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Different emotional lives

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Cultural differences in daily emotions were investigated by administering emotion questionnaires four times a day throughout a one-week period. Respondents were American students, Japanese students living in the United States, and Japanese students living in Japan. Americans rated their emotional lives as more pleasant than did the Japanese groups. The dimension of emotional pleasantness (unpleasant-pleasant) was predicted better by interdependent than independent concerns in the Japanese groups, but this was not the case in the American group where the variance predicted by interdependent and independent concerns did not significantly differ. It is argued that cultural differences in the concerns most strongly associated with pleasantness are related to differences in ideals, norms, and practices of what it means to be a person. Cultural differences in the concerns are assumed to implicate differences in the nature of emotional experience.

Emotions are contingent on concerns. Concerns are dispositions "to desire occurrence or nonoccurrence of a given kind of situation" (Frijda, 1986, p.335). A situation that was desired will elicit pleasant or good feelings and a situation that was undesired will elicit unpleasant or bad feelings when its occurrence was undesired (Descartes, 1647; Frijda, 1986; Maslow, 1970; Skinner, 1971; Spinoza, 1677/1979). We will assume universality of the relationship between emotions and concerns in this most general form.

This study started from the idea that concerns vary across cultures, because being a person in the world can be a markedly different task in distinct cultural

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contexts.[1] The "selfways" of different cultures—the characteristic ways in which an individual participates in the culture—are different (Markus, Mullally, & Kitayama, 1997).[2] Cultural differences in the ways selves are constructed and lived imply differences in central concerns. What is good or pleasant and what is bad or unpleasant will differ along with the ideals, norms, and examples of personhood.

The hypothesis was tested that the types of concerns associated with emotions differ as a function of culturally different selfways. As given concerns are more focal to the cultural selfways, they are expected to have a relatively greater effect on felt pleasantness or unpleasantness. This hypothesis was tested by comparing differences in concerns underlying the daily emotions of Japanese and American college students.

Differences between American and Japanese selfways

American selfways have been characterised as independent, Japanese selfways as interdependent (Markus & Kitayama, 1991). Independence is marked by promotion of one's own goals, personal accomplishment, distinction from others, realisation of internal attributes, and expression of the individual self. On the other hand, interdependence motivates the desires to fit in or belong, to occupy one's proper position, to engage in appropriate action and to promote common aims and others' goals.

Research has also suggested that American selves are relatively more agentic and focused on achieving a positive self, whereas Japanese are relatively more adjusting to the social environment and focused on the avoidance of a negative self and negative relationships (Heine, Lehman, Markus, & Kitayama, 1999; Karasawa, 2001; Kitayama, Markus, Matsumoto, & Norasakkunkit, 1997; Lewis, 1995; Morling & Kitayama, 1999; Weisz, Rothbaum, & Blackburn, 1984). American selfways favour self-esteem, achievement or ability, and primary control as concerns, whereas Japanese selfways include avoiding relational disruption, breaches of harmony, and the loss of face. Note that independent American selfways are about achieving positive end states and that interdependent Japanese selfways are about avoiding negative outcomes.

[1] By cultural contexts we mean any set of conditions with specific meanings and practices. Cultural contexts are, therefore, not contingent on national boundaries. However, some national boundaries do seem to correspond to a distinct set of meanings and practices.

[2] Selfways are distinguished from individual selves in that they are the cultural template not the individual instantiation of self (Markus et al., 1997). An individual will be likely to adopt the concerns of his/her culture, although it goes without saying that there will be some within-culture variation in selves, and thus in the guiding concerns and salient questions (Markus et al., 1997; Mesquita & Ellsworth, 2001). When we talk about cultural differences in selves and concerns, we mean that on the average the concerns of individuals differ from one culture to the next (or also that the mode is different in different cultures).

The experience of being American or Japanese can thus be very different. Yet, both independent and interdependent concerns appear in American and Japanese contexts. One of the ways to characterise the difference between American and Japanese selfways is by different degrees of focality of different types of concerns. The relative importance of independent and interdependent concerns is likely to vary across cultural contexts in ways that converge with the different selfways. There is some evidence supporting this notion. For example, self-esteem was found to be a concern for both Japanese and Americans, but more so for Americans (Heine et al., 1999; Kitayama et al., 1997). Japanese and Americans were both concerned with primary control in some occasions, but Americans more so; the reverse was true for secondary control (Morling & Kitayama, 1999; Weisz et al., 1984). Finally, relational closeness naturally is important across cultures, but it seemed more central to the functioning of the Japanese self than it is to the functioning of the American self (e.g., Lebra, 1994; Markus et al., 1997). Situations that are relevant to concerns of the independent self thus supposedly have greater impact in an American context, whereas situations that are relevant to concerns of the interdependent self will be more salient in a Japanese context.

Emotion-eliciting situations sampled in this study illustrate differences in the salience of independent versus interdependent concerns across cultural contexts. Generally, independent concerns permeated many descriptions of the antecedent events reported by Americans in this study, whereas interdependent concerns constituted the core of Japanese antecedent events. Following are instances of unpleasant situations that involve others.

American female:

> I was late for a sorority function. My friends came to pick me up and I was not even close to being ready. I had to throw on some outfit and finish my make-up as I walked out the door. It was not a good start of the night [for me].

Japanese female (United States):

> I was eating dinner with my Japanese friend and her roommate in the cafeteria. I sat down at the table last. While I was still eating, everyone else was waiting for me. So I felt bad for them. I could have told them not to worry about me and go ahead and leave, but I could not even say that.

The American example reflects an emphasis on the independent concern of control by relating the respondent's difficulty in meeting a self-set goal. The situation is about unpleasant consequences that are strictly of personal concern, rather than of relational concern. The Japanese situation on the other hand reveals interdependent concerns: The emotion is about the unpleasant consequences of the respondent's late arrival for others, about the social uneasiness that it creates, and about the respondent's inability to reinstate social harmony.

These self-reports illustrate that American and Japanese emotion antecedents may be permeated with different types of concern.

Cultural concerns as salient dimensions of emotional life

Concerns that are central to cultural selfways can be assumed salient evaluative dimensions. They are self-relevant and cannot leave the individual indifferent. Thus, the relevance of a situation to culturally salient concerns will more likely lead to an evaluation of pleasantness or unpleasantness, and thus to emotions. The process may be conscious, but need not be (Ellsworth & Scherer, in press).

Of central interest to this research was the relative impact of independent and interdependent concerns in everyday emotional life. We were interested in the *practice* of emotional life, aiming to compare the typical associations between concerns and emotion. The prediction was that independent concerns would typically be more associated with pleasantness in an American context, whereas interdependent concerns would be more commonly associated with pleasantness in a Japanese context.

It is important to underline the distinction between everyday emotional potential and emotional practice (Mesquita, Frijda, & Scherer, 1997). Emotional potential consists of the responses that are available to the individual in principle, whereas emotional practices are the combined responses that actually or typically occur in specific contexts. The aim of the current study was to test for typical patterns of association. A different enterprise all together would have been to test for potential associations. Even if pleasantness tends to reflect independent concerns in the American context, sometimes feelings of pleasantness may be induced by interdependent concerns. Conversely, the existence of a typical Japanese scenario in which pleasantness reflects changes in interdependent concerns, does not rule out the possibility that pleasantness is at times tied to independent concerns. This study aims at finding the rule, not the exception.

THIS STUDY

This study was designed to test cultural differences in concerns underlying *everyday* emotions. Everyday emotions were collected, by asking respondents to complete emotion questionnaires four times a day for about a week. The method allowed us to get at the dimensions of daily experiences of emotion that were salient to a person at the moment of experience or right after. We studied the emotions of three cultural groups: American students, Japanese students in Japan, and Japanese exchange students in the United States.

Our first hypothesis was that, on the whole, Americans would evaluate emotional events as more pleasant than the Japanese. From the American tendency to strive for positive selves and positive outcomes in general (Kitayama et

al., 1997), we inferred that Americans focus on aspects of the situation that could make them feel good. On the other hand, we did not expect a bias towards pleasantness on the part of the Japanese. The Japanese have been described as paying attention to both good and bad aspects of the situation and the self, in order to maintain harmony and balance (e.g., Heine et al., 1999).

Our second hypothesis was that the relationship of independent and interdependent concerns with the dimension of pleasantness would differ across cultures. More specifically, we hypothesised that within the American group, independent concerns would be more associated with the dimension of pleasantness than interdependent concerns, and that within the Japanese groups interdependent concerns would be more more associated with the dimension of pleasantness than would independent concerns.

METHOD

Sample

The respondents were 53 American college students (A), 27 men and 26 women; 46 Japanese college students, 23 men and 23 women, who were temporarily studying at an American university (JUS); and 50 Japanese college students, 21 men and 29 women, in Japan (JJ). Of the JUS sample, 87% had been abroad for less than five years (mode: less than a year; median: 1–2 years). The mean age differed across the three groups, $F(2, 131) = 5.4$, $p < .001$; A: $M = 19.0$, SD = 4.9; JUS: $M = 24.4$, SD = 4.9; JJ: $M = 21.3$, SD = 2.3.

The American students were all undergraduates at Wake Forest University who were enrolled in the Introductory Psychology course, and who participated in this study as part of the course requirement. The Japanese students in the Unites States were exchange students at Wake Forest University and neighboring universities (Guilford College Greensboro, Duke University, University of North Carolina at both Greensboro and Chapel Hill, and North Carolina State University at Raleigh). The Wake Forest exchange students received a present for their participation, the other students received US$20. Japanese students in Japan were undergraduates at Shirayuri College, Tokyo, and at Kyoto University. Shirayuri students participated in the study as part of a course requirement. Kyoto students were compensated with the equivalent of US$15.

Questionnaires

A demographic questionnaire asked about sex and age, as well as the time that the participants had spent abroad (less than a year; 1–2 years; 2–5 years; 5–10 years; more than 10 years).

An emotion questionnaire was administered four times a day. The questionnaires started by asking the participants whether they had experienced any emotion during the past three hours. If so, the respondents were asked to report

the last emotion they had experienced and to describe its antecedent event (the examples in the introduction were taken from these descriptions). Respondents rated the *pleasantness* of the event on a 5-point scale ranging from *very unpleasant* to *very pleasant*.

In this study, the independent and interdependent concerns were represented as separate sets of questions. The questions representing independent concerns all have to do with the central notions of being in control and being a unique and successful person. The items pertained to *self in control* [scale from not at all (1) to totally (5)], *ability to cope* [scale from total certainty unable to cope (1) to total certainty able to cope (5)], and *self-esteem* (scale from very harmful to self-esteem (1) to very beneficial to self-esteem (5)]. In contrast, interdependent concerns were reflected in questions about relational closeness, as well as questions about the fit of one's own and other people's behaviour in the relationship. Respondents rated situations on *social distance: closer to or further away from other people* [scale from a lot further (1) to a lot closer (5)], *face loss* (scale from not at all (1) to lost face a lot (3)], and *other people's behaviour signalling a bad relationship: somebody else's immoral/improper behaviour* [scale from not immoral at all (1) to very immoral (5)]. Respondents were able to answer pleasantness and concerns by checking "not applicable".

The questionnaires were designed in English, and translated into Japanese. As a check on the translation, we had the questionnaire back-translated into English. Few differences appeared, and the two Japanese translators agreed on how to resolve those differences. Americans received the English questionnaire, and both Japanese groups received the Japanese version of the questionnaire.

Procedure

In all cultural groups, the participants met with a researcher, who administered the demographic questionnaire. By mistake, the Kyoto students did not fill out the questionnaire. For all but one student the sex could be tracked down, but their ages are missing.

The researcher also explained the experience-sampling questionnaire, articulating the different components of emotions referred to in the questionnaire. The participants were told that they had to complete the questionnaire four times a day (at 12 am, 3 pm, 6 pm, and 9 pm) for eight consecutive days starting on the day of the meeting.[3] It was emphasised to the respondents that they should complete the questionnaire at or around the indicated time, because we were interested in "on-line reports" of emotions. Participants were

[3] The study lasted only seven days for students at Kyoto University. We decided to reduce the duration of the study after the Japanese students at Shiyuri College had indicated that the study was very demanding on their time. As it turned out Japanese students in Japan had the highest completion rates, which may be one of the reasons why they were the only group complaining about the load of the study.

encouraged to skip the questionnaire if they could not complete it within an hour of the designated time.

Questionnaires were collected every other day, partly to maintain the participants' involvement, and partly to ensure participants did not complete all the questionnaires at the same time. At the end of eight days the students were debriefed and told about the cross-cultural character of the study.

Measures of association

Respondents were asked to complete the questionnaire four times a day, for eight days. The reported instances of emotion constituted multiple measurement points for each respondent. For each measurement point we conducted six regressions, with pleasantness as the dependent variable and one of the six concern questions as the predictor variable. The unstandardised betas from these regression analyses were then averaged within each respondent. In this way we arrived at the within-respondent means of six unstandardised betas (self in control, ability to cope, self-esteem, social distance, face loss, and immoral/improper behaviour). The mean association between pleasantness and independent concerns was subsequently calculated by averaging the three unstandardised betas from the regressions of the independent concerns on to pleasantness (self in control, ability to cope, self-esteem). The mean association between pleasantness and independent concerns was calculated by first changing the sign of the betas for face loss and immoral/improper behaviour, and then averaging the three unstandardised betas from the regressions of the interdependent concerns on to pleasantness (social distance, face loss, and immoral/improper behaviour).

Response rates

Four respondents, all male students in the JUS group, were excluded from further analyses because they had completed fewer than 10 questionnaires. On average, the American students completed 30 questionnaires (n of questionnaires = 1568), Japanese students in the United States completed 25 questionnaires (n of questionnaires = 1065), and Japanese in Japan completed 29 questionnaires (n of questionnaires = 1462).

No emotions

The questionnaire had the option to report "no emotion" in the past three hours. This option was not equally used in the three cultures, $F(2, 142) = 29.8$, $p < .001$. On average, 4 of the questionnaires reported no emotions in the American sample (n = 53), 3 of the questionnaires in the JUS sample (n = 45), and 11 of the questionnaires in the JJ sample.

An additional nine respondents were excluded from data analysis, because they reported fewer than 10 instances of emotions, and their regressions were

thus relatively unreliable.[4] This group included one JUS man, one JJ woman, and seven JJ men. The final analyses include all 53 American respondents (27 men and 26 women), 41 JUS respondents (19 men and 23 women), and 42 JJ respondents (13 men, 28 women, and 1 gender missing).

RESULTS

General analytic trategy

All analyses were conducted using the aggregate variables per respondent. Culture and sex served as between-subject factors for all the analyses reported. None of the analyses yielded culture by sex interactions, and only one yielded a significant sex difference. Only this significant result will be reported. As the cultural groups differed in age, all analyses were also conducted with age as a covariate. Controlling for age did not change the hypothesised cultural differences, but the missing data of the Japanese who failed to complete a demographic questionnaire did reduce the number of respondents included in the analyses even further. In order to include the maximum number of respondents in the analyses to be presented, we chose to present the results uncontrolled for age.

Hypothesis 1: Differences in pleasantness. Consistent with our hypothesis, a univariate analysis of variance yielded cultural differences in the average level of pleasantness, $F(2, 133) = 3.5, p < .05$; A: $M = 3.22$, SD = 0.36, JUS: $M = 3.04$, SD = 0.49, JJ: $M = 2.99$, SD = 0.43. Pleasantness also significantly differed between the sexes, $F(1, 133) = 5.6, p < .05$; Women: $M = 3.17$, SD = 0.46, Men: $M = 3.00$, SD = 0.43). A planned contrast confirmed that Americans rated emotional events in their lives, on average, as more pleasant than did the Japanese in either Japan or the United States, $t(133) = -2.7$, $p < .01$. Furthermore, in the American group the average appraisal of the situation was pleasant (i.e., positively different from neutral: $t(52) = 4.4, p < .001$), but neither the Japanese in the United States nor the Japanese in Japan appraised the emotional situations as significantly different from neutral, JUS: $t(40) = .6$, $p > .1$; JJ: $t(41) = -.2$, $p > .1$.

Hypothesis 2: Independent and interdependent concerns. We also found support for cultural differences in the relative importance of independent and interdependent concerns as predictors of pleasantness. A repeated measures analysis of variance with the standardised betas of independent and

[4] The patterns of average unstandardised betas did not change by removing the respondents who reported fewer than 10 instances of emotions. Yet, the correlations with other, nonreported measures increased significantly, suggesting that removal of respondents with fewer than 10 reports of emotion made the results more reliable.

interdependent concerns as within-subject factors and sex and culture as between-subject factors yielded a significant interaction between the types of concerns (independent, interdependent) and culture, $F(2, 129) = 5.5$, $p < .01$. Thus, the cultures varied in the extents to which independent and interdependent concerns contributed to pleasantness. Further analyses suggested differences between the American group and the two Japanese groups. The Japanese groups were not significantly different from each other, $F(1, 81) = 1.6$, $p > .1$.

Furthermore, we hypothesised that within the American group, independent concerns would be more predictive of pleasantness than interdependent concerns and that within the Japanese groups interdependent concerns would be more predictive of pleasantness than would independent concerns. The means of the unstandardised betas of independent and interdependent concerns by culture are displayed in Figure 1. Paired t-tests confirmed that interdependent concerns were more predictive of pleasantness than independent concerns in the Japanese groups, JUS: $t(41) = -3.5$, $p < .01$; JJ: $t(42) = -4.9$, $p < .001$. However, contrary to our predictions, independent concerns in the American group were not more predictive of pleasantness than interdependent concerns, A: $t(52) = -1.07$, $p > .1$.

We explored to what extent the contribution of independent concerns to pleasantness was related to the contribution of interdependent concerns, by calculating Pearson's correlations by culture between the mean unstandardised

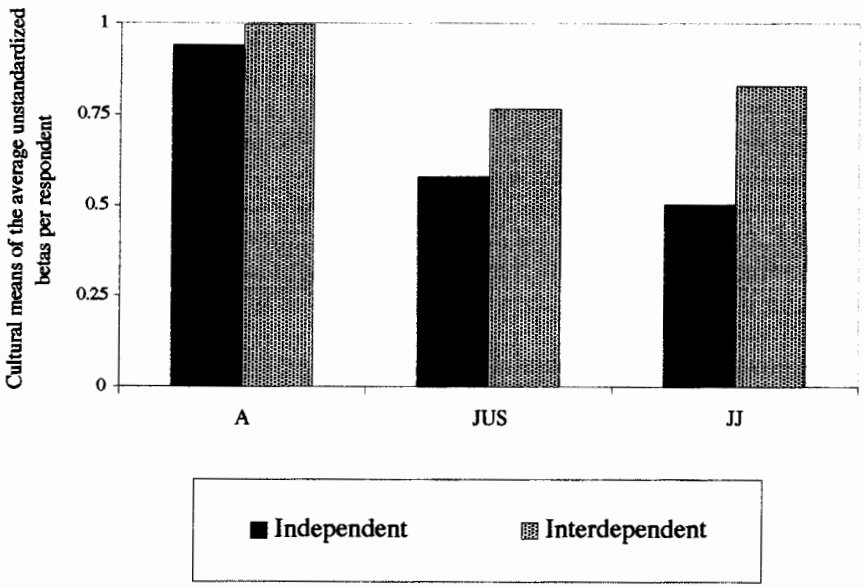

Figure 1. Independent and interdependent concerns as predictors of pleasantness.

slopes for independent and interdependent concerns. Significant correlations were found for the A and JUS groups (A: $r = .3, p < .05$; JUS: $r = .3, p < .05$), but the betas for independent and interdependent concerns were uncorrelated in the JJ group ($r = 0, p > .1$). Thus, pleasant events in the American and JUS groups tend to reflect independent and interdependent concerns at the same time, but in the JJ group this is not the case.

DISCUSSION

This study followed the daily emotions of Japanese and American students throughout a one-week period. We found remarkable differences in the profiles of everyday emotional lives. The first finding was that, compared to Americans, the Japanese in Japan reported more often that they had experienced no emotions at all. This was an unpredicted finding. Furthermore, as predicted, we found that American emotional life was judged more positively than was the Japanese: On average, Americans appraised emotional events as somewhat pleasant, whereas the Japanese appraised emotional events as "neutral". Consistent with our predictions, independent and interdependent concerns predicted pleasantness to a different extent in the American group than they did in the Japanese. In the Japanese groups independent concerns were more reflected in pleasantness than interdependent concerns. Contrary to our predictions, the pattern was not reversed in the American group: No differences were found in the extent to which independent and interdependent concerns were underlying the dimension of pleasantness.

The different patterns of correlations suggest that different processes may be going on for the American and JUS groups, on the one hand, and the JJ group, on the other. Where independent and interdependent concerns appear to predict pleasantness in related ways in the American and JUS groups, they seem to be independent predictors of pleasantness in the JJ group. This may mean that for Americans and Japanese living in the United States a situation that is pleasant because it makes you feel unique is also a situation in which you feel socially OK. When interdependent concerns (e.g., relational closeness) underlie pleasantness in the JJ group, they are not usually associated with a sense of self-esteem and control.

Whereas the strength of associations between pleasantness and the individual independent and interdependent concerns are cross-culturally different, it should be noted that in all cultures both independent and interdependent concerns were related to pleasantness. Thus, in all three cultures pleasantness was strongly related to such concerns as self-esteem and control, as well as to interdependent concerns such as social closeness and face loss.

In sum, the most important finding of the study is that pleasantness and unpleasantness, when they occur, are typically related to different concerns in the two cultures (see Kitayama, Markus, & Kurokawa, 2000, for convergent

findings). Although both independent and interdependent concerns figure in the emotional lives in all cultures, the focal concerns appear to be related to the cultural selfways. That is, emotions in interdependent groups depend largely on interdependent concerns that are focal to the interdependent selfways. The impact of interdependent and independent concerns on emotions were not found to be different in the American group. One of the explanations may be that the effects of independent and interdependent concerns on pleasantness were correlated in this group. Indeed, independent and interdependent concerns themselves were most correlated in the American group too (A: $r = .5, p < .01$; JUS: $r = .4, p < .05$; JJ: $r = .3, p < .05$).

It should be noticed that the established relations between type of concerns and pleasantness are based on within-person averages of regression outcomes. This means that the cultural differences are in part differences in psychological tendencies. When an individual in an interdependent culture encounters events that are relevant to interdependent concerns, he/she is more likely to have emotions than when the events are relevant to interdependent concerns. This is not true for the psychology of individuals in interdependent cultures. The data thus point to differences in psychological mechanisms.

Explaining unexpected findings

We had hypothesised that, in the American group, independent concerns would be more predictive of the dimension of pleasantness than interdependent concerns. The findings did not support this hypothesis. Still, there is reason to assume that interdependent concerns work differently for Americans than they work for the Japanese. First, both the mean means and the mean standard deviations of interdependent concerns were significantly lower in the American group than they were in the Japanese groups.[5] These findings can be interpreted to mean that interdependent concerns were not perceived to be relevant very often in the American group as opposed to the Japanese. The betas for the American group, then, supplement this picture to suggest that interdependent concerns infrequently play a role in everyday American lives; yet, *when* they are recognised as relevant, they affect pleasantness markedly.

It is not clear that in those cases the interdependent items meant the same to the American as to the Japanese group. Given the medium-sized correlation between the betas for independent and interdependent concerns in the American group, and the zero correlation in the Japanese group, interdependent concerns may mean something different in an American context. Interestingly, this would be true for all those living in an American context, Americans and Japanese

[5] For interdependent concerns the data were as follows: American: M (n = 53) = 1.9, SD = 0.20; Japanese: M (n = 93) = 2.2, SD = 0.40; Levene's $F = 14.87, p < .001$; independent samples $t(141.8) = 6.2$, p <. 001.

alike. One hypothesis is that pleasant feelings in the United States context stem from congruency with the dominant independent selfways—to be unique and in control—and that perceived relational closeness and fit reflects the social value that this congruence with selfways buys you. The meaning of relational closeness and fit may thus differentiate between American and Japanese contexts. Items differentiating between American interdependence and Japanese interdependence may bring clarity in this issue.

Not only the ratio between the betas of independent and interdependent concerns varied across cultures, but also the absolute level. We suspect that the higher betas in the American group are due to the larger variance that was established in the dimension of pleasantness, as compared to the variance in the Japanese groups. Alternatively, it might be assumed that Japanese pleasantness has other powerful predictors that were not captured by the concern questions.

Differences in cultural concerns: Implications for experience

Do our data imply that emotional experience is different or simply that the reasons for emotions are different across cultures? Although the data are not conclusive in this regard, we are led to think that the emotional experience itself must be different when it is an answer to such markedly distinct questions as "Am I on top of things?" or "Are social relationships OK?" For one thing, the agency in these questions is importantly different. Appraisal theories have argued that matters of agency do influence the subjective experience of emotions (e.g., Smith & Ellsworth, 1985).

Another important reason is that situations that touch mostly on independent or mostly on interdependent concerns give rise to very different coping possibilities (cf. Frijda & Zeelenberg, 2001). Situations affecting independent concerns would logically lead one to try to be more effective or competent, or to gain more control if this is lacking. Situations that touch on interdependent concerns would not benefit in the same way from primary control or agency. Instead, the help of others is needed to improve relationships and restore harmony if this is wanting. The primary coping responses will be those of primary control in the independent context and of secondary control in the interdependent context. Thus, differences in the major cultural concerns appear to have significant impact on secondary appraisal and coping, which have been identified as defining elements of emotional experience (Lazarus, 1991).

Differences in the salience of concerns are thus assumed to have an effect on appraisal and coping style, both in the moment itself and in the long run. We believe, therefore, that concerns affect emotions beyond their occurrence to shape the very experience. As the anthropologist Rosaldo stated: "Instead of viewing culture as an 'arbitrary' source of 'contents' that are processed by our

universal minds, it becomes necessary to ask how 'contents' may themselves affect the 'form' of mental process'' (Rosaldo, 1984, pp.137–138).

Questions for future research

The present study poses many questions for future research. Why did Japanese respondents report fewer emotions than Americans? One reason may be that the Japanese in Japan focus less on subjective phenomena than do Americans, and therefore have a lower tendency to report emotions. By contrast, an essential part of independent American selfways, one defining of a ''good person'', seems to be to work out how one feels. Americans may, therefore, be more inclined to recognise and label inner states as emotions, or indeed as anything that is more outspoken, than are the Japanese. Another, related reason may be that Japanese restrict their definition of emotions to situations involving others (cf. Levenson, Ekman, Heider, & Friesen, 1992). Thus, the range of situations qualifying as emotional may be larger for Americans than for Japanese living in Japan. Furthermore, the Japanese have been reported to place empathy before their personal emotions (Lebra, 1994; Tatara, 1998). Emotions, such as anger, should be controlled, for the sake of others who might be negatively affected by them. Emotional inhibition may sometimes take the form of a *post-hoc* regulatory mechanism, but it is equally possible that the emotional inhibition affects the emotional experience itself, in which case participants are likely to report ''no emotion'' (Mesquita, in press). Finally, the preferred states for Americans and Japanese may differ. Whereas Americans seem to strive for positive emotion, the lack of negative and disturbing emotions may be the desired state among Japanese. ''No emotion'' may stand for a lack of disturbance that is sought after by Japanese. Whatever the reason for the lower rate of reports of emotions, this reason seems no longer applicable to Japanese who have been living in the United States for less than two years.

A second question posed by the data is the following: What exactly is the reason that the Japanese (both in the United States and in Japan) evaluate their emotional lives as neutral on average, whereas Americans rate their lives as overall somewhat pleasant? The first reason for the differences might of course be that American life *is* somewhat more pleasant than Japanese life, possibly because independent selfways are primarily about making life pleasant for the individual (Kitayama et al., 1997). A second reason might be that American appraisals are biased towards positivity, whereas Japanese appraisals are not (Kitayama et al., 1997). Yet a third possibility is that Japanese ratings should be read as ''neither pleasant and unpleasant''. The pleasant and unpleasant characteristics of an event may be seen as balancing each other out. Cognition research shows that East Asians are less inclined to classify in mutually exclusive categories (Nisbett, Peng, Choi, & Norenzayan, 2001), which in this

case could mean that they are less inclined than Americans to consider an event as *either* good *or* bad. Finally, "good" may have different meanings for Japanese and Americans. Previous research has suggested that "good" in Japanese life means that there is a nice balance between positive and negative characteristics, whereas "good" in American life is identified with exclusively positive characteristics (Heine et al., 1999).

In conclusion, this study has suggested that, as a consequence of the cultural differences in selfways, many interesting and consequential differences are to be found in the daily emotional experiences that people from distinct cultural contexts have. Naturally, the consequences of the culturally different focal concerns for different types of emotional responses should be investigated, rather than assumed. Questions about culture-specific patterns of emotional responses as related to differential central concerns should be addressed in future research.

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