

INTERNATIONAL MILITARY STUDENT



CULTURE GUIDE

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International Military Student

Culture Guide

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CHAPTER 1

CONVERSATIONAL TABOOS

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1-1. CONVERSATION. Conversation is called, contradictorily, both the “lost art” and the “art of the civilized and genteel.” Certainly in America the incursion of TV-watching has not improved our skills in managing intelligent, entertaining conversation.

a. To improve your conversational skills, you might learn six magic questions—who, what, when, where, how, and why? Memorize them. Then, when stuck for conversation, pull one out and simply begin a sentence. For example: What is your climate like at home compared to here? *When* did you leave? *How* long will you be gone from home? Or, *how* was your flight over? *Where* have you visited in the United States before this? Why have you come here business or pleasure? Who is accompanying you on your travels? Then, depending on the answers, do the circle once again, keying off the information that is being revealed with each answer. Questions are extremely important because the artful host gives the guest center stage by merely listening. Polite questions flatter and draw out your guests.

b. Watch out for unconventional forms of questions, though. One hostess in Dallas, curious to know her visitor's impressions of her city, politely inquired “And how did you find Dallas?” The visitors answered, “I didn't have any problem at all. The airplane delivered me here.” Danish comedian Victor Borge gives another example of routine questions being misinterpreted. He relates that a Danish friend of his entered an American airport, walked to the ticket counter and requested a round-trip ticket. “To where?” the ticket agent asked. “Why back to here, of course,” said the Dane.

1-2. CONVERSATION TABOOS. Turning from questionable questions, there are numerous other conversational areas that probably should be avoided. Here is a short but important list of conversational “no-no's:”

a. *Religion.* This is usually considered a very personal subject, and probably best avoided unless your guest raises it first, or unless you have become very well acquainted. The Salman Rushdie affair in 1989 demonstrated to the whole world just how volatile religious convictions can be. Iran's Ayatollah Khomeini ordered Rushdie assassinated because of his writings that devout Muslims considered as blasphemy. Another important aspect of Islamic teaching is that only God knows the future. With devout Muslims it is silly to try to predict the future. As a result, be cautious about asking for forecasts or predictions about crops or oil prices or even travel agendas. Muslims punctuate their conversation with the word “Inshalla”, meaning “If God wills it.” So, if you should ask where your guest is traveling to next week, he might reply “To New York,” and then tack on “Inshalla”. (In the Appendix you will find a list of predominant religions, country-by-country, to help you know in advance something about the prevailing religions in your international guest's home country.)

b. *Politics.* While this is often a tough area to skirt, a proper host should never say anything that might be construed as critical of the politics of another country. True, after guest and host become well acquainted, it may be possible and proper to discuss world events and foreign policy but be certain to do it in a

thoroughly statesmanlike and diplomatic manner. If your guest wishes to discuss politics, one indicator might be if he or she initiates the discussion by asking questions about the American political scene.

c. *Highly personal questions.* While this may seem obvious, what may seem personal to us is open game for others, and vice versa. For example, among the British, one's personal privacy is sacred. Therefore, even the customary American conversational gambit "What do you do?" becomes forward and impolite in proper English social circles. We in the United States are identified by *what we do*; the British are not. On a scale of rudeness, it would be comparable, I suppose, to someone asking us "How much money do you make each year?" Or, "How much did your house cost?" Incidentally, among some cultures those exact questions might be popped at you and considered perfectly proper. In that case, a polite answer might be "Those are questions we here in America often wonder about among our neighbors and colleagues, but it is considered a personal matter and so that information is usually-kept private." The questioner will get your message. Orientals also dislike frank, personal questions. Frankness and outspoken expressions are usually considered rude in the Far East. Peace and harmony in relation to other people prevail. "Face," meaning self-esteem and reputation, must be preserved at all times.

d. *Saying "No."* Many cultures have difficulty coming out with a straight forward negative statement, or rejection of something. Westerners say the Japanese are most noted for this, with a dozen or more ways of avoiding a flat "no" in conversation. In written form, where no one can be offended, it might occur. Accordingly, a response like "That would be very difficult" probably means "no."

e. When a Japanese would *like* to say "no" it might come out as "I will do my best to comply, but if I cannot, I hope you will understand." This reluctance to say "no" stems from an unwillingness to disrupt harmony. It is true of the Indochinese (Vietnamese, Cambodians, Laotians, and Hmongs) as well. Among all these cultures, it is important to ask questions in the "right" way. For example, instead of asking "What do you find difficult about the United States?", which automatically implies criticism and therefore possible loss of face to Americans, it is better to ask "In what ways do you wish you could have been better prepared before you came to the United States?" Or, offer alternatives: "What things have Americans done that have been most helpful? Which have given you the greatest concern?" Another trick is to phrase your question so it can be answered in the positive. For example, instead of asking "Would you like to visit my factory?" (which calls for a "yes" or "no" answer and where the guest might reply "yes" just to maintain that all-important harmony), you might ask "Is it correct you would like to visit our factory, or perhaps your time is too limited?" That type of question allows an affirmative answer to either option: "Yes, we would like to visit your factory." Or, "Yes, our time is too limited." But if you think all this is complicated, wait until you try to sort out geographic questions, like national borders and national designations.

f. *Geography.* Gilbert Grosvenor III of the National Geographic Society, tells this story. When Anwar Sadat presided as leader of Egypt, he learned that a very influential U.S. Senator had often voiced strong interest in visiting Egypt to learn more about that pivotal Middle Eastern country. Sadat therefore extended a personal invitation that the Senator eagerly accepted. The reddest of carpets was rolled out, with Sadat personally escorting the Senator on a tour of the Pyramids, the Aswan dam, and other treasures of his country. Standing on the shores of the Red Sea, the Senator turned to Sadat and said: "This is wonderful. I've always wanted to see the Persian Gulf." As Grosvenor later commented, "I'm certain Sadat concluded that any U.S. official who was so ignorant about basic geography could not be worth much in the halls of Congress."

g. The moral here is: A basic knowledge of geography, and especially the geography of your guest's country, can be exceedingly important. One gaffe can bring frostbite to a budding relationship. Following are a few basic geographical nuggets that you should store away in your mind's safe deposit box to help you in international conversations:

(1) Taiwan is officially called “The Republic of China” and should *never* be confused with “The People’s Republic of China” (often shortened to the PRC), or what is often called Mainland China, or Red China. Taiwan is the island originally called Formosa, where Republican forces fled to escape Mao Tse Tung’s communist army in 1949.

(2) There are two distinct Irelands: the Republic of Ireland, which is the largest segment of the island with Dublin as the capital, and Northern Ireland which is part of the United Kingdom and has Belfast as its capital.

(3) Belgium also has two important components, although not politically divided as in Ireland. The *Flemish* reside in the North and speak a language related to both German and Dutch, the *Walloons* live in the south and southeast and speak French. In temperament, actions and culture, each group reflects either the Dutch or French heritage, which are quite dissimilar.

(4) The terms *Scandinavian and Nordic* are often muddled or used as synonyms. Nordic refers to a subdivision of the Caucasoid ethnic group most predominant in Scandinavia. The Nordic or Scandinavian region stretches from Greenland, to Iceland, Norway, Sweden, Denmark, and Finland. Finns are different racially and linguistically but customs and lifestyle are more Scandinavian than anything else. Swedes, Norwegians, and Danes readily accept being lumped as Scandinavians but are also touchy about retaining their separate identities and languages. Remember, too, that the Germans occupied both Norway and Denmark in World War II, while Sweden remained neutral. Some hard feelings still linger, so it is helpful to step carefully on these cultural eggshells scattered along the shores of the North Sea.

(5) *North and South Korea* fit the same mold. The official name in the North is the People’s Democratic Republic of Korea, and the South as the Republic of Korea. Relations between the two are still strained and tense.

(6) As pointed out earlier, the word *Indochinese* refers to Vietnamese, Laotians, Cambodians, and the Hmong (pronounced “mong”).

(7) *Australians and New Zealanders* become vexed when they are misidentified. Americans often try to cover up by saying “Well, you all sound alike.” That’s not good enough. Take pains to make the right designation. To untrained American ears, the *South African* accent also sounds like the Australian or New Zealand pronunciation. But that is like saying Gary Player is Australian and Crocodile Dundee comes from Capetown.

(8) Even with our good, old friend the *United Kingdom*, most Americans do not know the difference between Great Britain, Britain, and England. Here is the formula: Great Britain refers to the island that contains three separate political divisions, England, Scotland, and Wales. When you throw in Northern Ireland, the designation becomes United Kingdom.

(9) *Moslems* (or Muslims) are people-who-abide by the *Islamic religion*. Even though the dictionary refers to the religion as “Mohammedanism” because of the founder Mohammed, it is impolite to call it that. Remember, too, that the Arab or Islamic region of 19 countries clustered around the Mediterranean Sea ranges from “moderate” to “extreme.” This can refer to either their political stance or their religious zeal. Egyptians, Saudis, and Jordanese, for example, are considered on the moderate side both religiously and politically.

(10) Canadians dislike being called “Americans.” (See Chapter 10 on Canadians.)

(11) The full and correct name of our neighbor to the south, *Mexico*, is “The United States of Mexico.”

(12) Finally, *avoid all ethnic jokes*. This may seem like an obvious piece of advice until you find New Zealanders telling Irish jokes, Belgians telling Dutch jokes, the Dutch telling Belgian jokes, and ad infinitum. It is amazing. Ethnic jokes just materialize, no matter the size of a country. In Italy they tell jokes about the people of Cuneo, a city outside Milan. Canadians tell them about “Newfies,” the people of Newfoundland. And before civil war ravaged tiny Lebanon, they actually told the same basic ethnic jokes told around the world but there the butt of the stories were people from a small village called Homsey. But while such jokes may seem universal, and while it may be tempting to haul out your own list of ethnic jokes--don't.

CHAPTER 2

TIP LIST

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2-1. TIPS. A list of brief but helpful tips follows, nationality by nationality, on the following important aspects of hosting:

- Greetings
- Punctuality
- Gift-giving
- Protocol
- Conversational do's and don'ts

a. The discussion is organized, first by general region--Europe, Africa, Middle East, Far East, Central and South America, and the Caribbean, in that order--and then by specific nationality within those regions, in alphabetical order. Although the format is generally consistent, the enormous diversity in cultures and customs makes a rigid style of giving this information impossible.

b. These are intended to be quick tips, but like all generalizations about people and cultures, when you host international guests you may and will encounter exceptions. Nonetheless, being generally aware of these accepted, albeit broad-brushed traits might save you some embarrassment in your hosting responsibilities.

c. One cautionary note: A gentle but sometimes confusing clashing of cultures may occur if your international guests have studied and learned American customs and protocol and want to demonstrate that knowledge. Therefore, in the following listings, where it may say "limp handshakes are the custom" or "arriving 30 minutes late for appointments is the norm," you should remember that those are the *indigenous* practices. Certain guests from those locales may surprise you with a bone-crushing handshake and split-second promptness simply because they have done their homework on American protocol, learned firm handshakes and punctuality prevail here, and decided to display that knowledge.

d. To begin this listing, it's only fair that we first hold a mirror up to the American image. After all, what's good for the guest is good for the host, too. This particular list of American traits is culled from a series of seminars where I asked both foreign and American audiences to describe the stereotypical American businessperson. Here is how Americans might be described in some foreign language text when the question is asked: "What quick tips, what traits should I know when hosting Americans?"

2-2. AMERICANS FROM THE UNITED STATES. Firm handshaking is the rule, along with direct eye contact. Avoid body contact when greeting men, for example, hugs, kissing. Generally, punctuality is practiced and is important. In business, little time is spent on small talk. The attitude is "Time is money, so let's get down to business." Americans quickly jump to the use of first names. They prefer light lunches, with the main meal in the evening. They may even schedule breakfast meetings. They rarely speak other languages, but use much American "lingo." If business gifts are exchanged, they

usually are token gifts. Americans often enjoy entertaining business guests at home. Good topics: sports, family, and business; bad topics dominance of American power.

2-3. EUROPE. Before examining individual countries in Europe, here are a couple of bits of protocol common throughout Europe:

- When giving flowers, you should know that chrysanthemums are linked with death, so avoid giving them. Red roses signify a strong romantic interest and attachment, so it's best to avoid them, too. When presenting flowers, always unwrap the paper in advance. Never give an even number of flowers--that's bad luck, but it is also unlucky to give 13 flowers. Finally, Europeans always seem to carry flowers in an upright position, while Americans tend to carry them in a downward position.
- Another idiosyncrasy among almost all Europeans is that their second floor (in U.S. terms) is the "first" floor. This is because they call the "first floor" of any building the "ground floor."

a. Austrians.

- Never call an Austrian a German.
- Are punctual.
- May bring flowers or chocolates if invited to your home.
- May call the toilet the "W.C." (for "water closet").
- Use a firm handshake (both men and women).
- Keeping hands in the lap when dining considered impolite.
- Are uncomfortable with first names, until friendship established.
- Good topics: history, art, music, sports, wines.
- Bad topics: money, religion, politics.

b. Belgians.

- Value privacy.
- Use frequent handshaking at both greetings and farewells.
- Use first names only with old friends.
- Embrace among Belgians and other close friends.
- Cheek-kissing with other Belgians and close friends--three times, alternating cheeks.
- Like punctuality.
- Will joke about the Dutch and vice-versa.
- Great gourmets; they revere good cooking.
- Dislike being confused as being "French."
- Half the country speaks a dialect similar to Dutch.
- Snapping fingers or putting hands in pockets when conversing impolite.
- Good topics: soccer, biking, history.
- Bad topics: French-Flemish rivalries.

c. Bulgarians.

- Frequent handshaking.
- Not many speak English; German and Russian are often spoken.
- Make appointments well in advance; very punctual.
- When dining, may use bread to mop up gravy and sauces.

- May bring flowers, candy, or wine to your home.
- A nod means “no”; shaking the head side-to-side means “yes.”
- Good topics: family, home life, professions.
- Bad topics: politics and social conditions in Bulgaria.

d. Czech and Slovak Republics.

- Very punctual.
- Two republics: Czech and Slovak.
- Two separate languages but understood well by both.
- Handshaking very common: arriving, leaving, business, social.
- Make appointments well in advance.
- May bring flowers, wine, cognac as gifts to your home.
- Toasting common at special occasions.
- Putting elbow on the table impolite.
- Good topics: sports and don't mine personal questions.
- Bad topics: socialism

e. Danish.

- Punctuality very important.
- Firm handshaking common among men, women, and even children.
- Toasting with the word “skoal” very common.
- Guests of honor to sit left of hostess.
- Guests of honor expected to make a toast.
- Like long, slow dinners with much conversation.
- Not accustomed to tipping taxi drivers or waitresses.
- Very impolite to “cut in” while dancing.
- Complimenting clothing is personal and considered odd.
- Don't like to be confused with Norwegians or Swedes.
- State church is Lutheran but few attend.
- Normally don't show emotions.
- Not a back-slapping, touching society.
- Substance more important than style.
- Good topics: food, Danish culture, current events.
- Bad topics: personal subjects like religion, income.

f. Dutch.

- Officially, the Kingdom of the Netherlands.
- Called “Holland” but that is actually a province.
- Punctuality expected.
- Handshaking with everyone present, even children, common.
- Always introduce yourself or they may consider you rude.
- Don't exaggerate or present fluff in business proposals.
- Avoid haggling.
- Business gifts customarily wrapped.
- Not prone to touch and not physically demonstrative.

- Take pride in: land reclamation, art, history, furniture.
- Good topics: politics, travel, sports.
- Respected worldwide as sound, honest business traders.
- Usually fluent in English, plus other European languages.

g. **English, Scots, Welsh.**

- Each national group likes individual recognition.
- English more formal than others.
- Conservative in dress and social, business practices.
- Tend to use understatement in business matters.
- Titles and honors highly important.
- Usually have great fondness for household pets.
- Appointments, well in advance, are the rule.
- Punctuality important.
- Respect personal privacy--avoiding personal questions.
- Adopting American customs of first names, light lunches.
- When eating, declining "seconds" is considered polite.
- Accustomed to cooler room temperatures than Americans.
- Striped neckties denote military or school affiliations.
- Handshaking common among both men and women.
- English normally do not say "you're welcome"; Scots do.
- May appear standoffish until formally introduced.
- Call a Scot a Scotsman, not a Scotchman or Scottish.
- If you smoke, offer cigarettes to everyone.
- Good topics: history, architecture, gardens.
- Bad topics: religion, Northern Ireland, money, and prices.

h. **Finnish.**

- Considered "Nordic," meaning geographically grouped with Scandinavians.
- Linguistically and racially different from Scandinavians.
- Reflect Scandinavia in other customs and lifestyle.
- Firm handshakes the custom.
- Hugs and kisses not the custom.
- Tend to be quiet and unemotional.
- Punctuality preferred; same with advance appointments.
- Not formal, but may offer a toast at beginning of a meal.
- Good topics: hobbies, sports, travel, politics.
- Bad topics: personal questions about job, religion, politics.

i. **Former Yugoslav Republics.**

- Greetings will be the customary handshake, also extended when leaving.
- General punctual.
- Offer business guests coffee, tea, maybe a drink and snack.
- More open in discussion political views.
- May ask personal questions: Married? What work do you do?

- More knowledgeable than their neighbors about Western world.
- Good topics: lifestyles in United States, sports, family, fashion.
- Bad topics: religion and particularly sensitive politics.

j. French.

- Tend to be formal and conservative in business protocol.
- First names rarely used, even among colleagues.
- Take great pride in French history, language, and arts.
- Frequent handshaking, but shorter and less firm than most.
- Highly value good cuisine and fine wines.
- Main meal of the day usually at midday.
- Mineral water is often sipped in addition to wine.
- Avoid personal questions, politics, and money in conversation.
- Take great pride in French educational system.
- Chauvinistic about country and language.
- Decisions made usually after much deliberation.
- Dinnertime conversations are important and often long.
- Good topics: food, sports, culture.
- Bad topics: money, prices, very personal questions.

k. Germans

- Firm handshakes (often one pump) the rule.
- Never use first names until invited.
- Rank important in business dealings.
- Punctuality extremely important.
- Full name: The Federal Republic of Germany.
- Most appreciative of American military support.
- Proud of economic renaissance.
- Northern Germans more quiet and reserved.
- Southern Germans more gregarious.
- Hands in pockets when conversing impolite.
- Answer the phone by stating their names.
- Discuss business after a meal; breakfast meetings are out.
- When eating, don't place your hands in your lap.
- Good topics: autos, soccer, good food.
- Bad topics: references to World War II, American sports.

l. Greeks.

- Respect the elderly.
- Shake hands, embrace, and kiss when meeting.
- Punctuality *not* a must.
- Prior appointments are not necessary, but appreciated.
- Extremely hospitable, warm, and demonstrative.
- If you admire an article, he/she may give it to you.
- Main meal of day served at noon.

- Smiles when happy, but also when very angry.
- Signals “no” with uptilted chin and raised eyebrows.
- Good topics: sports, music, politics, Greek culture.
- Bad topics: Cyprus, Turkey, American political intrusions.

m. **Hungarians.**

- Customary greeting the handshake.
- Socialist country, socialist beliefs.
- Self-deprecating when complimented.
- “To your health” is a common toast before sipping wine.
- “Good appetite” the customary phrase before eating.
- Good topics: food, wine, history.
- Bad topics: political party membership or religion.

n. **Icelanders.**

- Use first names among their own countrymen.
- Expect foreigners to use last names.
- Language: Icelandic (oldest living language in Europe)
- Punctuality not required.
- Customarily bring a small gift to a hostess.
- Service charges included on bills, so they don’t tip.
- Political ties to Denmark.
- Fishing industry predominates.
- Good topics: absence of crime, history, and culture.
- Bad topics: weather and social problems

o. **Irish.**

- Not overly conscious about time and punctuality.
- Giving business gifts is not a common practice.
- English spoken liberally; Gaelic infrequently.
- Avoid discussion of religion or politics.
- Divided country.
- Strong emotional ties to the United States.
- Irish tell British jokes and vice versa.
- Jolly, warm temperament.
- Refusing a drink or failing to buy your round is bad.
- Other ways to offend the Irish: unkindness, be pro-British.
- Good topics: beauty of the country, culture, sports, weather.

p. **Israelis.**

- More formal than the United States, but less than Europe.
- Shake hands when meeting and leaving.
- Usual spoken greeting is *shalom*, for departures, too.
- Titles are less important than in America.

- Saturday is the Sabbath to Orthodox Jews.
- Sabbath actually begins on Friday at sunset.
- Punctuality appreciated.
- Flowers and books are appreciated as gifts.
- Strong attachments to the United States.
- Sensitive conversation subjects: U.S. aid, West Bank situation, depressed economy.
- Good topics: culture, history, religion.

q. **Italians.**

- Demonstrative and emotional by American standards.
- Use strong and frequent hand and body gestures.
- May shake hands accompanied by grasping the elbow.
- Men who are good friends will also embrace and pat backs.
- Titles are common among university graduates.
- Don't use first names until well acquainted.
- Punctuality not a virtue, at least for social events.
- Normally the big meal of the day at midday.
- Don't use bread plates; they break rolls next to the plate.
- Exchanging business gifts common among business people.
- Don't talk business at a social event.
- Good topics: world events, soccer, family.
- Bad topics: Mafia, politics, religion, taxes.

r. **Luxembourgers.**

- Appreciate being recognized for own achievements.
- "Benelux" refers to: Belgium, Netherlands, Luxembourg.
- Handshaking the customary greeting.
- Good friends kiss cheeks, one on each side.
- Punctuality important.
- Speak both French and German.
- National language Luxembourgish.
- Good topics: history, national independence.
- Bad topics: anti-Catholic issues, internal politics.

s. **Norwegians.**

- Strong on punctuality and precision.
- More restrictive in using first names than Americans.
- May refer to you by your last name only.
- "Designated driver" originated in Norway due to harsh driving-while-intoxicated laws.
- Proud of history and culture.
- May consider Americans and both glib and too casual.
- Dislike being lumped with Swedes and Danes, but accept it.
- Normally bring gifts to a hostess.
- "Skoal" the customary toast.
- Good topics: winter sports, hobbies, Viking heritage.

- Bad topics: employment, salary, social status.

t. **Polish.**

- First names used by close friends only.
- Men may kiss a woman's hand when greeting and departing.
- Usually bring flowers to a hostess.
- Chewing gum while conversing impolite.
- Don't use first names until invited to do so.
- Toasting often done at both formal and informal dinners.
- Cognac a popular drink.
- Proud of their history and culture.
- May know much about the United States from relatives here.
- Catholic religion practiced extensively.
- Good topics: national history, culture, solidarity movement.
- Bad topics: past linkages with U.S.S.R and Germany.

u. **Portuguese.**

- Customarily men embrace and slap backs.
- For women, a kiss on both cheeks is customary.
- Do not use extensive gestures like Spanish neighbors.
- Promptness appreciated.
- Discussing business at lunch O.K., but not at a dinner.
- Instead of business gift giving, dinner invitations prevail.
- Good topics: family, history, personal interests.
- Bad topics: politics and government.

v. **Romanians.**

- Handshaking the customary greeting, done often.
- A very punctual society.
- First names used only among very close friends.
- Curious about Americans; may ask how much you earn.
- Enjoy entertaining by invitations to dinner.
- Good gifts: quality pens, lighters, perfume, coffee.
- Good topics: sports, travel, music, fashion, books.
- Bad topics: attitudes toward Soviet Union, communism, economy.

w. **Russians.**

- *Glasnost* (new openness) on every Russian's mind.
- Same with *perestroika*, the restructuring of the economy.
- They want to know what Americans *really* think.
- When greeting, Russians shake hands and announce their name.
- Among friends, the "bear hug" and cheek kissing are common.
- Good gifts: jeans, quality pens, music albums, books.
- Many speak at least some English.

- Chief topic of conversation: peace.

x. **Spanish.**

- Main meal between 1:30 and 4:30.
- Known for dining very late at night: 10:00 or later.
- Close male friends exchange an *abrazo*, or hug.
- Women friends greet and part with slight embrace.
- Punctuality only important when attending a bullfight.
- Prefer much small talk before getting down to business.
- Dahlias (and chrysanthemums) associated with death.
- Mr. Lopez-Cardenas addressed as Mr. Lopez.
- May interrupt you, but that's eagerness not rudeness.
- Good topics: sports, travel, history, politics.
- Bad topics: dislike of bullfighting, religion, family, job.

y. **Swedes.**

- Handshaking common; touching and backslapping uncommon.
- Appreciate awareness of differences with Danes, Norwegians.
- Punctuality a must but the business pace is not rushed.
- May seem stiff and overly serious at first.
- Compliments often denied--don't blow your own horn.
- Toasting is common at meals--look in eyes and say "Skoal".
- Proud of social advancements, their history and culture.
- Take great joy in nature.
- Pride taken in Viking heritage.
- Good topics: Sweden's high standard of living, sports.
- Bad topics: high taxation, neutrality during World War II.

z. **Swiss.**

- Trilingual: Swiss/German, French, Italian.
- English spoken freely, especially by businesspeople.
- Tri-cultural: distinct German, French, and Italian influences.
- Provinces known as "cantons."
- Proud of independence, high standard of living, history.
- Punctuality and overall courtesy highly valued.
- Conservative and dislike displays of wealth.
- Virtually every male serves in the military defense force.
- Impersonal gifts like flowers and candy popular.
- Common toast is simply "To your health."
- Good topics: sports, Swiss heritage, travel, politics.
- Bad topics: Questions about age, job, family, diet.

aa. **Turkish.**

- Conservative in dress.
- Make appointments well in advance and be punctual.
- Most businesspeople speak English, French, or German.
- Business meetings begin with extensive small talk.
- Turkish hospitality generous, sincere, sometimes almost overwhelming.
- Consider a casual “We must have lunch” as sincere and real.
- To say “no,” raises chin, shuts eyes, and tilts head backward.
- Most common form of entertainment restaurant dining.
- Good topics: families, professions, hobbies.
- Bad topics: politics, communism, the Cyprus-Greece conflict.

2-4. AFRICA. It is first important to recognize there are three subdivisions of this continent: South Africa, the black African countries, and the northern nations that are generally grouped around the Mediterranean Sea. As for protocol and etiquette, the northern African nations follow Arabic or Muslim customs, while the middle nations are oriented to black multi-cultures, and south Africa has Dutch, English, and tribal black African influences.

In the Muslim portion, where the Muslim religion is practiced, there are several extremely important customs that apply throughout that region. To learn what they are, jump ahead to the section on the Middle East, (p. 2-13).

a. **Algerians**

- Handshaking common, on both meeting and leaving.
- Cheek kissing (both cheeks) done among close friends.
- First names not used in business discussions.
- Professional titles widely used.
- Punctuality somewhat relaxed.
- Business discussions begin with small talk.
- Small gifts may be exchanged during second business visits.
- Good topics: industrialization and agrarian reforms.
- Bad topics: politics and economic problems.

b. **Egyptians**

- Normal workweek Saturday through Thursday.
- In the Muslim world, Friday is the day of rest.
- Friendship and trust come before any business relationship.
- Social engagements usually held late in the day.
- Good topics: history, national advancements, antiquity.
- Bad topics: Mid-East politics.

c. **Ghanaians**

- Notable for having diverse ethnic groups within the country.
- Difficult to pinpoint specific, common customs.

- Shaking hands the common form of greeting.
- Probably observe Western rules for punctuality, but at home, punctuality very relaxed.
- Avoid gestures with the left hand.

d. Ivory Coast

- Official name *Cote d'Ivoire*.
- A former French colony, with that influence.
- Traditional handshaking the custom.
- Official language French, but English very common.
- Make appointments well in advance; be punctual but don't be surprised if your guest is not punctual.
- Good topics: achievements, history, culture.
- Bad topics: politics, inefficiency of industries.

e. Kenyans

- Call them "KEN-yans" not "KEEN-yans."
- Swahili the most common language, but English well known.
- As a former English colony, many English traits common.
- Shake hands at greetings and departures.
- Flowers usually express condolences.
- Good topics: Kenyan track stars, history, culture, wildlife.
- Bad topics: British occupation period, Mau-Mau period.

f. Libyans

- Economy almost entirely state-controlled.
- Political relationship with West very tense, even warlike.
- Strong militaristic and religious attitudes.
- In all other respects, Libyans are like other Mid-Easterners.

g. Moroccans

- Shaking hands customary.
- Good friends--male and female--kiss cheeks.
- Punctuality relaxed.
- Admire and object and you may receive it as a gift.
- Good topics: history, culture.
- Bad topics: Mid-East tension, religious zeal.

h. Mozambiquens

- First names rarely used.
- Professional titles should be used.
- Good topics: history, culture.
- Bad topics: politics, regional disputes.

i. Nigerians

- Important to recognize variety of customs and cultures.
- Diverse life-styles.
- Avoid discussing religion.
- O.K. to discuss African politics.

j. Senegalese

- Shake hands when introduced.
- Relaxed attitude toward punctuality.
- Muslim practices common.
- Good topics: national achievements, and culture.
- Bad topics: politics, religion, government leaders.

k. South Africans

- White culture (17 percent of the population) derived from Dutch/English settlers.
- Proud of accomplishments.
- Whites sensitive and defensive about apartheid.
- Punctuality expected.
- Proud of role as a world source for essential minerals.
- Almost all speak English, but Afrikaans official language.
- Majority population black, with many tribal languages.
- Good topics: all sports, natural beauties and resources of South Africa.
- Bad topics: racial unrest, boycotts.

l. Tanzanians

- Shaking hands the prevailing custom for greeting.
- Small gifts often exchanged in business situations.
- Good topics: Tanzanian parks, African culture.
- Bad topics: politics.

m. Ugandans

- Punctuality important.
- Handshaking common.
- Guests will probably bring small gifts for a hostess.
- Most topics can be discussed freely.
- Most common topics: world affairs and arts.

n. Zambians

- Shaking hands with the left supporting the right common.
- Use courtesy or professional titles.
- When dining, Zambians may ask for food; it is impolite not to.
- Improper to refuse food.
- Gifts should not be given to government officials.

- For others, small gifts of modest value acceptable.
- Avoid discussing Zambian politics or economic problems but O.K. to discuss international politics.

2-5. THE MIDDLE EAST. There are certain, extremely important customs you should learn regarding this intriguing part of the world. They include:

- Devout Muslims never drink alcohol and dietary rules are important.
- Eat only with the right hand because the left hand is used for bodily hygiene and considered “unclean.” (When handing out business cards or giving business gifts it is best to use only the right hand.)
- Women usually have second-class status. Muslim men are embarrassed when women cross their legs or show off their bodies in any way.
- Middle Easterners are more of a touching culture, meaning they will stand closer than Americans are accustomed, touch arms, and even hold hands for short periods.
- They are generous and may bring you expensive gifts.
- Take care about admiring possessions like, say, a briefcase because your guest may immediately insist that you accept it as a gift.
- Middle Easterners may also toy with small sets of beads, which are *not* like a Catholic rosary, but instead are “worry beads.” In other words, they are a form of relaxation and therapy, nothing more.
- In many Middle Eastern countries, the business work week ends on a Thursday, with Friday being the day of rest. Business affairs then resume on Saturday.
- A devout Muslim is required to pray five times daily: sunrise, three times during the day, and at sunset. They must face Mecca while praying. Often they are given dispensations when traveling abroad, but you might discretely inquire if they would like times set aside for personal prayers. If they say yes, then arrange for a quiet, private room and politely indicate which direction is East.
- Many Middle-Easterners will frequently say, “God willing” or as it is said in Arabic, *Inshallah*. In our parlance, this is comparable to say, “Well, I hope so.” And therefore it is used often.
- It is impolite to sit in any position where you might show the sole of your shoe to your guest.

a. Gulf Residents

- Unofficial designation; refers to five separate states: Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, and United Arab Emirates.
- Important to know political and cultural differences of each.
- Customary greeting is *salaam alaykum*.
- Shaking hands and saying *kaif halak* comes next.
- A touching society, so be prepared.
- Punctuality important.
- Live on the “Arabian Gulf” not the “Persian Gulf.”
- Good topics: horses, falcons, families.
- Bad topics: politics, religion, male-oriented society.

b. Iran

- Handshaking and slight bow is the customary greeting.
- Divided into “anti-West” and pro-West.”
- Most who visit United States in “pro-West” category.

- Farsi is the official language.
- Most are devout and far right Muslims.
- West-oriented businesspeople good negotiators.
- Good topics: ancient history and culture.
- Bad topics: current unrest and antipathy to United States.

c. **Iraq**

- Greetings are similar to other Mid-East nations.
- Punctuality flexible.
- When entertained, alcohol more common.
- Good topics: ancient history and culture of Iraq.
- Bad topics: Iran-Iraq war, Persian Gulf war, politics.

d. **Jordan**

- Greetings a mixture of Western and Middle-Eastern.
- Usually bring warm feelings for America.
- May refuse invitations twice before accepting.
- Dislike high-pressure business techniques.
- Punctuality relaxed.
- Good topics: history, culture, families, the King.
- Bad topics: relationships with Israel, other politics.

e. **Lebanese**

- Punctuality not especially important.
- About half are Christian, and half Muslim.
- Descended from early world traders: the Phoenicians.
- Will probably want to talk business only after a meal.
- Hospitality an unspoken rule among Lebanese.
- English, French, and Arabic the common languages.
- Before the civil wars, they were the Swiss of the Mid-East.
- Good topics: business, children, education.
- Bad topics: politics, religion, sex, Israeli relations.

f. **Saudi Arabians**

- Greetings can be elaborate.
- Handshaking may be accompanied by touching arm or shoulder.
- After several visits, men may even embrace in greeting.
- Enjoy giving luxury gifts.
- Are usually the strictest about religion and dietary rules.
- Men bring wives to the United States but they're unseen in Saudi.
- Like to develop long, close business friendships.
- Dislike U.S. business custom of changing sales/marketing representatives.
- Dislike dogs as household pets.

- Good topics: history, culture, respect for Islamic faith.
- Bad topics: any blasphemy, Israel, role of women, blue jokes.

g. Syria

- Handshaking and embracing common greetings.
- Women friends kiss cheeks
- Relaxes about punctuality.
- Appreciate respect for their history and culture.
- Avoid conversations on Mid-East politics and alignments.

h. United Arab Emirates

- A country comprised of seven sheikdoms: Abu Dhabi, Dubai, Sharjah, Ras al-Khaimah, Alman, Umm al-Qaiwain, and Fujairah.
- Important to recognize each leaders.
- Customs and protocol similar to other Mid-East countries.

2-6. THE PACIFIC AND ASIA. This is one of the most diverse regions of the world, however there are still some generalizations that withstand the test of diversity. Here are a few of them:

- Style is often equal to, or more important than substance. This is especially true in Japan, but also among all the others there is an exquisite sense of politeness and patience. The role of personal friendships cannot be overemphasized. Losing face, which in American terms simply means to be embarrassed, is another taboo. Do nothing that might possibly embarrass your Oriental guest.
- English is either spoken or being studied in every country in the Asian crescent. They are diligently learning American customs and protocol, so be prepared to run into a sometimes surprising overlapping of behavior. For example, the Japanese normally give what we would consider a mild, even weak handshake because to grip firmly is considered aggressive in their culture. However, the Japanese have become eager learners and are adopting Western ways. Consequently, you might find some Japanese who give handshakes so vigorous you'll think you're on some American used-car lot.

a. Australians

- Called by some "Chicagoians with an accent."
- Warm, friendly, and informal.
- Firm handshakes prevail.
- Speak frankly and directly; they dislike pretensions.
- Dislike class structure and distinctions. Example: If alone, may sit in front with the taxi driver.
- Value close personal friendships.
- Use the word "Mate" often.
- Know much about the United States but feel we know little of them.
- Will not shy away from disagreement.
- Appreciate punctuality.
- Have good sense of humor, even in tense situations.

b. Bangladesh

- Men shake hands, but women merely nod.
- Hindus, in the minority, greet with palms held in prayer.
- Most businesspeople speak English
- Punctuality highly regarded.
- Originally part of Pakistan.
- Heavily Muslim.
- Use the right hand for eating.
- The “thumbs up” gesture is considered rude.
- In conversation, avoid criticizing the country or government.
- Business travelers enjoy talking about travel and professions

c. Chinese --(People’s Republic of China)

- In China when meeting, a nod or bow may be sufficient, however, here they may offer their hand for handshaking.
- Seniority and rank both very important when hosting.
- Dual-language business cards recommended.
- Usually have three names: first one is the family name.
- May ask very personal questions: income, value of your home.
- Have difficulty giving a "no" response.
- Any type of touching uncommon--hugging, back-patting.
- Toasting common, as is applauding even simplest acts.
- Among businesspeople, personal relationships important.
- Gifts should be kept modest, or give one gift to a group.
- Avoid talking about Taiwan.
- Good topics: history, culture, family, progress in China.
- Bad topics: cultural revolution, sex, wealth, politics.

d. Chinese (Hong Kong)

- Largest free market in the world, it reverts to China in 1997.
- Strong British influence because of 100-year-rule.
- English spoken by all businesspeople.
- Handshaking is the customary greeting.
- Chinese may have three names; first one the family name.
- Some Chinese have adopted Western first names.
- Politeness, humility, and grace appreciated and respected.
- Do nothing to cause embarrassment.
- Not a touching society, so avoid hugs or holding arms.
- Winking or beckoning with the index finger considered rude.
- Good topics: food, families, hobbies, travel.
- Bad topics: politics on mainland China and the 1997 takeover, although these are difficult to avoid.

e. **Chinese (Taiwanese or Republic of China)**

- Taiwan a province of the mainland before 1949 revolution.
- Inhabited by Nationalist Chinese.
- Refer to the “other” China as “Mainland China.”
- Very friendly to Westerners and most speak English.
- Dual-language business cards are frequently exchanged.
- Most businesspeople have adopted English surnames.
- Patience, humility, and respect are highly valued traits.
- Close personal friendships valued in business.
- Toasting common and “Kam-pie” means “bottoms up.”
- Gift giving is common, and they may present expensive gifts.
- Good topics: Chinese antiquities stored in Taiwan, food, and art.
- Bad topics: politics, trade friction, smuggling.

f. **Fijians**

- Greet one another with a smile and raised eyebrows.
- But handshaking common with all others.
- “Respectful friendliness” goes a long way, say Fijians.
- Punctuality respected but the pace of life is slower there.
- Good topics: personal experiences, culture, history.
- Bad topics: displays of intellect frowned upon.

g. **Filipinos (The Philippines)**

- Handshaking common with maybe even a pat on the back.
- English the language of business, government, education.
- American practices prevail in business and when hosting.
- May send a small gift to a hostess following a dinner.
- Easy to entertain, they smile, are warm and friendly.
- May have anti-American feelings.
- Good topics: family, culture, history, business.
- Bad topics: politics, religion, corruption, foreign aid.

h. **Indians**

- Men shake hands with one another.
- When greeting a woman, put palms together and bow slightly.
- Hindus do not eat beef and cow is a sacred animal.
- Great respect shown elders.
- Muslims usually follow their strict dietary rules.
- Orthodox Sikhs wear a turban, do not smoke, or eat beef.
- Use your right hand for passing food.
- Many British colonial customs still prevail.
- Good topics: culture, tradition, other people, and travel.
- Bad topics: personal matters, poverty, foreign aid.

i. Indonesians

- Handshaking and a nod of the head customary greetings.
- Punctuality important.
- Respect for the individual a trait of their society.
- Business dealings may be long and slow by U.S. standards.
- Impolite to refuse a gift.
- Good topics: history, culture, tradition.
- Bad topics: local politics, socialism, and foreign aid.

j. Japanese

- Adopting Western customs quickly.
- Pleasing to them when a host exhibits their protocol.
- Business cards exchanged before bowing or handshaking.
- A bow the traditional greeting; the lower the better.
- Handshaking common, but it may seem like a weak grip.
- Impolite to have long or frequent eye-to-eye contact.
- First names rarely used.
- The personal side of business extremely important.
- Style just as important as substance.
- Patience, politeness, and humility great virtues.
- Gift giving ingrained in the culture; be prepared.
- Phrase questions so they can be answered with “yes.”
- Harmony important, so the word “no” is shunned.
- Good topics: history, culture, art.
- Bad topics: avoid discussing World War II; anything that will embarrass.

k. Malaysians

- Either “Malaysians” or “Malays” correct.
- Predominant ethnic group Malay, then Chinese and Indian.
- Handshaking common when they visit the West.
- Among themselves, they hold palms outward and touch fingers.
- English commonly spoken but second to Malaysian.
- Touching uncommon, especially the top of one’s head.
- Never beckon someone with the curled index finger.
- Use the right hand to eat, touch people, or things.
- Don’t clear your throat or blow your nose while dining.
- In business, decision-making slow.
- Good topic your guest’s business or social achievements.
- Bad topic: comparing standards of living with the West.

l. New Zealanders

- Handshaking the customary greeting.
- Formality may rule at first, but then ease off.
- Make good guests because they are frank yet friendly.

- Dislike being identified as being Australians.
- Loud speech considered rude and irritating.
- Napkins called serviettes; a napkin is a diaper.
- Rank in business minimized; they prefer equality.
- Good topics: rugby, cricket--anything about New Zealand.
- Bad topics: personal questions, religion, nuclear energy.

m. Pakistanis

- The common greeting a handshake, though close friends may hug.
- Men usually do not shake hands with or touch women.
- Refrain from using first names, until invited.
- Islamic code of conduct prevails.
- English common but Urdu is the major language.
- Names complicated, so study carefully or simply ask.
- Staring fairly common in this culture.
- Showing the soles of your shoes is a rude gesture.
- Good topics: culture, history and Pakistani crafts.
- Bad topics: criticizing Islam, discussing India or Israel.

n. Samoans

- Before business meetings, formal greetings exchanged.
- Samoans can be very eloquent.
- Exchanging gifts common.
- Avoid pointing your legs towards the center of the room.
- Good topics: culture and history.
- Bad topics: American aid and political dominance.

o. Singaporeans

- Western-style handshaking the custom.
- Business cards presented respectfully with two hands.
- Take special care with name pronunciations.
- Punctuality prized.
- All speak English even though the heritage Chinese.
- Pride taken in being practical, straight and to the point.
- Unlike the Japanese, gift-giving uncommon in business.
- Business lunches can be long and informal.
- Unlike other Asian countries, power breakfasts common.
- Blunt questions may be asked, such as "How much do you earn?"
- Virtually a nonsmoking society.
- American negotiating methods considered pushy.
- Women treated as equals in business.
- Good topics: clean, economically healthy country.
- Bad topics: being disrespectful over the country's size.

p. **South Koreans**

- Men bow slightly and shake hands, sometimes with two hands.
- Women refrain from shaking hands.
- Family names come first, then the surname.
- The open mouth considered rude; cover it when laughing.
- Impolite to blow your nose in public.
- Women play secondary roles in their society.
- Patience, humility, and respect for age are important traits.
- Business entertainment important and extensive.
- Solo or group singing a tradition after dinner.
- Called “The Irishmen of the Oriental world.”
- Good topics: culture, history, the successful Olympic Games.
- Bad topics: political unrest, secondary role of women.

q. **Sri Lankans**

- Handshaking the common form of greeting.
- Punctuality respected.
- Tea is the national drink.
- Country originally called Ceylon; now pronounced “SHREE-lanka.”
- Different castes have different religious restrictions.
- Predominant ethnic group--the Sinhalese (Buddhists).
- Minority group--the Tamils (Hindus).
- Smoking during introductions considered impolite.
- English commonly spoken.
- The left hand considered unclean.
- Nodding your head means “no”; shaking it means “yes.”
- Good topics: hobbies, families, schools, history, culture.
- Bad topics: ethnic frictions, caste system, religion, sex.

r. **Thais (Thailand)**

- Putting palms in a prayer position is the Thai greeting.
- In the West, Thais will adopt the handshake.
- First names used frequently.
- You may be addressed as “Mr. Bob” or “Mr. Tom.”
- Displays of both temper and affection in public are bad.
- Western humor and sarcasm often misunderstood.
- Be patient. Businesspeople take a long time to decide.
- Never point to anything using your foot, or show your sole.
- Don’t pat a Thai on the head.
- Good topics: culture, history, Thai food.
- Bad topics: criticizing politics, the Royal Family, or religion.

2-7. **CENTRAL AND SOUTH AMERICA.** The first rule when entertaining Latinos is to recognize that there are some 40 different countries south of the Rio Grande River. This means there are important

and distinct differences within this major region of the world. But there are also some common habits and similarities, so let's begin with them:

- All of them speak Spanish, except in Brazil where the national language is Portuguese.
- In all Latin countries, the attitude toward time is less rigid than among North Americans and a 30 minute delay should not be a surprise. In fact, among close associates, it is recommended that, when setting times for appointments or pick-ups, ask "*la hor inglesa, o la horu espanol?*" This means "the English hour" (meaning "Promptly at the time specified?") or the Latin hour" (meaning "If I say 7 o'clock, don't be surprised if I don't show up until 7:30 or even later").
- Latinos will usually stand closer together during conversations, so be prepared for that plus casual touching and, of course, the *abrazo*, or embrace, among good friends. You may even be startled to have a Latin businessman hold your elbow while conversing, or walk down the street arm-in-arm.
- The main meal of the day is usually taken at midday throughout all Latin American countries. However, this should not deter you from also hosting your business guests over dinner in the evening. Most Latin businesspeople know about American dining customs and, indeed, in their own country will entertain in the evening at a restaurant for special occasions. When toasting, the host customarily is expected to make the first toast with the guest then probably responding.

a. **Argentines**

- Handshaking common when meeting for the first time.
- Titles important.
- Italian and German the second and third languages.
- Strong Italian, German, British, and Spanish heritage.
- Tender beef and red wine virtual national symbols.
- American beef and red wine compare poorly to theirs.
- Long meals and conversation the norm.
- Crossing the knife and fork signal "I am finished."
- Never pour wine back-handed; it's considered impolite.
- Good topics: soccer, history, culture, home and children.
- Bad topics: the Peron years, religion, Falkland Islands conflict.

b. **Belizeans**

- Formerly British Honduras, now Belize.
- Handshaking customary.
- An exception: Punctuality practiced in business.
- English the official language but Spanish common.
- Titles important.
- Refusing food considered impolite.
- Pushing the plate forward indicates "I am finished."
- Good topics: Mayan culture, coral reefs and jungle in Belize.
- Bad topics: religion, politics and race.

c. **Bolivians**

- Shaking hands the customary greeting.
- Direct eye-contact important during conversations.

- Titles important.
- Midday the time for the main meal.
- Tea and cakes common around 4:00 and repeated at 9:00.
- When a full evening meal is taken, it may be around 9:00.
- Bolivia has the highest everything: airport, lake, and capital.
- Good topics: auto racing, soccer, families and food.
- Bad topics: poverty, Chile, and other political subjects.

d. **Brazilians**

- Handshaking, often for a long time, is common.
- Share hands for hello and good-bye; use good eye contact.
- Touching arms and elbows and backs are common.
- First names used often, but titles important.
- Music and long, animated conversations are favorite habits.
- When conversing, interruptions viewed as enthusiasm.
- Enjoy joking, informality, and friendships.
- The “O.K.” hand-signal a rude gesture in Brazil.
- Midday the normal time for the main meal.
- A light meal common at night, unless entertaining formally.
- American coffee is a mere shadow of Brazilian coffee.
- In Brazil, restaurant entertainment prevails versus at home.
- Good topics: politics, soccer, family, and children.
- Bad topics: Argentina, politics, poverty, religion.

e. **Chileans**

- With first introductions, a handshake is the custom.
- Close friends will hug and rub cheeks.
- In business, punctuality respected.
- Light conversation customary before business discussions.
- Men customarily wear suits and ties for social events.
- Don’t serve wine with your left hand.
- Wines, especially white wines, a national pride.
- Women have advanced in the professions in Chile.
- Good topics: families, children, Easter Island, history.
- Bad topics: politics, human rights, 1988 grape export scare.

f. **Colombians**

- Handshaking the customary greeting in business.
- Among friends, expect the *abrazo*.
- Punctuality relaxed.
- Business people prefer relaxed conversation before business.
- Titles are respected.
- People with university degrees can be called “Doctor.”
- Impolite to yawn in public.
- Bullfighting popular; don’t make negative comments.

- Good topics: history, culture, soccer, coffee, gold museum.
- Bad topics: drug traffic, politics, religion.

g. Costa Ricans

- Handshaking the common greeting.
- *Abrazos* not as common as in other Latin countries.
- Titles important and respected.
- Call themselves *Ticos* (TEE-kos)
- Gifts frequently exchanged on special occasions.
- Politics freely discussed because of stability there.
- Businesspeople are more formal and serious than other Latins.
- Women active in business.
- Good topics: children, history, art.
- Bad topics: any personal criticism, religion.

h. Ecuadorians

- Handshaking common when arriving and when leaving.
- Men friends will embrace and women friends kiss.
- Relations with neighbor Peru have always been strained.
- A girl's fifteenth birthday extremely important.
- Midday the customary time for the main meal.
- A famous part of Ecuador is the Galapagos Islands.
- Good topics: family, culture, history.
- Bad topics: politics, U.S. political influence.

i. El Salvadorians

- Handshaking the usual form of greeting.
- Some people merely nod when meeting.
- Titles, especially among the elderly, very important.
- Touching more common here than in the United States.
- Some will insist they are "Americans" as well.
- Small gifts often exchanged.
- Good topics: history, geography, culture, families.
- Bad topics: local politics, religion.

j. Guatemalans

- Shaking hands and saying "mucho gusto" very proper.
- Handshake may seem limp, which is customary.
- Close friends embrace and pat each other's back.
- Titles very important.
- The Indian culture exists here more than elsewhere.
- Speaking softly considered the polite thing to do.
- Male guests sit to the right of the host; women to the left.
- Business people usually punctual.

- Social conversation before business the custom.
- Business discussed at lunch and even breakfast.
- Good topics: Guatemalan geography, history, culture.
- Bad topics: politics or “the violence” since 1978.

k. **Hondurans**

- Handshaking the custom.
- Close acquaintances often greet with a hearty hug.
- *Machismo*—the idea that men are superior—prevails.
- Titles and family names used rather than first names.
- Hondurans are known for their gracious hospitality.
- Gifts are not necessary, but token ones for women are nice.
- Good topics: Honduran history, culture, families.
- Bad topics: Current unrest and internal politics.

l. **Mexicans**

- Handshaking the custom.
- Longtime friends may embrace; women kiss the cheek.
- Punctuality not rigid.
- The midday meal the main one, taken about 1:00 to 4:00.
- Purple the color of death.
- Mexicans tire of hearing jokes about “Montezuma’s revenge.”
- Refrain from using first names until invited to do so.
- Titles important.
- Hands on hips suggest aggressiveness.
- Hands in pocket impolite.
- Mexicans refer to people from the United States as North Americans.
- While there is pride in Indian Ancestry, don’t dwell on it.
- Good topics: Mexican culture, history, art, museums.
- Bad topics: Illegal aliens, earthquakes, poverty.

m. **Nicaraguans**

- When greeting, smile, shake hands, and use a Spanish phrase.
- The concept of *machismo* prevails.
- Dinner guests may bring small gifts, like flowers or candy.
- Approach politics warily; the country is split.
- There is a long, long history of unrest and disruption.
- Many respect and love the United States, others see us as an enemy.
- Good topics: family, history, culture.
- Bad topics: poverty, politics, religion.

n. **Panamanians**

- Handshaking the custom. Old friends embrace.
- Titles important.

- Spanish the official language but English very common.
- In business, conversations begin with much small talk.
- Panamanian women taking more and more managerial jobs.
- Gifts normally not exchanged when entertaining.
- The host sits at the head of the table opposite the guest.
- Good topics: family, hobbies, basketball, baseball.
- Bad topics: former Canal Zone, race problems, politics.

o. Paraguayans

- Handshakes and “mucho gusto” the custom.
- Good friends embrace: women kiss cheeks.
- Close friends may walk arm-in-arm.
- People stand close together when having conversations.
- Titles important to remember and use.
- Don’t eat many vegetables.
- In business, decision-making may be a slow process.
- Good topics: family, sports, current events.
- Bad topics: local politics.

p. Peruvians

- Handshaking at greeting and parting customary.
- Embracing (*abrazo*) common among good friends.
- Titles important.
- The main meal of the day usually at midday.
- Tend to be more formal and conservative.
- Great pride in the Inca and Spanish heritage.
- The ruins at Machu Picchu are a national treasure.
- A gift of flowers is appropriate for any occasion.
- Only a bullfight requires absolute punctuality.
- Dinner often taken after 9:00 p.m.
- It is polite, in Peru, to arrive 30 minutes late for dinner.
- Politeness requires eating everything on the plate.
- Good topics: families, culture, geography--a wide variety.
- Bad topics: politics, religion, racial prejudices.

q. Uruguayans

- Handshaking the usual way of greeting.
- First names used only among close friends.
- Titles important.
- Meetings tend to be formal but rarely start on time.
- Guests often send flowers or candy to a hostess.
- A European culture has been inherited here.
- Spanish the official language.
- Beef common fare for all meals in Uruguay.
- Good topics: history, culture, all sports—especially soccer.

- Bad topics: politics and Communism.

r. **Venezuelans**

- Handshaking by both sexes common and customary.
- Good friends hug and women kiss cheeks.
- People tend to stand very close together with conversing.
- Businesspeople punctual and small talk minimal.
- Titles important.
- Guests may bring or send flowers or candy to a hostess.
- The orchid is the national flower.
- In their country, guests rarely sit at the head of the table.
- Good topics: business, art, literature, history.
- Bad topics: local unrest, inflation, politics.

2-8. THE CARIBBEAN. The Caribbean is a polyglot of races, languages and cultures. It consists of independent countries as well as territories. Political associations range from Great Britain, to Holland, to France to the United States. It is therefore difficult to offer substantive tips about each and every country. James Michener's book, *Caribbean*, is an excellent resource in this area.

Following are some general comments on greetings, protocol and conversation, followed by specifics on Haitians and Puerto Ricans.

a. **General Comments about Residents of the Caribbean**

- The handshake is the common and customary form of greeting.
- English prevails but Spanish, French and Dutch are found.
- Table manners are informal.
- A more relaxed pace is practiced compared to the United States.
- Punctuality is not closely adhered to in this region.
- Business often begins with extended social conversation.
- Exchanging of gifts is not required or customary.
- Business cards are always important and used extensively.
- The main meal of the day is generally taken at midday.
- Good topics: weather, tourist business, economy.
- Bad topics: local politics, religion, racial conflicts.

b. **Haitians**

- Handshaking the customary greeting.
- French and the Creole dialect commonly spoken.
- Casualness and informality prevail.
- Per capita, the poorest nation in the Hemisphere.
- Good topics: food, local art, weather, culture.
- Bad topics: local politics, refugees in America.

CHAPTER 3

FROM THE INTERNATIONAL MILITARY STUDENT'S PERSPECTIVE

An international military student who attended schooling in the United States wrote the following. Although suffering from grammatical errors, problems in construction, and other slight irritants, the information is interesting reading for anyone dealing with foreign students.

3-1. BACKGROUND. The International Military Student arrives in the U.S. Army school system to attend a course which is to further his military education and enhance his military skills. When he arrives he is normally very keen to study. However, he is very ignorant of the society he is going to live in and may even be encumbered with personal problems, social or religious differences, political prejudices and a psychological uncertainty of what the future holds. Being unfamiliar with the society he is living with, he will often become an introvert, stifle difficulties and fears, and count the days when he can return home.

3-2. THE CULTURAL SHOCK The vast differences and values of the American way of life from that of any other country and even more so with that of the developing countries of Asia, Africa, and South America are facts that need not be debated here. There are sufficient anthropological, cultural and economic data to reflect them. Arrival in a foreign country often causes a cautious and apprehensive attitude in the International Military Student. This may be further accelerated if he is unaccompanied.

3-3. LANGUAGE. His limited vocabulary and comprehension of the English language, coupled with ignorance of American idioms, expressions and accent, are going to dismay him from the time of his arrival. Immigration, customs, liaison with other government officials as well as American civilians may find it difficult to communicate with him. A guessing game, aggravated by limited patience, will erode cordiality on both parties. However, these initial experiences are not only going to be vivid memories henceforth, but will be the seeds of despair that are now germinating in him. His fears that he brought with him prior to his departure from his home country are being reinforced from the time of arrival in the United States of America.

His poor language proficiency will be a handicap for him in other transactions as well, e.g., at the commissary, at the post office or in the classroom. He will find his difficulties insurmountable and will slowly withdraw into his "shell" so as to try and establish some confidence in himself. He will probably seek companionship with other International Military Students experiencing similar difficulties.

3-4. SOCIAL CUSTOMS. The International Military Student often comes from a different cultural background. He may be ignorant or have limited knowledge of the American culture. Coming from a developing country that may not condone the fashions and casual fraternizing with the opposite sex, he would often react negatively. He will feel ill at ease when talking casually to women. His "rustic" mannerisms may also be an embarrassment to others, and they may show their surprise or snobbery unwittingly in front of him. All this will add to his sociological immoderacies and make him more miserable.

3-5. FOOD

Every country has its own national dishes. The sudden exposure to hamburgers, hot-dogs, and other American food may be a traumatic experience. The International Military Student who has received some kind of briefing from his own Army may be better off in that he may bring along his own spices or other additives that are used in preparing his native dishes. However, the average International Military

Student does not come so well prepared and thus has to contend with unfamiliar American food that further aggravates his social adjustments.

3-6. LONELINESS. This is one of the biggest problems of the International Military Student. Jet travel has changed his mini-society of family, relatives and native friends, to that of an American "BOQ" kind of society. He is suddenly deprived of the use of his own language, music, and the sight of fauna and flora. He is even forced to think in a foreign language, i.e., the American language (since thoughts are formed before verbal expression), listen to American music and experience other facets of the American society. He has hardly anyone to turn to discuss anything confidentially, and even if there is, the lack of language proficiency is a major obstacle.

This problem is even further aggravated during week-ends when he is left alone in his BOQ to find his own recreation.

3-7. STUDIES. This is another agonizing problem for the International Military Student. His lack of proficiency in basic American language is very evident. He experiences different accents, mannerisms and colloquialism of the American instructors. He is frustrated by his ignorance of American Army Unit Organization, technical equipment and doctrine. He would very much want to ask questions, but is reluctant because of his poor language proficiency. Even if he succeeded in asking his question, he may not understand the reply, which is equally frustrating. When he reads his manuals, student handouts or other publication, it is a constant battle of vocabulary and pronunciation against comprehension. In all instances, the International Military Student is the loser because his native mental processes react with his emotions to adjust to the physical handicaps of the lecture room.

He may have an American student-sponsor to assist him. Even there, this so-called "Academic Assistance Program" may be a failure because it does not involve any common tool or skill between sponsor and sponsored. They are unable to communicate comprehensively because the student-sponsor can only speak American, which is the fundamental cause of the International Military Student's poor comprehension. Very often, the student-sponsor himself does not understand the lesson that has been taught. Therefore, when the International Military Student questions him, he gets an "I don't understand myself?" for an answer which is the final form of assistance rendered. To an International Military Student, this is very despairing because he has been conditioned to expect some guidance from his student-sponsor. Furthermore, because of repeated negative replies, the social relationship between these two individuals deteriorates till the International Military Student will no longer look on the other for academic assistance. Such consequences defeat the objectives of this program.

3-8. OVER-ALL REACTIONS OF THE INTERNATIONAL MILITARY STUDENT. It is evident that the International Military Student is very much plagued by problems that he finds personally very difficult to surmount. He despairs with frustration and harbors feelings of resentment, disillusion and even dislike for his studies and the American people. He loses total interest in his studies and does not care about his academic performance. He will instinctively develop a hostile attitude toward any facet of the American society and survive merely on a "self-help" basis. He pays lip service to any other programs planned for International Military Students by the school. However, the biggest repercussion is that he has developed a totally hostile anti-American opinion and will be returning home with almost total ignorance on the subjects taught in the course. He will, in turn, express such opinions and feelings to his fellow Military Students in his country. Thus, the American Military Aid Program for his country is affected and its objectives will never be achieved.

CHAPTER 4

IDEAS FOR GENERAL HOSPITALITY

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4-1. IDEAS FOR GENERAL HOSPITALITY. Ideas for places to go and things to do are limited only by your own imagination. Here is a list contributed by seminar audiences around the country. They were asked, "What are some novel ideas you found successful when entertaining international visitors?"

a. Rodeos, or anything having to do with cowboys and Indians, are very popular opportunities for entertainment. You can bet that nearly every foreign visitor has seen an American "Wild West" movie. The French and Germans are especially captivated by that period and actually have cowboy roundups and rodeos in their own countries, attempting to replicate that lusty period in American history.

b. State and country fairs—animal judging, sulky racing, crafts and dress-making, country western music—the list of unique sights for a foreigner at a fair is endless.

c. Boat tours on major rivers and lakes, such as the mighty Mississippi, for example. This is just as exotic to visitors as the Amazon and Yangtze are to us. In the minds of visitors, paddle steamers create visions of Mark Twain and "Gone With The Wind." As for lake tours, when tour boats traverse a United States shoreline announcing who lives where and how much the properties are worth, British visitors, for one, are amazed by this 'invasion of privacy' but still delight in this insight into American life.

d. Fall colors—only a few countries can rival the annual coloramas that stretch across the northern half of the United States each Autumn. Consider this simple form of entertainment, especially for Middle Easterners who may never have seen this fall display.

e. A local grocery store—while the giant supermarkets are perhaps the best, whatever the size of the store, visitors love to compare packaging, sizes, assortment, and prices.

f. A local courtroom is an unsuspecting attraction that often catches the interest of business visitors because law, justice, and order are important in every country. It also shows you aren't hiding anything.

g. Sporting events—baseball and football are the logical candidates—but be prepared for the almost impossible task of explaining innings, outs, downs, scrimmage line, and why there are three strikes, yet four balls. Tennis is played all over the world and with its simplified scoring system, you don't have to know your opponent's language. The Japanese enjoy baseball, golf, and skiing, and of course swimming is another universal sport. Basketball is also growing in popularity and because games are plentiful at all three levels—high school, college, and professional—it becomes a good candidate. Showing your guest a local or in company health and fitness spa is another idea. Sports new for visitors might be racquetball, bowling, water ski competitions, horseshoes; curling, ice hockey, lacrosse, or even sailing. Americans are known as

sports enthusiasts and if our games are foreign and complex to visitors, “Don’t worry,” advises one British publication dryly, “any one of 200 million Americans will be glad to explain them.”

h. The cultural attractions—such as your local history and art museums, concert halls, theaters, and so on—one veteran host added, “Skip churches, though, unless you live in Salt Lake City. Not because ours are unworthy, but because religion can be a touchy subject and also because we can hardly compare with the cathedrals of Europe and South America and the temples of the Orient.” On the other hand, if your visitor expresses interest, by all means take them to your local church service. Bear in mind that American museums are often vastly different from museums in other parts of the world. The reason is that American history is so comparatively new and recent and visitors marvel that only 100 years ago native American Indians roamed much of this continent. Our historical museums also demonstrate how much progress has been achieved in the United States in a relatively short period of time.

i. Potluck dinners at local churches or clubs are as American as you get—everyone streaming to the community hall with a favorite dish to pass. For some visitors, it may even conjure visions of pioneer Americans circling the covered wagons for the evening meal.

j. Attending live television shows is still, for most, a novel experience that represents an important part of the American cultural scene. Make certain, though, that your guests have a reasonably good command of English.

k. Regional food harvests—fish boils at lake and seashore sites, crawfish boils, barbecues, pig-picking in the Carolinas, corn boils, crab harvests, catfish broils—the list is endless.

l. Bingo games—while the game itself might already be known to your visitors, the prospect of people watching might produce a memorable evening.

m. Demolition derbies have been described as “bumping-car rodeos” or, less kindly, as typical American “conspicuous destruction.” Auto races are another option.

n. Auto shows—Europeans are usually very automobile conscious and knowledgeable about horsepower, displacement, and design features. In many European countries, the type of car driven by a company executive is a direct reflection of his (or her) status within that company. This is particularly true in Germany and Great Britain. Therefore a chance to examine the latest U.S. auto models can be both entertaining and informative.

o. State Capitols help emphasize the traditional separation in the United States between federal and state’s rights. The capitols themselves also have a rich and varied history.

p. Local amusement parks like Disneyland and other national theme parks.

q. Local schools—a visit to a typical American classroom might have special appeal to any visitor with children back home. Almost everyone likes to compare common and essential institutions like schools.

r. Any American holiday—spend the day in typical American fashion, whether it be attending a Labor Day parade, or a Fourth of July picnic and fireworks display complete with pony rides for children and mud volleyball for grownups.

s. Tours of local factories, whether they make pens or power generators, it is possible your guests will enjoy seeing the inside of a typical U.S. manufacturing plant and observing how products we all take for granted are fabricated and assembled.

t. Local colleges and universities are usually scenic as well as historic. Also, just observing typical American college students can be fascinating to some guests. You might also check with campus officials to learn if foreign students are enrolled from your visitor's country and then maybe even arrange for a chat over coffee.

u. A typical American ranch or farm is a good idea, if your guests have any interest whatsoever in agriculture. A local farmer will usually be willing to give your guest a tour of his buildings and land.

v. These are just a handful of idea-starters. More will come to you as soon as you look around you. Visitors are curious and interested in what you personally, do for entertainment, so don't be afraid to consider your own everyday pastimes.

4-2. FORMAL BUSINESS ENTERTAINING. There will be times that call for more formal entertainment, such as when your visitors are foreign government dignitaries. For these occasions, obtain a copy of *Practical Protocol* by James E. Lott, Gulf Publishing Co., Houston, 1973. The author is the former protocol officer for the City of Houston. This is an excellent guideline to everything from table seating arrangements to motorcades and press releases. Lott writes: "For most entertainment activities an informal approach is often most congenial and personable." He quotes Longfellow "In character, in manner, in style, in all things the supreme excellence is simplicity."

a. As a sampling, for more formal entertainment occasions Lott lists these bits of simple courtesy: Place-cards at a luncheon table, a list compiled beforehand of those attending, including titles and responsibilities; a clear indication of who is the host; and finally, don't feel obliged to cater only to the best restaurants. President Lyndon Johnson delighted most foreign potentates with outdoor, Texas-style barbecues at his ranch. These always produced an opportunity for relaxation as well as a sampling of Americana.

b. Your local library will also have a collection of books on etiquette for more formal business occasions with advice on:

- proper forms of invitations
- cocktail receptions
- selecting wines
- receiving lines
- choice of foods
- head table seating
- national anthems
- national flags
- table styles
- seating diagrams for different styles and sizes of tables, and
- an explanation of the pecking order of importance among dignitaries.

c. Emily Post and Letitia Baldrige are just two of the more popular authors of these wonderful reference books on rules of etiquette.

d. Be prepared, though, for an occasional boomerang seemingly good entertainment idea that comes whizzing back to haunt you. Mine occurred with our Danish distributor. I decided to take him to a typical social event of our company's men's club. Our group met monthly at a rustic cabin without running water. We cooked on grills, played softball, drank a few beers, and then had a speaker of demonstration. On this night, the program was a man's hair stylist who gave an actual demonstration using one of our members. Many months later, I learned the Dane's version of the evening was this: "Those Americans are strange. They have every type of modern convenience known to man, yet they meet in a broken down shack, cook outside enveloped by smoke, urinate behind trees, and finally for entertainment - they sit around and watch some fellow get his hair cut."

CHAPTER 5
UNDERSTANDING THE LATIN AMERICAN

USAF Special Operations School
Latin America Affairs Branch

Latin Americans are...as complex "a people" as is the world they represent. There is a unique sameness that always makes communication between and with them an adventure that is both enhancing and exciting...and never less than challenging. This is so especially when you are one with them; and more particularly when you understand them.

--Explorings of Ideators

5-1. INTRODUCTION. Latin America is an area made up of 24 separate countries with vastly different cultures. The cultural differences between Bolivia and Chile alone are as diverse as Germany and India, and these ethnic and social differences make it very difficult to generalize about the area. Nevertheless, along with the variety in Latin American culture there are also similarities. Therefore, even though iron-clad rules cannot be made, there are some general guidelines for understanding Latin American culture that can be helpful.

5-2. LATIN AMERICA TODAY. The Land: Most North Americans learned to call Latin America by the term South America, without realizing the continent is actually east as well as south of Florida--making the directional title of "Southeast" America more accurate.

a. What we call Latin America consists of Central America, the main South American continent and the islands of the Caribbean settled by Spain, Portugal, France, and Italy. It covers one-sixth of the world's landmass with some 8 million square miles.

b. As mentioned before, the average Latin American Officers does not want to be at the top of the class, a natural motivator. They will not overtly compete with their peers or against higher status individuals. This, again, is part of traditional values where personal harmony-at least on the surface-is more valuable than expediency. Grades should not be publicly displayed by name.

c. The Latin American system stresses memorizing material and the students can easily feel overloaded. More exams, covering less information than is normal for the US system, may be more effective.

d. **Critiques:** When critiquing students, avoid public criticism.

e. **Summary:** The keys to effective communication with Latin American students, then, are primarily:

(1) Where a genuine, personal relationship exists, the path will be much smoother despite any unintentional misunderstandings.

(2) Friendship implies mutual obligations-favors, loans, help past red tape and regulations. There is a way to say "no" without offense.

f. Latin Americans tend to be deductive thinkers, preferring theory and generalizations, rather than inductive thinkers where specific examples lead to general conclusions. When examples are given, the student will probably not connect them and generalize into a conclusion, but will see each example as a whole unit, separate from others. The instructor, then, must emphasize the theory and then relate the connection to the examples—a sort of “back door” approach.

g. Rather than the “streamlined,” objective, stay-to-the-point North American presentation, Latin students respond to and learn more quickly from someone who is not only eloquent, emotional, and able to relate personal experiences, but who is also able to display a depth of knowledge. The US style tends to bore them and drop their attention span.

They prefer to reach for understanding rather than to have material obviously simplified. Reaching implies the instructor’s knowledge is high; simplification implies instructors are substandard.

h. With military students the pattern has not been for the students to “brain storm” but to follow the group leader’s choices. This ties to traditional patterns where a lower status person does not correct the higher status person openly, or brashly put forward conflicting ideas. Leadership of a group goes to the person with the status or rank in the military, not necessarily to the most knowledgeable. This is another instance of inherited or achieved status spreading to all situations.

i. Feedback: Do not expect the Latin American student to indicate when he does not understand, for this public admission is very damaging to his status and his character.

j. Use plain, clear English and avoid slang. Grant more time for reading. Asking the student to repeat what you said is one technique.

k. In the US, where specialization supports technology’s demands, a reply such as, “I don’t know, but I’ll find out,” is considered properly humble and appropriate.

l. In Latin America it can destroy your status or lessen respect for you. “Let me show you where to look it up,” or “That will be covered next week,” or “See me later on that,” is more suitable and more comfortable for the Latin American student until he understands some of the US ways and their meaning in our life.

m. **Language:** A slow steady pace, with pauses, can increase your effectiveness during lectures.

(1) Generally, reading comprehension tends to be higher than spoken capabilities. In some universities and schools in Latin America, English textbooks are used but exams and discussions are in Spanish, bringing reading comprehension to a higher level.

(2) Providing more time to read, reading material before lectures, and handouts to take along can greatly assist student comprehension.

n. **Lecture Notes:** Taking notes, as many U.S. college and high school students have learned, involves a learned technique. Often U.S. school or training program assumes students know how. The average Latin student will try to take down every word the instructor says. Outlines or lecture texts passed out ahead of time will greatly improve comprehension and study sessions. The most common approach in Latin countries is for the teacher, professor, or instructor to lecture from notes which the students are also reading and can later read again.

o. **Group Discussion:** Latin American students prefer to follow their own, traditional pattern where the instructor gives them the material, and they give it back in the exam. Being asked to answer questions

before the class, to express their thoughts on a subject they are just learning, is very threatening to Latin students. Their status can be badly injured by failure or public correction, which equals public criticism.

p. Be aware of the Latin American worldview and take time to invite a student to the Club for a drink or to your home for dinner. This will create a natural background for him to talk about his studies, any difficulties, and signal the personal touch so necessary for him to relax and learn. This, in turn, increases your training effectiveness.

q. In Latin America, the military profession is sometimes only one of two professions. The military work day is generally short - mornings only. Therefore, you can expect less comprehension in afternoon sessions. Some appreciation should exist for the difficulty of being placed in a situation where activities never vary, have little breaks between them, and require constant, intense concentration. It is an extremely stressful situation that takes time to adapt. Where possible, morning schedules should be primary, with less demanding activities in the afternoon, and variety as well as acknowledging their effort to adjust, may help increase comprehension.

r. Latin American students tend to continually try to negotiate class times, test dates, break times, and other administrative matters. This is tied to seeking flexibility in rules through personal connections, instead of having the flexibility automatically in the rule. As they see the connection to the teacher or instructor as a personal one, to a degree, it is natural to negotiate away from technicalities here.

s. Where you can, show or grant flexibility. It is natural for them to assume that if a person of status cannot grant any flexibility, that person either does not really have much status or is rejecting them. In time, students may come to understand that technological approaches allow less flexibility or else the technological system becomes increasingly inefficient.

t. **Gifts:** Gifts are part of the mutual obligations within any personal relationship in Latin America. Gifts cement the tie and ensure future obligations. A student who likes and respects an instructor will probably try to present him with a gift when he leaves-despite knowing it is against regulations. To refuse the gift is an insult, so accept-and later check with your unit on the proper disposition of the gift. Some units display the more extravagant gifts in a unit display case, and some gifts may be kept. A gift, of nominal value, from instructor to student might also be appropriate.

u. **Criticism and Praise:** Criticism, to be effective, should always be done in private, very indirectly, and in as friendly and sociable way as possible. As with most people outside of the US, Latin Americans are extremely sensitive to criticism and praise. With a tradition of tact and subtlety, the Latin American picks up the slightest hint of error very quickly and finds our pattern of public “constructive criticism a signal of utter failure and disgrace and the end of a relationship.

v. Approaches such as, “It looks as if we better check over such-and-such next time before we....” or “I recall when I was...the same thing happened, but we can work it out together,” will not only be more comfortable for the student, but will increase the instructor's effectiveness as it reinforces the personal relationship

w. Praise in public, which is not excessive and insincere, can be highly motivating. An arm across the student's shoulder and a “Great job!” in front of others is high praise from an instructor. The praise should be earned, generous, and often.

x. **Reactions to Misunderstandings:** When a student feels insulted, it is apt to be hidden, leaving the North American unaware that he has unintentionally hurt or insulted his student. A direct, face-to-face, confrontation is equal to a North American punching someone in the face, therefore, “frank” discussions are

not likely to occur when there is a misunderstanding. Usually the student will discuss with his other friends what has happened or will brood, a sign to start probing for a misunderstanding.

y. **The Personal Relationship:** As the Latin American cultures are still in transition and largely traditional cultures, personal relationships are the key to all functions. The “survival network” is still strong. People take priority over institutions and paper laws and regulations. The only way to get anything done in Latin America is through a “friend” or a “friend of a friend.”

(1) When teaching Latin American students this need for a personal relationship before anything can be accomplished becomes critical to *training* effectiveness.

(2) When a Latin American student believes you care, you are trustworthy, and you sincerely wish to help him as an individual, he will do his best work. He will try to make you look good as his part of the relationship.

(3) When it comes to traffic laws and other rules and regulations, you may find the Latin student regards them as impersonal and not applicable to him unless a known individual actually enforces them. A law or rule enforced upon a stranger is enforced to the smallest technicality. But where a “friend” or “friend of a cousin” is involved, the personal touch mitigates the law and may even bend it.

(4) In the training situation you are apt to find your student asking you for favors--part of establishing a personal relationship. The very fact that he asks for a favor shows he feels a personal relationship is started and he expects you to produce. If you refuse bluntly to help, “No, I can’t do that, there’s a regulation...” the “friendship tie” is broken. You have indicated you do not want to be associated closely with him. And without a tie, there can be no learning.

(5) The way to avoid this misunderstanding is to give a Latin “no.” That is, to say “I’ll see what I can do.” It means you will try and you care. If he asks about it again, or indirectly brings up the subject, I’m still trying,” continues an indirect “no” without offense.

(6) In daily activities, shows in a dislike of plans, schedules, and forms, and shows a preference for ad hoc decisions and for freewheeling.

(7) While we tend to delegate authority to all levels of supervisors--a requirement of efficient technology, they have traditionally centralized, reserving almost all decisions for the higher authority.

(8) Further, in the US the practical, impersonal, and “rational” judgment is the preferred mode. The Latin American responds to charisma, and the “Macho,” by definition, always has charisma. It is “Macho” that motivates every enlisted man and officer to want to finish first in all endeavors.

z. Success: Success for a Latin American is living happily and maintaining with a flair the position and status he was born into. In the United States where birth status is basically a discarded tradition and can be detrimental to growth in technology, success is measured to a large degree by material possessions or money. When you do something well, you are paid well--therefore money is an indicator of success and personal achievement.

aa. Manual Labor: In the traditional life style, manual labor is associated with the poor and unskilled people. Proof of a higher position in life, of upward mobility, is in the degree to which you can avoid manual labor using your hands. Middle and upper class Latin Americans have maids, never wash their own cars, polish their own shoes, or cut their own grass. To do so would be equal to a North American building

an outhouse in an upper-middle class neighborhood. This accounts for the reluctance to clean quarters, as North Americans may be expected to, or to dirty their hands in hands-on work.

5-3. TEACHING AND TRAINING. The following is presented specifically for North Americans who may find themselves in a position of training Latin Americans. Even though the examples relate directly to the classroom, the cultural trends that are evident will give the non-trainer a further insight into his dealings with Latin Americans. Throughout the teaching/training process, the North American should remain cognizant of the Latin American worldview as it relates to the classroom - a delicate balance between technological process-orientation and the traditional, wholistic approach to learning can be achieved. It is in the *training* process that the goals of both the North and Latin American are congruent from the start. That is, to learn what is taught, and this can be the foundation for a valuable education

a. In line with the “whole” approach, if a person has expertise in one area it transfers to all activities. Status also transfers and “counts” at all times and in all situations.

b. In learning, the Latin American will usually prefer theory first, application second, and will see abstract terms as real. There is less value on “doing” and on practical application, and more on “understanding” general terms and universal, philosophical truths. Learning patterns also emphasize memory.

c. At work the Latin American is less outcome-oriented than the technological North American. Work is not measured by what is done, but rather it is an expressive function, an important part of life involving social networks and connections, which should be enjoyed. Being busy is work.

d. Therefore, the Latin American does not cut his day, or life, into separate pieces-time for work, time for socializing, time for sleep, but rather keeps the whole mixture going at all times, and is not used to a strict 8 to 5 schedule. He will commonly keep four or five tasks going at the same time, mixing, interrupting, socializing, and expects interruptions or multiple conversations as normal. Evening cocktail parties are often the setting for major business deals.

e. It took North Americans hundreds of years to move from a pattern similar to the Latin one into the technological pattern of the schedules and separations needed to support technology.

f. **Time:** In the US and to some degree in all technological systems, time is important to measure precisely, every minute counts, and schedules keep the machines and system operating efficiently. The Latin American sees time as abstract. There is no sense of urgency in the traditional way of life, rooted in the seasons of agriculture. Urgency is not required-except in emergencies-to survive. To consider a 10 AM appointment as meaning roughly 10:30 or 11 AM is natural in Latin America and it is prompt there. In the US, it is rudely late to arrive more than two or three minutes after 10 AM.

g. **Machismo:** The concept of “machismo” is widely known in the US, but little understood. Usually North Americans connect it to sex alone. In Latin America it is more the “essence of being masculine.” The basic male outlook is involved, whether the man is tall, short, fat, skinny, ugly, or a handsome person.

5-4. LATIN AMERICAN VALUES.

a. **"Personalism" and Latin Individualism:** Basic to understanding the psychological makeup of the Latin American is the concept of “personalism” or “Latin individualism.” The Latin view of individualism is quite different from ours. We believe in the dignity and worth of the individual as defined by what he or she does in life. Because of our emphasis on the social equality of the individual, we expect

broad similarities in behavior. Abnormal behavior or individual differences, if approved of, result in distinction. If not approved of, they bring about punishment or ostracism.

(1) The Latin American holds the rights of man in high value verbally, but his emphasis is on the inherent uniqueness of the individual. The individual is valued simply because he is not exactly like anyone else. One is important not for what he does; but for who he is.

(2) The emphasis on personalism and individualism has its roots in the Catholic religion and its emphasis on the soul, yet now it has lost its religious connotation. The results of this trait are that people in Latin America have strong sense of “dignity.” Man deserves respect because of his unique inner worth no matter what his position in life and despite social inequalities. Poorly chosen words and actions can be easily interpreted as insults to the individual’s inner worth and are highly explosive in their effects. To promote harmony, Latin Americans have evolved a complicated system of etiquette and diplomacy for interpersonal relations.

b. **Greetings:** In the US a greeting of “Hi!” or a grunt gives no offense. To a Latin American it is a put-down, rude, and impossible to do, much less to understand.

(1) The minimum Latin American courtesy is to say “Hello,” to shake hands, and to ask about one’s family. Anything less is an insult and provokes a deep emotional reaction; it is difficult to communicate effectively with clenched teeth.

(2) If the North American bends a little toward the Latin American courtesy ritual, which doesn’t really take very long, he sends a signal to the Latin American that he is respected as a person and matters as an individual. Often, as simple a gesture as that will overcome the initial communication barrier and make it easier for each to better relate to the other.

c. **Invitations:** Hospitality is one of the cornerstones of Latin culture. Elaborate parties are common in their homeland that may even cost more than they can afford. There are some great differences between the two cultures here.

(1) “Dutch” treat is not only not done, but is considered a put down. If you invite someone to lunch with you, however casually, he expects you to pay-and vice versa. People take turns-whether it is buying lunch, dinner, tickets to the movies, cigarettes, or rounds at the bar. If you try to divide the tab, unless they understand our system, they will think you are not only cheap but not interested in friendship or honestly working together. Drinking is an enjoyably accepted pastime for many Latin Americans (with Scotch the preferred drink in most cases) with the sharing/hosting etiquette being a very important ritual.

(2) If you take a cigarette and put the pack back in your pocket without offering them, or leaving them out with a general offer, it will probably be misinterpreted as a rejection of the Latinos personally or a definite lapse in manners and hospitality.

(3) BYOB (Bring Your Own Bottle) parties are a US custom and it takes some getting used to for Latin Americans. In their homeland, to bring wine or liquor to someone’s house tends to imply the host serves substandard quality.

(4) North American women who make friends with Latin American women should be aware that, in some Latin countries, women visit most commonly in their bedrooms and only near-strangers are consigned to the living room. An explanation of our customs might help avoid embarrassments on either side.

d. **Body Language:** Whereas most North Americans stand at “arm’s length” when talking face-to-face, the Latin American stands much closer. It is a common Latin complaint that North Americans are cold, they keep you at arm’s length and don’t want to get close.

(1) Latin Americans of the same sex touch more than Americans of the same sex do. Young women will hold hands while walking. Men hug in greeting, while women commonly greet another woman with a light kiss on the cheek-and always a handshake.

(2) Handshaking is softer than in the US. The firm, “frank,” handshake is a hostile greeting in Latin America, while his soft handshake misleads Americans into thinking the person is a little less than honest and sincere.

(3) Voice inflection, gestures, and emotion are important in any discussion for the Latin American, while we tend to consider softer tones, fewer gestures and less emotion as the sign of a poised individual. The expressiveness and emotion in talking is again tied to the Latin concept on individuality and “Machismo”.

(4) Discussions, wholehearted ones, on any subject from flying to philosophy are greatly enjoyed. They enjoy displaying their knowledge eloquently and humor, even off-colored, often appear in their private conversations.

(5) There is no general rule about eye-contact, though some Latin Americans are taught it is respectful to look down, to lower your eyes, when with someone in authority-especially when you are “on the carpet”. If this occurs it can look “shifty” to the North American who does not realize a cultural pattern of respect is operating.

(6) When it comes to “girl-watching” the Latin American does not consider it rude to stare, to visually sweep the length of the lady of interest, and to maintain an intense eye contact. North American women tend to find this a rude and uneducated characteristic.

e. **Worldview:** Every nation and culture has its own way of looking at the world and life. Sometimes differences in a few areas can create barriers to effective communication.

(1) Latin Americans are more apt to look at the whole than at the parts and pieces as technology people do. They are more apt to be present-oriented rather than future oriented, with many things accepted as “just happening” rather than applying technological analysis and planning

(2) During colonial times the Spanish and Portuguese tried to prevent immigration from other European countries into Latin America. However, after independence the small trickle of Italian and German merchants that managed to bypass the restriction became a flood. Some Latin American countries, principally Argentina and Chile, encouraged immigration, and others such as Mexico and Peru, continued the colonial restrictions. The resultant racial differences between countries are readily apparent. Although the newcomers changed the racial mix in some Latin America countries, most were eventually absorbed into the “Cosmic Race” and had little cultural impact.

(3) The North American travelling in Latin America notices that, while there are whites, blacks and Indians, it is more difficult to define color lines than in the United States. The race of an individual in Latin America is not defined by color but by cultural and social factors. These are based on education, occupation, ethnic background, language, worldview, dress, and customs. So while the upper is mostly white, a mestizo can become a member if he acquires the traits of the upper class, not necessarily easy without upper class advantages. Mulattos can “whiten” with money and Indians can become mestizos by changing their clothes.

(4) So the “Cosmic Race” of Jose Vasconcellos never really developed in Latin America. However, the social race that evolved does make it easier to generalize about cultural traits. Moreover, the Latin American military is even easier to portray since it forms a caste within each country that tends to reflect upper or middle class values.

(5) Latin America was settled between 1550 and 1650, or 100 years before the start of the Industrial Revolution. North America was colonized between 1650 and 1750 when the seeds of the Industrial Revolution were sown.

(6) The result was that the North American, unlike the Spaniard or Portuguese, rejected European traditions and accepted technology willingly. The Latin system, by its very nature and earlier start, chose to ignore technology for centuries.

5-5. ROOTS OF CULTURE. “The culture of a young people,” Liberator Simon Bolivar once said of Latin America, and “a culture which has yet to reach maturity.” Jose Vasconcellos, a Mexican author, described Latin America as a “cosmic race” and attributed this societal “immaturity” to the relatively recent fusion of the Spanish, Portuguese, African, and Native American cultures.

a. The Spanish-Portuguese culture is probably the key to understanding Latin Americans. Both nations dominated colonial Latin America and social status could only be achieved by adapting to their standards.

b. A comparison between North American and South American settling patterns is helpful in understanding differences that still exist, to one degree or another, today.

c. The North Americans came to the New World, fleeing oppression in the Old, with their families. The Spanish and Portuguese came to explore, conquer and exploit, and came alone. North Americans cleared small farms to support their families, the Spanish and Portuguese took vast tracts of land basically to achieve wealth and status, that is, to elevate themselves into the ranks of the nobility.

d. The North Americans came to break free of the aristocratic traditions of Europe, establish practical and personal achievement as the key to status and, in general, to create a new way of life, keeping the best of the past and omitting what they believed to be the worst.

e. The Spanish and Portuguese brought their traditional system with them, and considered themselves still part of the mother country rather than colonizers. The social and economic systems they brought were transplants of the traditional, manorial life style of Europe, a system where status is connected to birth and bloodlines, where loyalty is primarily to individuals rather than to laws or to the Constitution of the land. The wealth of the New World was exported. The Roman Catholic religion was imported and, in the 1700s, this religion viewed the world as a temporary residence with Gods will alone, and not man’s efforts, deciding all events: a basically anti-technological world view.

The second component of the “Cosmic Race,” the Native American, in what is now Latin America was very different from his North American counterpart. The conquistadors found three societies-the Incas, the Mayas, and the Aztecs, as well as a number of nomadic tribes. Where there was resistance, the Conquistadors killed many of the people. Where there was no resistance, the society was allowed to remain. Those that remained lived very similarly to the Spanish and Portuguese traditional life style and the Conquistador needed only to co-opt the tribal leaders or eliminate them to control the tribes.

f. The traditional Native American social system is still very evident in some parts of Latin America and, in some cases, clashes with the Latin-style society of the Central government. At times these clashes have become violent and they will likely be so again. While some groups of Native American descendents

remain adamant in preserving their heritage, there is a great deal of crossover from one culture to another. Because racial lines are not pure, but mixed, sometimes a change of clothing can “transform” a Native American into a Mestizo, who then mixes, unnoticed, with the mainstream of the “Latinized” society. Dealing with a Latin American who has a strong tie with the Native American culture can be doubly difficult for a North American because, while there are certain similarities between the Latin and Native American worldviews, there are significant differences in tone and emphasis. Complicating that is the question of which “set of clothes” the individual is wearing at any given time.

g. The third contribution to the “Cosmic Race” is the African. The Native American population was inadequate in number for the forced labor needs of the Spanish due to many deaths from imported “European” diseases and from “The Conquest.” The African slave was brought over to fill this void. Between 1790 and 1800 over 75,000 slaves a year were brought into Latin America to produce export crops of tobacco, sugar, and coffee. The Africans, unlike the Indians, readily adapted to the Latin culture and mixed freely with Native Americans, Spanish and Portuguese. The principal African influence on Latin American culture today is in the Caribbean area and Brazil and is characterized by a musical way of talking, and an apparently cavalier attitude toward life.

h. Overcoming cultural misconceptions is no easy task and certainly a delicate one that calls for the maximum of understanding and adapting. Both sides must agree upon a goal for the association and be flexible in attempting to reach that goal—it’s difficult sometimes, but not impossible.

5-6. CULTURAL MISCONCEPTIONS. Skimpy sixth grade geography lessons and less-than-accurate television and film presentations have left many North Americans with bizarre images of Latin America, as far off the mark as their images of us, gotten from similar sources. Common pictures of Latin Americans are of the Cisco Kid, the Frito Bandito, and perhaps a beautifully fragile woman and hot-blooded, dark-eyed lover.

a. However, when North Americans finally meet Latin Americans they find they do not fit these images, and further, seem to be “much like us.” Because the Latin American does not behave in strikingly different or exotic ways, the consequence of assuming he is “like us” is to treat him as any North American would be treated.

b. The result is ineffective communication and many misunderstandings. Quite often, being treated in alien ways and seemingly unfeelingly by his standards, especially if here in the United States, the Latin American becomes despondent, enters culture shock, stops cooperating, and may even try to “get back” for perceived insults or injustices the North American was unaware of committing. Before long, each incorrectly attributes the other with a “personality problem” which creates even greater friction as mutual expectations continue unfulfilled. The real basis of the problem is cultural and the solution hinges upon the ability of each to recognize and adapt to others approach to life.

c. Just as we have cultural misconceptions, so do Latin Americans. Again, television and movies play an important role. It is easy to imagine the kind of picture they have of us by just a cursory glance at our current television or motion picture offerings overseas. The United States appears overrun with crime, fast women, henpecked men and lost youth. Added to these impressions is a history of United States military intervention in Latin America and economic exploitation by North American and multi-national corporations. They see us as wasteful materialists and imperialistic exploiters, as clever with technology but behind the curve on culture.

d. When the Latin American comes to the United States he finds that this country is not what he expected. Women are not as easy as he anticipated, and crime is not really as apparent as he expected. People seem to reject materialism or at least temper it with higher values. Yet, people do not take time to let

go of cultural misperceptions and these continue to have a profound effect. The Latin American continues to have mixed feelings about the North American, feelings of both superiority and inferiority. On one hand, he admires our expertise and competence. He knows the North American is efficient and will get the job done.

e. Almost all Latin American countries have tropical zones and at the same time many also have extensive mountains and deserts. Most of the people in Bolivia, for instance, live above 12,000 feet in a perpetually cold climate. Chile and Argentina have some of the finest ski areas in the world. Northern Chile also has one of the driest spots on earth, the Atacama desert, and Southern Chile looks like Scandinavia. In short, there is a great deal of variety in climate and geography in Latin America just as in the United States.

f. **The People:** The people of Latin America also are as varied as are North Americans. There are fewer and fewer people in Latin America who are, today, pure blooded "Latin Americans." Over 87 percent of the people of Mexico are of mixed descent, and 65 percent of Bolivians are full-blooded Indian who speaks only their native languages of Aymara and Quecha. Argentina has a population that is 97 percent Caucasian, many of whom are of Italian descent. In addition many Japanese, Germans, Syrians, Dutch, Indonesians and Americans, who left the South after the Civil War, emigrated to Latin America and now identify with their adopted countries. So, racially, "Latin" does not really apply to our neighbors to the southeast.

g. **Economics:** Latin America presents a marked contrast between rich and poor, modern technology and the tradition of the agricultural life style. Some of the most modern and beautiful cities of the world are Rio de Janeiro, Buenos Aires and Mexico City, yet only a short distance from them are villages that are much as they were hundreds of years ago. Latin America is in transition and is constantly expanding its markets and moving toward greater technological development.

h. **Politics:** Just as in the United States, there is a wide range of political ideology in Latin America. Historically, Latin American governments tended to be authoritarian and conservative, many times directly or indirectly under the control of the military. Lately, however, there has been a trend towards more democratic forms of government with some countries overcoming fierce internal opposition to the democratization process, such as in El Salvador. Nonetheless, there are dictatorships still in being in Latin America that range from the extreme left (Cuba, Nicaragua) to the extreme right (Chile, Paraguay). Whatever the form of government in a particular country, the political scene is a busy one. Latin Americans are, generally, highly nationalistic and take a very serious and passionate interest in the political process. Political discussions, conventions, and elections are marked by a fervor (and, sometimes, violence) that many North Americans find exceedingly intense.

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CHAPTER 6

INTERVIEW WITH A MIDDLE-EASTERNER

American instructors have had difficulty understanding the different ways of doing things in the Mid-East and Americans have unintentionally offended their guests, or the reverse.

Usually the misunderstandings occur because the people involved are unaware of the differences between the cultures. What would not insult an American student might offend a Mid-Easterner. To reduce some of these areas of misunderstanding, the following questions were asked of a Mid-Easterner pinpointing the situations that most commonly occur. This is not meant as a criticism of either Americans or Mid-Easterners, but simply an explanation of situations where one side or the other misunderstands what is happening because of the different ways of life.

Q: I can see the similarity to our military structure where the ideal leader needs only to ask, the order underlying it is understood by both parties, but it's crude to say, "I order you to do that."

A: *Very similar, yes. There are different ways to say the same thing.*

Q: Are there any other implications to giving a direct order?

A: Yes, when you add to it the implications of direct orders during their experience with colonialism...the years of the "Mem-Sahib" ...there is an emotional reaction. Give direct orders, instead of suggestions, and he is not going to take it and like it. He is not going to accept it, which blocks his learning. It reminds him of the days when everything "western" was a superior to inferior relationship, of master to slave. Finally, a matter of religion enters where a Muslim does not take orders from someone who is not a Muslim.

Q: So, in more than one way, a direct order, a direct criticism, or a direct accusation is a put down.

A: Definitely. And when a person reacts emotionally to the way you treat him, his learning ability is upset. My suggestion is to try to find an indirect way of suggesting what you want your student to do. Eventually, by the way, this becomes second nature. And never reprimand him in public - I can't stress this enough.

Take him aside over a coke, coffee, or what have you and gradually lean up to the subject. Put him at ease and then indirectly make your point. "Okay, I understand...for instance...that your button was not functioning and that is why you didn't push it. So, next time before we fly, why don't we check it?" or try, "Keep look at it as you fly...or work...to make sure it doesn't malfunction again." Give him an out...he understands what you mean.

Q: But what if the student or trainee makes the same mistake again and again?

A: If he keeps doing it and it is a critical procedure, then I think you face a dilemma. Possibly the man shouldn't be a pilot or technician. Then, you can either go to his superior and say, "Somehow I don't seem able to teach...(blame yourself)...so-and-so," and his superior will understand what you mean. Or you can go to your own superior and let him handle it at his level... "One of my instructors doesn't seem to teach so-and-so..."

Q: Are the American methods of teaching compatible to the Mid-East?

A: Here again, one has to remember that in the United States we teach students to understand things. In the Middle East, as in many places in the world, they teach by rote memorization. If your student forgets once, twice, three times, you have to keep repeating in different ways until he has it down pat.

Q: Until he has memorized it almost mechanically, step-by-step.

A: Right! That is the way he learned in school and he is used to learning that way. If you expect him to learn in our pattern to react the way you react, you are making a mistake. You have to presume you must repeat yourself many times. You have to keep insisting on a point and go over it with him every time before you operate the machine or fly the plane.

Say, "Hey, let's look at this now. What do we both have to do?" No, just him. "We have to take off, and upon take-off, we have to..." But time and time again! Until finally he does it almost by reflex.

Q: I know of one group of instructor pilots who have set up a system where they debrief the flight as a group, saying something like, "The formation could have been better and needs more effort." But they don't point out anyone in particular, even if only one student was primarily at fault. Then they add, "Such-and-such a part was very good." After this the instructor takes his student aside and privately discusses his performance.

A: Again, never give direct criticism. Find a way, I would insist...and certainly not in front of anyone else...never in front of their superiors or inferiors.

Q: So you would never say, "Hey, you didn't..."

A: I would not. You turn him off. And when you turn him off his learning drops and your effectiveness drops. It puts a barrier between you. There are gentle ways of saying it. I mean, even in this country when we are talking to a superior we say, "Well, I'm sure you know..." or "As you know..." It's a tactful way of telling the boss he really doesn't know or should have known and you are going to tell him.

Q: Can you ever be somewhat direct?

A: If you develop a really close friend that you feel is open, and you are having a coke together, no one else is around, you can tell him, "Hey, Mohammed, I think you forgot to do such-and-such!" You say this on the side during the conversation, then add, "It would be nice to do next time." But, again, NEVER IN PUBLIC, NEVER in front of anyone else, including officers of higher or lower rank in his service.

Q: Suppose you are recommending a proposal to someone. I understand that if you say, "What do you think of my idea or my plan?" or "I put this together, what do you think?" you will usually get a polite reply, "Everything is fine," even if your plan or idea is a disaster.

A: The required, polite answer is that "it's great!" Otherwise you would be criticizing someone personally or implying the instructor or advisor doesn't know what he is doing.

Q: Then, how do you present a proposal and get a critique?

A: First, I think you have to find out if the man knows the subject area. If you give him something he knows nothing or little about, he cannot judge from his experience, he will give you a polite answer and tell you it is good.

Secondly, I think rather than say it is your plan or proposal, because he doesn't want to be rude and criticize you, you have to say something like, "You know I have this proposal I came across and find it interesting. I'm thinking of using it and could you give me your opinion on it? It's not mine...I just came across it..."

This way if he wants to criticize you, it doesn't appear like he is doing it directly. He is criticizing some other fellow who wrote it or thought of it and he knows you won't be offended. He will probably adjust the plan rather than say, "Such-and-such is wrong." Of course, he knows what is really happening...but it's a game you must play. Again, don't tell him you want criticism.

Q: What do you tell him?

A: "What's your opinion?" or "Give me your ideas?" or "How can this be improved?" or all of these. Generally, I would approach with, "How can it be improved?"

Q: Suppose he comes back to you with a suggestion or change which you believe, based on your technical knowledge, just won't work.

A: I'd never tell him. I would say, "Ah, this is very interesting. I didn't think about it. Let me see how I can rearrange this."

Q: How about, "This is very interesting. Let me see if there's anything I might add?"

A: Right. Take his idea if you must and re-phrase it. Then take the paper to him and say, "Here it is. I put your idea right in here." He will accept that you "rephrased" it because you are the expert. He won't mind when you say, "I've reworded it because, you know, it's English and not Arabic...or Farsi..." or something like that. "But here is your idea and here is where I put it in."

Q: Another area where I have noticed instructors having difficulty is when they say to a student, "Mohammed, can you tell him what you do when you are in close formation?" or "Can you see the other aircraft from the back seat in fingertip formation?" The answer should be "No, I can't see from the backseat." But Mohammed hedges around and finally says, "Yes, I can see." How do you correct him according to his code of courtesy?

A: Don't say, "That's wrong!" Rather, give him a hint first while he's hedging. Obviously, he is not sure of himself. He is in training, and if you ask him a question like this, he starts to hedge. He doesn't want to appear as if he didn't know...especially if you ask in front of other people.

Before he replies, then, and while he is still searching for the answer, you step in and say something like, "Normally, I have problems seeing from the back seat and in some cases, I cannot see at all. What has been your experience, Mohammed?" or Lt Kadafi?

Then he will realize you cannot see from the back seat and it is not bad for him to say, "I can't see from the back seat." But if you come up with a situation which is fairly new or not totally learned yet, and say, "Can you see?" He doesn't want to admit he doesn't know. He may not be able to see, but he may think others can see and worries about admitting it for it would reflect against him. So he hedges. "maybe...sometimes...not really..." and watches you for clues.

Q: In a sense you are still teaching your point but in a different way.

A Yes.

Q: Sometimes, also, the instructor will say to his student, “Mohammed, we are taking off at such-and-such a time. Let’s go through what we’re going to do. When we take off we call the tower and say...what?” Normally, we do not feed the student the answers step-by-step. If he hesitates, is there a way we can slide the information in to remind him without “putting him down” as he would see it?

A: Use a joint approach and do it privately. Take him aside and say, “We fly this morning...or tomorrow...what do we both need to do? I’ll do this and you do that,” might be the first approach. Then, “Now, if you want to do it all by yourself, fine! I’ll go along for the ride. After all you’re the pilot.”

If you know he is not quite ready, you suggest, “Okay, I’ll do this and you do that.” This is one way of going over a checklist. “Is that okay?” you ask. He may say, “I think I’d like to do this, instead.” Then you say, “Fine!” and repeat what you are agreeing with.

Gradually, until you can develop a close rapport, you do it this way...but never in front of others. And never appear to be giving orders.

Q: Student pilots are taught to brief as part of the technical system they are here to learn. This means a Lieutenant must brief a flight that will include his senior officers. Can this procedure be effectively taught when their rules are stricter between ranks?

A: If he has a brief I think it creates greater cooperation and friendship if the instructor takes him aside and says, “I know you are going to do a great job. Don’t be afraid, you’re a hot shot pilot. Let me tell you how we do it here (in the US), how I do it for my superiors.”

This way you are telling him by describing the way you do it the way to conduct his briefing. Then he is much more secure. “My instructor tells me this and therefore it’s okay to do. You’ll find he adopts ideas this way.”

But first reassure him. He needs a lot of reassurance as he absorbs all the new things while his superiors are looking at him. If you go to him first, when the new procedure or checkout comes up, and say, “You are doing a great job. You’re a good pilot. There’s nothing to worry about...but let me tell you a bit about how we do it here...” This is how I would do it. I’m sure there are other ways, but don’t forget repetition.

Q: An then something like , “We’ve got to check this next time...”

A: Right. Remember, too, that with safety and many other ideas, despite your saying, “This can save your life,” there is an undercurrent in him that tells him, “If my number is up, it’s up!” OR as we say in the Middle East, “If the oil is finished, my lamp will go out.”

Any reasoning that runs against this doesn’t make much of an impression. Ultimately, you don’t have to do a thing and anything you do is not significant because God will determine in the end whether you will survive or not... “Thy will be done.”

This is why they usually won't pay as much attention to safety devices as an American who believes he has some input in life, some cause and effect impact. The Muslim believes that while the human being can do anything, if Allah decides he is going to live, he will -- if not, he won't.

Q: What about a sense of personal responsibility?

A: There is none in the sense an American learns it. That's why if you say to the Mid-East student, "You broke it," he will say, "I didn't." Partly to protect himself against your accusation and partly because if it broke it was meant to break, but he, personally, did not "cause" it to happen.

Q: I recall a close friend of mine who gave up quickly on a project and said, "It must be Buddha's will." In private and in a teasing way I replied, "Let's not assume we know what Buddha wants. Let's try everything we can think of and if it still won't work, then it must be Buddha's will."

A: Not a bad approach if you have that close comradery that close friendship. Once you become friends you can light-heartedly say comments like that. You didn't come down strong with "Damn it! What do you mean Buddha! All the time it's Buddha!" If you did that, you would lose your student. But if you tease lightly and say, "Come on now let's not test Buddha or assume we know His will," in private, it may work. Never in public though. In public you have to say and do certain things regardless of your personal opinions.

Q: How can the American instructor tell he has been "turned off" by his student?

A: A very stiff, formal thing comes between the instructor and student. You'll find this frozen smile and nothing else. No more touching. The Mid-Easterner is one of many cultures where touch is very big body language...touching a friend, someone he likes. That disappears.

Q He won't touch you at all then.

A: No more touching. No more, "Come on, let's smoke a cigarette together." No invitations for a coke or coffee. No invitations to lunch or dinner. He avoids you as much as he can.

Q: That reminds me, I've heard if you are smoking and you take out cigarettes you should offer them around or leave them out, not put them back in your pocket as we do when we're informal.

A: Offer everyone a cigarette. Leave them out.

Q: And if they offer you one and you smoke, take it.

A: Yes...otherwise you are not making contact.

Q: Our instructors report that often when they come in from a flight the student will go and get cokes for the instructor and himself. If the student doesn't have enough money for cokes for everyone, he won't get any. Suppose the instructor notices his student always buys the cokes, does his student feel it is his place to do it or can they switch back and forth in buying?

A: The student feels he should. At first he wants to do it to thank you, to get on your good side, get your friendship and avoid criticism.

Q: Can the instructor buy?

A: Definitely. But you should choose a day when the student has done something perfect and say, "We had such a great flight, I'm so pleased...happy...would you allow me to buy you a coke?" That cements that rapport. You have promoted him in the eyes of his people, he's done a great thing, and you returned the gesture. It's a good thing to do.

Q: Suppose you get a turn-off signal, what do you do? You may not even know why he is upset or angry.

A: I would ignore the turn off. Even if you are not sure, continue as before, keeping in mind the body touching, the smiling, putting your arm around his shoulders, reducing your criticism for a while, and maybe sometimes increase your praise, say how great he did in front of his fellow officers, reinforce him, and he'll come back. Then he we'll realize, "Now, he really didn't mean it that way last time."

Don't react formally, too, for the minute you do, you allow the barrier to stay and you lose him.

Q: How about using first names?

A: Generally the military is very formal. Sir...Captain this...Lt. Even the business world until you know someone well.

Q: Call him Lt kadafi or Mr. Such-and-such, if he's a civilian?

A: Yes. First call him Lieutenant when you meet him. Later, if you become friends, call him "Mohammed" in front of his superiors. With his superiors around it elevates him though they may not take it, still it raises him.

Don't call him "Mohammed" in front of the lower ranks. After all, his rank means a lot to him.

Q: That rule applies, more or less, in our system too, when you stop to think about it.

A: Right.

Q: What about this body touching? Where should you touch? Is there any place you shouldn't touch?

A: Right.

Q: What about this body touching? Where should you touch? Is there any place you shouldn't touch?

A: Put an arm around his shoulders...very important. If you don't object because of your learning, holding hands, hugging, even kissing when you meet are signals of friendship - similar to the French. I know Americans learn to connect sex with almost any touching, but in the Mid-East it simply means friendship.

Q: On meetings is the cheek or mouth kissed?

A: Well, again, initially on the cheek but if the friendship becomes so close you are "blood brothers," so to speak, it moves towards the mouth. You are part of the family then, but few people will become that close.

Q: You know, about nine times out of ten the American will be very uncomfortable about this touching - except for an arm around the shoulder once in a while. Will the Americans uneasiness turn off the student?

A: First of all, do not move quick to kissing upon greeting. It takes a long time and involves lifetime friendship ties. You begin rather formally, then some touching, then holding hands and maybe kissing the cheek, and so on. I think in the process you can begin to mention casually that culturally in your country men don't do it because they are thought of as being lesser men, homosexual. He will get the idea that it isn't done in public and won't go that far.

Q: Exactly how is the greeting usually done?

A: Generally, if you watch two Middle-Easterners meeting...here let me show you...they may shake hands - both hands go out to the other person. Then both hands move to the other person's shoulders and there is a brief or enthusiastic hug, depending on how well you know each other. Then you make the first move towards kissing or you don't. If you don't, or if you pull back, he will stop.

Q: Both hands go out?

A: Oh, yes. Always both hands. This is to show your intentions are peaceful, that there's no dagger in the other hand...similar to using the right hand to greet in Europe and the U.S. which was originally for the same purpose.

Q: What about the strength of the handshake?

A: It depends. Don't use too much strength...less than you normally would in this country or else you come across as hostile or crude.

Q: A few of the Americans seem to feel threatened by the social life of their students, all the dating.

A: Look, the student is probably playing this up. He's saying, in effect, "Okay you may be a better pilot, but I get around more." He's just the same but he is educated as a matter of course in intimacy. There should be no feeling of threat.

Q: Do the Mid-Eastern men "socialize" as much at home or is it similar to our troops when they are away from home?

A: The more women a man can be seen with, whether or not there is actually intimacy, the more it reassures him and tells others he has not gone stale, he still has his looks, he's still attractive.

Also, in the Mid-East the woman states clearly how far she wishes to go in any relationship. The man who does not abide by her wishes is not considered a man in control of himself. American women who don't say it clearly are very confusing.

Q: What is the general rule as far as the dating or marriage-age in the Mid-East?

A: While the age is rising in the cities, the legal age, basically girls seem to mature more quickly in the Mid-East. Usually between 10 to 12, and in Islam once a girl is physically able to have a child she is marriageable. Of course, she is taught from the moment she can understand to refuse a man until she marries. If she says yes, though, she is assumed to understand the implications.

Q: There have been some difficulties with convincing students they must take out auto insurance as well as obey traffic laws. If a sergeant stops them, gives them a ticket, or they go to the local jail, the student believes it is personal discrimination.

A: Traffic laws are not as binding in the Middle East. It's a matter of whether you learned as a child to obey laws on paper and learned the laws apply to everyone, regardless of status. In the Mid-East a person of high status has extra privileges...is above the law in some ways...rather like the peers of England were once.

Q: RHIP?

A: Yes. The higher the status of rank the more the privileges, and in some ways, the more the responsibilities. Now a sergeant just doesn't give an officer a ticket, nor does he stop him or jail him. Another officer might, but not someone of lower rank or status. However, in the US, the President's wife might be given a speeding ticket! That type of thing would never happen in the Mid-East...never.

Q: We have tried to explain our driving customs but cannot seem to do it correctly. The Security Police have tried to keep a violation from a student's record because he is a guest, have often offered to drive him home.

A: That would enrage him because it implies he's not man enough to handle his liquor and drive, if he's been drinking. Or it would imply he lacks skill at driving.

Q: Could we somehow bring it up indirectly with their senior officer.

A: That is one way. Tell him that insurance and obeying our traffic laws is for the protection of the people. Now, if you could had a U.S. General give the first briefings and mention this requirement, it would be law.

Q: Perhaps explain it is a custom observed by officers and people of status, even though it is sometimes broken by the outcasts of outlaws or those who don't behave the way an officer should?

A: Yes, that kind of approach.

Q: Another technique I've used where indirectness is involved is to set up a conversation with another American where I know we will be overheard, then say something like, "I'm quite worried about...." etc. The other person cooperates with the conversation, and we are not directly talking to anyone. This was used occasionally...not often.

A: Beautiful! There is an Arab proverb that says, "I'm talking to you, my neighbor, so that my daughter-in-law will hear what I am saying.

Q: What you have a person in your employ overseas and he or she is not doing what you expect, what do you do?

A: It may be you have not repeated the instructions clearly. Remember, repetition is the comfortable pattern of learning. When that doesn't work, however, then you say, "You know, I'm going to have to talk to your mother - or your father." Begin with the mother. That carries weight.

Q: What if you believe a servant has stolen something? In the U.S. if you were quite sure you would approach the servant directly.

A: No. If it is not a sizable amount, consider it a loss. Otherwise, a technique I've used is to gather the family or everyone there along with the servants and say, "I have misplaced a hundred dollars, and I want you all to look for it with me. I know it's somewhere around here and the person who finds it gets a reward" - perhaps \$5 or \$10. It's not usually lost and it turns up. "I just found it in the trash can."

Q: *If you used our approach and said, "I'm sure you took it," what would happen?*

A: You had better find the money on their body or they will not only say (whether they are innocent or guilty) "I did not touch it," leaving you stuck, but also may add, "Who are you to accuse me! Just because you're an American you think you can come here and attack or accuse me."

Q: *Then proof is...*

A: ...catching them with the money on their body. If it is in their room or among their possessions, anyone could have put it there.

Q: *Some of the American instructors feel they are being manipulated.*

A: Probably true, in a way. The man comes in knowing less about flying or whatever is than you do. This bothers him. Also, his whole future depends upon how well he does; how well he finishes.

So at the same time he is trying to get an edge, to make you like him. It can be difficult to tell when he is genuine and when he is not. But, at first, he may buy you a coke, try to get an edge on passing. His fate is in the U.S. with our teachers; try to get them to look favorably his way.

Q: *This might anger the instructor, if he suspected it.*

A: He's probably done the same thing in his life. And he had to understand this is their way of life, the normal procedure. It's whom you know as much as, if not more than, what you know. While it may not work we all hate to fail a friend. We all understand that.

Q: *What other factors are involved in the teaching situation? For instance, saying, "I don't understand."*

A: A student will usually not say that unless he has become very accustomed to U.S. techniques of learning. Now, there are times when he may not have understood what you said...language, you spoke too fast, you skipped something...whatever. He will be too ashamed to say, "I didn't understand," even if you ask him. He'll never stand up in class or before others and say it. So he may do nothing even though he has said he understands.

Q: *He could receive a poor grade because the instructor in the I.S. expects a student to signal if he doesn't understand.*

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Q: He could receive a poor grade because the instructor in the U.S. expects a student to signal if he doesn't understand.

A: He prefers not to do anything and he punished than to stand up and say, "I didn't understand." That is public shame. He can justify doing nothing easier...he didn't explain it right, he insulted me, he doesn't like me. Rather than say, "I'm no good. I didn't understand how to do it." After all, to say you do not understand also implies the instructor, the expert, failed to explain properly.

Q: Couldn't we explain that when they are with our instructors, it is proper here to raise your hand and ask a question, ask for clarification, or say he didn't understand?

A: Yes and no. I wouldn't put it that way, though. Again, the instructor is superior - in charge. I think, instead, you have to plan your first lecture, keeping in mind about half of it will be missed. They are learning in a second language as well as entering a new area of expertise without a background of tinkering with machines as most Americans have throughout their childhood. The next lecture would repeat a great deal...they might miss a third. Eventually, perhaps only 10 percent will be lost - if the instructor remembers to speak more slowly.

So rather than expecting 100 percent comprehension from students learning in their second, third, or fourth language, the lectures and presentations should be planned with a great deal of repetition. Again, rote learning...repeat and repeat.

Q: Then how does the instructor find out if the student understood?

A: Ask the student questions. "Tell me about..." or "How would you describe...?" If he hesitates in replying, it may be he is translating in his mind back and forth or he is unsure. If he's unsure, give him a hint until he can reply with confidence.

Where it is possible, it helps to begin building a rapport by first sharing experiences. "Did you have a good trip coming over?" Put him at ease and begin building a common ground between you. Then point out how many mistakes you made prior to becoming an instructor.

Q: When you are an instructor, you're pretty high up, aren't you?

A: Very high. You don't make mistakes. And that's something an instructor must keep in mind. The Mid-Eastern student does not understand the American who says, in order to be humble, "I don't know how I'll find out."

Q: We have tried to explain to our instructors that this will be misinterpreted, to never reply, "I don't know, etc." We advise them to say, "Let me show you where to look that up so next time you will know." Or, I'm busy right now, can you return in an hour."

A: Exactly! If you say you don't know, he won't listen to you after that. You've lost "face"...your status and power to influence him. If you are an expert, you know.

Q: What do you think of our current program if integrating foreign students, despite the language differences and custom differences, into one class with the American students? No changes are made at all for the foreign student.

A: My experience has been that despite the difficulties, the foreign students tend to resent it. They usually don't realize that cultural differences make learning more difficult. Instead, they see it as a put down.

Q: At one of our training bases many of the enlisted instructors resent the extra effort involved to teach someone who isn't a fellow countryman at the cost of time for American students. They also resent our policy of doing everything possible, more than for an American student, to let the foreign student pass.

A: If you fail an American student, he is reassigned without any terrible result. If you fail a foreign student, you make an enemy. They were not raised in the American system and they cannot be expected to act like Americans. It is a problem in some ways on the American side for there seems to be a belief that almost any officer or sergeant has the special skills needed to teach - especially for teaching students who are not "mainstream" Americans.

Q: Then you agree that there is a special skill involved for working with or teaching people who are not from your culture?

A: Yes, definitely. Whatever country you go to, some people have this skill and others don't. I think it would help in this case if your instructors were more aware of cultural differences...explain why people act differently, believe differently...that they don't mean to appear arrogant in your country or insult you...and vice versa.

Q: Our experience has been that some instructors seem to have personalities which make it almost impossible to work with people who are different...they just see them as bad or stupid. The whole situation becomes emotional as they misinterpret things and their duty effectiveness drops.

A: Where the person cannot adjust, even after training, he should be reassigned. It happens everywhere. Sometimes it is just with one group of people - the Englishman who cannot "stand" Italians but gets along fine with other nationalities.

Q: Do you think it might be of interest to students for the Middle East to learn about what is different about our ways, our systems?

A: As long as you don't appear to be criticizing them.

Q: There is no need to do that for we would speak of differences between two cultures, not judge them.

A: You might mention the contributions to Western culture that came from the Middle East.

Q: Such as "captain" from the Arabic word, "Krafton?" or that Sherry came from Shiraz, and astronomy as well as geometry come from the Middle East?

A: Right...weave that in to show you are aware of their contributions to your civilization. The Arabic numbering system, the basic math and sciences that are used in technology...things like that.

Q: What about gifts? We explain to students that our instructors are not permitted to receive gifts. However, often when the student had finished the course, a gift is presented at the last moment. "You are no longer my instructor" is what they say. What does this mean? If the instructor refused it, would they understand an insult was not meant?

A: I would never refuse a gift --and I know the regulations--even if you have to turn it in because of its value.

Q: Must you return a gift then?

A: Not in this situation--unless you have become friend--close friends. He has visited your home, spoken frankly with you in private, trusted you, touches you...and you did the same.

Q: If there is not a friendship that close, how should you handle it?

A: It means simply, "Thank you. I appreciated what you did." Thank him, several times. There's no need to give a gift in return.

Q: And if there was a close friendship?

A: You don't have to immediately present a return gift. You can wait until he's returned home and write him a nice letter saying, "I appreciated our friendship so much and I know while you were here you admired...(whatever it was)...and I send it as a token gift not worthy of your esteem. But I hope you will accept it in friendship."

You do not say if it is a gift in return, of course. You speak of friendship, the important thing.

Q: One of our instructors sent his students flying scarfs after they returned home. They had presented him an unexpected gift on their departure.

A: Something like that is good...something which reminds them of the squadron or school. Generally, despite the problems it creates in the U.S. system, you should accept the gift because of what it means on their part. You can always turn it in or ask for approval to keep it.

CHAPTER 7

WHAT IS ISLAM?

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7-1. ISLAM. The study of Islam fills libraries and consumes lifetimes. This overview is intended merely as an introduction.

a. Islam is at once a religion and a total way of life. Almost a fifth of the world's people—700-800 million in some 60 countries—are Muslims, embracing this faith first preached by the Prophet Muhammad fourteen centuries ago in the Arabian Peninsula. The world of Islam stretches from the heartland of Saudi Arabia eastward through west Asia and the Indian subcontinent to Indonesia—the largest Muslim country—and the southern Philippines; northward into central Asia and southeastern Europe; and westward across north and sub-Saharan Africa; and the Atlantic into south and north America.

b. This geographic spread contains people of many races and cultures, thus creating diversity among Muslims. They are unified by their common faith, Islam.

7-2.A FAITHFUL WAY OF LIFE: "GOD IS ONE"

a. What do Muslims share, be they Africans or Arabs, Asians, or Americans? They share above all a belief in a single, all-powerful God, the same God worshipped by Jews and Christians. Their faith is summed up on the creed:

"There is no god, but the God and Muhammad is His Messenger"

b. Allah is the name of God in Arabic and in fact means "the God," to emphasize that "He is One and there is no other." Islam means "submission," connoting that total commitment to God brings health, peace, and justice. Islam also refers to the worldwide "nation" or community of all believers. These believers are Muslims (also spelled Moslems)—that is, "one who submits to the will of Allah (God)."

c. Islam is not just a religion, if religion means only a system of belief and worship; rather, Islam is a way of life. It proclaims faith and sets forth rituals. It also prescribes order for individuals and society; codifying law, family relationships, matters of business, etiquette, dress, food, personal hygiene and much more. Islam is a complete, complex civilization, in which ideally, individuals, societies, and governments should all reflect the will of God. In essence, it is a system or rules or laws to be followed in which the sacred is not separated from the secular. The Western concept of such separation is alien to Islamic thought. As a faith structured by laws, Islam more closely parallels the legalistic Judaic system than the broadly stated principles of Christianity.

7-3.THE KORAN: WORD OF GOD.

a. The teachings of Islam are found in the Koran (al-Qua'an, or "recitation") which Muslims hold to be the immutable word of God and the unrivaled source of authority in almost all aspects of individual and group living. It was given in classical Arabic, transmitted through the angel Gabriel to Prophet Muhammad. Muhammad was commanded to recite the revelations he received from God, which were first written down during the lifetime of the Prophet, but duplicated for distribution only after his death. Muslims the world over, no matter what their tongue, memorize and recite as much of the Koran in Arabic as possible.

b. The Koran came to be supplemented by the Tradition and Sayings (hadith), statements about what Muhammad said or did, as remembered by his companions and passed down during succeeding generations as part of the sunnah, the "beaten path" for devout Muslims to follow. The sunnah recounts the deeds, sayings and silent approval of the Prophet covering details of community life.

c. The Koran and the sunnah provide the framework for the shari'a, Islam's body of law. In many, but not all, Islamic countries, the shari'a still provides the legal basis for judgment and punishment, at least in some areas of life. Although problems in dealing with non-Muslims and the colonial imposition of other legal systems have caused the shari'a to be supplemented with Western legal codes in some countries, many Muslim nations have recently extended and reinforced the application of Koranic law.

7-4. THE FIVE PILLARS AND OTHER PRACTICES. Islam has five essential practices or "pillars of faith." These are:

- Bearing Witness to the one true God, and acknowledging Muhammad as his Messenger (shahada).
- Praying five times daily—dawn, noon, afternoon, sunset and night facing Mecca (Saudi Arabia), Islam's holiest city (salat).
- Giving alms to help the needy and for communal purposes (zakat).
- Fasting from dawn to sunset throughout Ramadan, the ninth month of the Islamic lunar calendar (saum).
- Making the pilgrimage to Mecca, once in a lifetime, for those who are able (hajj).

a. Daily prayers are performed by practicing Muslims whether individually or, preferable in a group. When the time for prayer comes, in many countries Muslims stop wherever they are, ritually wash themselves, and face the Ka'ba in Mecca to pray. Facing in a common direction symbolizes unity of purpose for the millions of Muslims offering their prayers at the same time. Prayers said in mosques (the Muslims place of worship) have greater merit. Prayers may be led by an imam. However, this function does not give him any special religious status. Similarly, the summons to prayer, azan, is called by a man of the community, the mu'azzin, who happens to have a particularly good voice, rather than someone who claims religious status. The call to prayer begins Allahu Akbar, "God, is Great," a cry heard throughout the Muslim world.

b. Because of the uncompromising nature of Islamic monotheism, no images or pictures of any kind are permitted in the mosque. Islam preaches that all men are equal. Therefore, there are no pews and generally no reserved places for dignitaries. The mosque is usually furnished with simple mats and occasionally with rugs. Worshippers form lines behind the imam as they arrive with no distinction of rank.

c. The belief in the equality of all men further means that Islam rejects the concept of ordained clergy. There are, nonetheless, religious leaders, many of whom exert power in their political as well as

the strictly the logical sphere, and who may be their followers. There is no separate religious organization or “church”.

d. In addition to the “five pillars,” there are other practices commonly observed throughout the Islamic world. Muslims are forbidden to use intoxication beverages or to consume pork, blood, or anything that might be harmful. In order to be eaten, animals must be ritually slaughtered and drained of blood. Similar dietary laws are found in Judaism.

e. There are no prescribed patterns of dress. Women and men are asked, however, not to dress or act in a provocative or indecent way. Customs in different Muslims societies reflect a range of practice. Women in some areas of the Muslim world are covered completely from head to toe, while in other places they dress demurely and some of them cover their heads with a scarf.

f. Many customs are currently under active discussion in the Muslim world, including the roles of women. The Koran states that God created all mankind from a male and a female, and as all are equal, none is better than another in His sight except through deeds. Within Islam, women, like men, have moral and religious duties and are viewed as responsible. In the words of the Prophet, basic education is a right and also a duty for both men and women. Marriage and family are important. Sexual activities within marriage are meritorious; outside that bond, premarital or extramarital sex is a serious offense, punishable under the law of Islam. The degree to which men’s and women’s lives are separated, and women’s lives are restricted, varies considerable in Muslim societies. It is determined by custom of keeping women in seclusion practiced in parts of the Muslim world seems oppressive to Westerners and to some modernist Muslims, but is viewed by many other Muslims as being protective and respectful of women.

g. These and other unifying beliefs and practices shape and define Muslims. Theirs is a faith and a way of life centered on individual and communal submission to the will of the one God. Within this faith, what is the position of Muhammad?

“Muhammad is his Messenger”

h. Islam teaches that God revealed His existence to a number of prophets through the ages. They include Noah, Abraham, Moses, and Jesus. According to Muslims, however, God’s final and complete revelation was given to Muhammad.

i. Muhammad was born in Mecca, in what is now Saudi Arabia, about 570 A.D. He was unsatisfied with the pagan religions of his people as well as with the prevailing social conditions, and contemplated religious and social questions.

j. During one of his frequent meditations alone in the desert hills near Mecca in the lunar month of Ramadan in 610 A.D., Muhammad heard revelations from the angel Gabriel and began to receive the Koran. This process of revelation continued for more than 20 years until his death. At God’s commandment, the Prophet Muhammad began reciting God’s work and preaching the message revealed to him. His wife, Khadija, and some of his closest friends were the first believers. The ruling oligarchy in Mecca fought bitterly to stamp out this movement. During this period, tradition holds that Muhammad went on a night journey in which he was transported from Mecca to the site of The Dome of The Rock in Jerusalem and from there ascended to heaven for a preview of the afterlife. (According to Biblical tradition, the Dome of the Rock is the site on which Abraham was prepared to sacrifice his son, and is revered by Jews, Christians, and Muslims. Next to it has been built the Aqsa Mosque, one of Islams most sacred places of worship.)

k. In 622, after continued persecution, Muhammad and his followers left Mecca and took refuge in Yathrib, which came to be known as al Medina, “the City.” This emigration (hijra) marks the year one of the Islamic calendar. A.H., used in denoting years in this calendar, stands for Anno Hegira, “in the year of the emigration,” in the same way A.D. stands for Domini, “in the year of Our Lord.”

l. In Medina, Muhammad became the ruler of the community as well as its religious teacher. Both the Koran and the examples of the Prophet governed daily life and gave the community its laws. Muhammad gathered more and more followers and eight years later returned to Mecca victorious. There he smashed the idols in and around the temple of the Ka’ba. The Grand Mosque erected around the Ka’ba is the most holy place in Islam and marks the direction in which Muslims pray. Before he died in 632 A.D., Muhammad was able to break down tribal loyalties and unify his followers who came from different groups.

m. In Islam, Muhammad is honored as God’s final Prophet. He did not create but received the Koran. Muslims do not worship Muhammad, only Allah. It is incorrect, consequently, to call Muslims—those who submit to the will of God—Muhammadans.

7-5. “PEOPLE OF THE BOOK.”

a. Muhammad is viewed by Muslims as the last in a succession of prophets who preached parts of the same message. Their earlier sacred writings, the Torah, the Psalms, and the Gospel of Jesus, are constantly mentioned in the Koran. In contrast to pagans, who worshipped idols and believed in many gods, Jews and Christians are called “people of the book,” and are given special protection under Muslim law. The Koran states:

Be courteous when you argue with People of the Book, except with those of them who do evil. Say “we believe in that which is revealed to us and that which was revealed to you. Our God and your God is One. To Him we surrender ourselves.”

b. Jesus is granted particular respect by Muslims. However, because of their belief in the oneness of God, they reject the Christian concept of the Trinity. Respecting “people of the book” underlines the common heritage Muslims believe that they share with Christians and Jews.

7-6. SUNNIS, SHAIS, AND SUFIS.

a. When Muhammad died, a dispute arose over leadership of the Muslim community, which was also the first Islamic state. One faction, the sunnis (derived from the Arabic word for “tradition”), felt that the Caliph (khalifa, Arabic for “successor”) should be chosen, as Arab chiefs customarily are, by election. Therefore, they support the succession of the first four, or “rightly guided,” Caliphs, who were Muhammad’s companions.

b. The other group maintained that Muhammad chose his cousin and son-in-law Ali as his spiritual and secular heir, and that succession should be through his bloodline. In 680 A.D., one of Ali’s sons, Hussein, led a band of rebels against the ruling Caliph and they were massacred. Hussein’s martyrdom began the shia (sometimes called Shi’ite) movement, whose name comes from the word meaning “partisans of Ali.”

c. The shia and the sunni are the two major branches of Muslims, with the sunni comprising about 85 percent of the total. The differences between these two major divisions are not so much in belief or law, which are fundamentally the same for both, as in practice and political theory. The shia, mainly

located in Iran, Iraq, Yemen, Afghanistan and Pakistan, have developed a hierarchical religious leadership. Both the shia and sunni are further divided among themselves in ritual and practice, structure, and political orientation.

d. Cutting across these branches is sufism. Sufism is a mystical strain of Islam which reflects the need felt by many individuals to go a step beyond formal religious observances and

7-7. THE SPREAD OF ISLAM

a. Perhaps no single historical event between the fall of Rome and the European voyages of discovery was more significant than the rise of Islam. Islam provided a focus for political order and intellectual growth affecting the entire world, not just those people who embraced it.

b. By conversion, commerce and conquest, the new faith spread quickly in all directions soon after its founding. During a period of world chaos and the breakdown of existing empires, people saw Islam as a comprehensive faith and political/legal system that provides order and justice.

c. To describe the expansion in general terms, however, Islam soon brought North Africa under its way. In the Middle East, from modern Iraq to the Atlantic, most of the converts became Arabized, adopting Arabic language and culture. Elsewhere conversion did not bring Arabization (today, only 15 to 20 percent of all Muslims are Arabs). Within a century, Islam has spread to northern Spain in the West and India and China in the East.

d. Although this initial expansion was halted in France in 732 A.D., Sicily and parts of Europe were later conquered. The Ottoman Turks later added most of previously Christian southeastern Europe to the domain of Islam. In a different direction, Islam crossed the Sahara into the kingdoms of black Africa. Arab Muslims and non-Arab converts carried Islam beyond India into central Asia and to what are now Malaysia, Indonesia, and a part of the southern Philippines.

e. The rise of Islam not only brought empires into being, it also fostered the flowering of civilizations and development of centers of learning. A melding of new thought with ancient, of ideas from east and west took place, producing great contributions in medicine, mathematics, physics, astronomy, geography, architecture, art, language, literature, and history. Eventually crucial ideas and concepts were transmitted, either directly or indirectly, from Islamic centers to medieval Christian Europe. Much ancient reek learning was passed on. Basic mathematical concepts such as Arabic numerals, algebra and the idea of zero were refined and later conveyed into European thought. Sophisticated instruments, which were to make possible the European voyages of discovery were developed, among them the astrolabe, the quadrant and navigational maps.

f. From the 7th to the 11th centuries, the community of Muslims was economically and militarily more powerful than Christian Europe, rivaling Chinese civilization in its achievements. However, Islam's success in spreading rapidly over such an expanse of territories and peoples led to political fragmentation. It was this, which in the 12th and 13th centuries, made it possible from Christian Crusades, events still remembered by Muslim Arabs as Western aggression. While in the 15th and 16th centuries, the Ottomans reimposed some political unity, the original dynamism of Islamic civilization slowed and an enduring equilibrium, of forces in many Islamic societies was struck.

g. In the meantime, Europe discovered new, well-springs of vitality, partly fed from Islamic sources. The Renaissance in the 14th and 17th centuries led to the creation of powerful secular institutions, in particular the nation state. The Protestant Reformation, with its emphasis on the individual, complimented the Renaissance. Advancements in science and the industrial revolution generated new

methods of organization and of physical strength. Europe was, therefore, able to dominate large portions of the rest of the world, including much of the Muslim world. The New World grew out of the European voyages of discovery, and the industrial revolution spawned both capitalist theory, giving rise to the present superpowers.

7-8. MUSLIM HOLIDAYS AND SPECIAL OBSERVANCES

a. The Islamic year is marked by many religious and traditional holidays. Some involve prayer and fasting; others take on additional festive aspects. Some are more cultural than religious in origin. Some are obligatory for the believer while others are not.

b. Not all "Muslim holidays" are celebrated everywhere. A few – Ramadan, 'Id al-Fitr, and 'Id al-Adah – are celebrated widely in the Muslim world, while others are important in a specific area or are significant only to particular groups of Muslims. Similarly, the forms of celebration of the same holiday may differ from country to country. In addition, many Islamic countries have their own national celebrations.

c. **Lunar Calendar.** Islamic holidays occur in the Muslim lunar calendar of 354 days, or twelve twenty-eight day months. These months – Muharram, Safar, Rabi'I, Rabi' II, Jumadi I, Jumadi II, Rajab, sha'ban, Ramadan, Shawwal, Dhu al-Qidah, and Dhu al-Hijjah - - each begin with the new moon. Because the Gregorian calendar, in use in the West, is based on the 365-day rotation of the earth around the sun, the Gregorian and Muslim calendars do not conform. Therefore, an annual check is necessary in determining the Gregorian date, which corresponds to a particular Islamic festival. A general rule is that the date will advance 11 days from one year to the next (e.g., Ramadan dates: July 13, 1980; July 3, 1981). A particular date in both calendars will coincide once in 32 years (i.e., January 1—1 Muharram). Because the Gregorian calendar is accepted internationally, people in most Muslim countries operate in both calendars systems, and the international calendar is used in non-Muslim matters.

d. Muslim holidays are dated in relation to phases of the moon. Throughout the Muslim world, there are astronomers and mathematicians who calculate precisely when there can be anticipated. Nonetheless, in many areas, the date is not confirmed until the actual sighting. Islam is a world-wide religion, and therefore, because of differences in geography and sighting, holidays may begin on different days in various countries. However, the variation is seldom more than one day. Consequently, it is not always possible to anticipate exactly when business and government offices in a particular country will close for a holiday.

e. Both the earlier period of Muslim dominance and the later reversal of historical fortunes have created stereotypes and misperceptions of Islam in the non – Muslim world. These are reinforced by the lack of contact between most Westerners and Muslims. Hence Islam – in many ways closely related to Western civilization – is often seen as hostile, dangerous, or incomprehensible. Complex forces are sweeping Islam that affect not only Muslims, but also the entire world. Understanding these forces is further complicated by the misperceptions.

7-9. THE PRESENT: MATERIAL PROGRESS AND SPIRITUAL VALUES.

a. In our own time, the impact of industrial development, technology, urbanization and secular values has had far reaching consequences. Around the world, rapid change has disrupted social patterns and cultural traditions, which served as reference points for centuries. Muslims, no less than others, are reacting. Along with the flood of Western technology have come new, sometimes unwelcome ideas concerning individualism, materialism, sexuality, family, and politics. To some, these ideas seem to threaten basic Islamic values. Furthermore, the outlook of most Muslims is strongly colored by a very

recent emergence from a long period of foreign domination. There is also an awareness of the clearly visible economic disparities between industrialized and developing nations and, within societies, between classes.

b. Concerned Muslims across Asia and Africa are actively exploring many routes to find the balance between modernization and tradition. This reflects a sense among Muslims that Islamic principles may offer them more appropriate solutions to their national problems than those offered by either capitalism or communism. Therefore, they call for a reinjection of basic Islamic values into the lives of the individual and society. Among the varied responses advocated, one had been a resurgent call for pietistic reform. This response is closely related to similar outpourings of fundamentalism of all sorts around the world.

c. Just as Muslims are culturally diverse, so there is no single "Islamic" politics or economics. What unites concerned Muslims are common beliefs, common rituals, and determination to strengthen and preserve their heritage: Islam, at once a religion and a way of life.

d. Throughout the Islamic world, the day goes from sundown to sundown, rather than midnight to midnight as in Western custom.

e. Unlike Christmas, Passover, or Chinese New Year, which fall in the same season each year, Muslim holidays rotate through the seasons. During a lifetime, therefore, a Muslim will observe the Ramadan fast, for example, during hot and cold seasons and longer and shorter days.

f. Each Muslim observance has its own significance. They are listed here in the same order that they occur in the Muslim lunar calendar, and their standard Arabic name is used. However, the Arabic spelling for the name of the Holiday may vary or a local name may be used.

7-10. SPECIFIC HOLIDAYS

Holiday	Observance
Muharram 1	Ras al-Sana, the New Year, is the first day of the first month, Muharram. Particular religious observances are not called for, but rather it is celebrated much as the New Year is celebrated in the west, although without alcohol. The workweek is interrupted in some countries for this holiday.
Muharram 10	'Ashura (the tenth), is a religious holy day during which pious Muslims may fast from dawn to sunset. Although it is not an obligatory day of fast for Muslims, fasting is a recommended ritual and often practiced by individuals. For Shi'a Muslims, it is a day of special sorrow, commemorating the assassination of the Prophet's grandson, Hussein. In some places, there will be passion plays and parades which often include self-flagellation in sorrow and sympathy for Hussein. Among Shi'i, the celebration of 'Ashura traditionally begins on the first of Muharram and culminates on the 10 th day. It is a time of mourning in Shi'I areas, where daily work will often be interrupted.
Rabi'I 12	Maulid al-Nabi, the birthday of the Prophet Muhammad, is celebrated the 12 th day of Rabi'I. In some regions, this holiday goes on for many days. It is a time of festivities and the exchange of gifts, with children, especially, receiving candy and toys. Sufis may have torch-light processions at night. Often panegyrics (passages) eulogizing the Prophet are read aloud. In some places, businesses may be closed for the celebrations. Islamic teaching does not encourage the veneration of saints, the Prophet, or other pious persons, so that in some Muslim lands, Saudi Arabia, for example, the popular celebration of his birthday is discouraged.
Rahab 27	Lailat al-Isra wa al-Mi'raj, literally "the night of journey and ascent," commemorates Muhammad's night journey to heaven and return the same night. This night is traditionally celebrated by saying prayers and the reading of panegyrics. In Mecca, parades may take place. Its observance does not disrupt daily life
Sha'ban 14	The 14 th night of the eighth month, Sha'ban, is widely celebrated by pious Muslims. Sometimes it is called "Lailat al-Bara'a" or "night of repentance." In some areas of the Muslim world, it is treated like a New Year's celebration. According to Muslim hadith or tradition, it is the night God approaches earth to call to man and to grant forgiveness for his sins. In some countries, India and Malaysia, for example, it is a night when prayers are said for the dead, food is given to the poor and sweets are eaten
Ramadan	Ramadan, the ninth month of the Muslim year, is entirely devoted to meditation and spiritual purification through self-discipline. It is a period of abstinence from food, drink, and physical pleasure. The fast is an obligation practiced by Muslims throughout the world, unless they are old, infirm, traveling, or pregnant. Those who cannot complete the fast during the prescribed time will frequently make it up the following month. Throughout the month, which begins with the sighting of the new moon, the strictures apply between dawn and dusk. Observing the fast, however, does not preclude performing normal daily tasks. However, in some Islamic countries, business slows down for this month and government offices, if they are open, keep short hours. After dusk, the faithful say the evening prayers and gather for a meal. Guests are frequently invited to share in these sumptuous gatherings. In countries, for example, Jordan and Saudi Arabia, it is difficult for

	non-Muslims to obtain food and drink during the hours of fasting; frequently they can best care for their needs in the larger hotels in major cities. It is considered inappropriate for people to openly eat or during Ramadan.
Ramadan 27	The next to the last night of the fasting month, “Lailat al-Qadr”, or “night of power and greatness”, is by custom an especially holy time. It is said to commemorate the time at which revelation was first given to Muhammad. It is felt that prayers said during a particular, but unspecified hour of this night will be answered, hence many pious Muslims spend the entire evening at prayer.
Shawwal 1	“Id al-Fitr”, called the lesser feast, begins immediately after the month-long Ramadan fast. It is perhaps Islam’s most joyous festival, marking the end of the month of abstinence and the cleansing of the believer. Although the 1 st of Shawwal is the primary holiday, celebrations often continue for two or three more days. Like the beginning of Ramada, the exact date is not fixed—although most people know when it should be—and in many countries, ‘Id al-Fitr is not declared until the actual sighting of the new moon. The first morning begins with communal prayer followed by feasting. Families and friends visit each other’s homes. It is a time for new clothes and for presents, with sweet pastries a particular favorite. In Indonesia, where friends must be greeted and asked forgiveness for the commissions and omissions of the past year, festivities may continue intermittently for several weeks. Businesses and government officers are frequently closed for the holiday time.
Dhu al-Hijjah 1-10	Muslims, if they are able, are obliged to undertake a pilgrimage to Mecca, at least, once in their lifetime. This duty, called the hajj, should be performed in the last month of the Muslin calendar, Dhu al-Hijja. According to tradition, it commemorates Abraham’s offer to sacrifice his son, Ishmael. (In Islamic tradition, Ishmael, son of Hagar, was the intended sacrifice, not Isaac, son of Sarah, as held by Jews and Christians.) Pilgrims from all over the world converge on Mecca for these ten days, performing a number of rituals and participating in communal prayer.
Dhu al-Hijjah 10	All Muslims, whether on the pilgrimage or at home, participate in the feast of sacrifice, “Id al-Adha”, which marks the end of the hajj on the 10 th of Dhu al-Hijja. The feast of sacrifice, called the “greater feast”, is observed by the slaughtering of animals and the distribution of the meat. In some places, this is done individually, and the meat is shared equally among the family and the poor; sometimes the slaughtering may take place in a public area and the meat is then distributed. As with the lesser feast to mark the end of Ramadan, people put on new or good clothes, offer a special prayer in the morning, visit each other, give presents, especially to children, and visit cemeteries. The festivities usually last two or three days, during which time businesses and government officers are usually closed.

7-11. PRAYER. One of the daily and weekly rituals in Islam is prayer. Prayers are said five times daily, before sunrise, before noon, afternoon, after sunset, and in the evening. A call to prayer is delivered from the minaret of the mosque. This is customarily begun by the Arabic phrase—Allahu akbar—or “God is great”. The prayers at noon on Friday are the most important of the week. The community—particularly the men and boys—gathers at the mosque. A sermon in which the community is told of important events usually precedes the prayers. While Friday is a special day, it is not one of relaxation, but one of joining together. Muslim businesses and government offices are usually closed. In some countries, Friday may be a half-day or the lunch hour may be extended to facilitate communal prayers.

CHAPTER 8

SOME GUIDELINES FOR THE MIDDLE EAST

USAF Special Operations School Middle East Affairs Branch

8-1. STATUS.

a. In the United States, we have status according to what we do – through actions which “earn” us more respect, authority, and power. Therefore, we tend to identify ourselves by our achievements rather than by our family.

b. In the Mid-East, they gain status by being born into the right family. If God....Allah....did not want you to be important, you would have been born into a poor family. And once, you were born into status, you must, in a sense...protect your status from all challengers the rest of your life. If you fail...such as being successfully criticized in public or insulted...you lose some of your status and your family also loses. Occasionally, all can be lost.

c. Social mobility, regardless of birth status, is beginning to appear to a degree in the Middle East, but it is still very new.

d. While in the U.S., our status is connected to salary or control over more people, in the Middle East, your status lies in your public “face” presented to the world and in appearances – personal dignity. For instance, white and blue collar workers dress formally to go to work – keeping up appearances. At work, the blue-collar worker changes clothes. Of course, the quality of suits and dresses and their cut allows most people to pretty well guess the real status, yet appearances are preserved.

e. In America, a respected community leader, a General, a doctor, can wash his car, sweep his driveway, paint his house, without hurting appearances.

f. In the Arab world, they do not think us mad, but might well lose all respect for us. For them, it is shocking, even barbaric, to have anyone of importance do manual labor, whether at home or work. This becomes especially significant when we get involved with training. In some countries where similar beliefs exist, the use of special “lab: coats with insignia have circumvented traditional thinking and bridged the way to technical tasks.

g. Tied to these attitudes is the belief that *how* money is made is critical. The first action of a successful young professional son of a laborer in the Arab world is likely to be to arrange for new jobs for his family, which do not involve manual labor. Then he is likely to move everyone – brothers and their families, parents, sisters, cousins...to a new neighborhood and then, begin arranging marriages for his relatives into a higher status, and finally, he will likely start acquiring western symbols of success.

h. Yet, despite all his efforts, he and his relatives will always remain vulnerable to the deadliest insult of...“they’re lower class.”

i. As Americans, we need to remember if we are in their country to never wash our cars, clean our own floors, and so on, but instead to protect our status – and influence – by letting others do it for us.

8-2. CRITICISM. An important part of “status” in the Middle East is protecting it. When we, acting in American pattern, directly criticize an Arab, try to “prove him wrong with “*facts*,” publicly evaluate his performance and trouble shoot it, or accuse him of a wrong,” he must above all else, protect himself and his status. Therefore, you can expect him to react by his code:

- Interpreting the facts to suit himself;
- Denying your “facts” flatly – and perhaps honestly, for the “facts” are culturally defined; or
- Condemning or dismissing any of your conclusions which threaten him as completely illogical nonsense.

a. We are taught to believe there are “objective” facts even when dealing with people. Despite our own “scientific” findings which indicate no one can perceive without subjectivity, we still believe in objectivity.

b. The Arabs do not. “Facts are what you see, what you experience, what you want to see. Therefore, if they are confronted with a threatened put down, they simply reinterpret the facts to suit their needs – which is perfectly correct within a code that stresses public appearance above all.

8-3. INDIRECTNESS.

a. Because American “frankness: and directness is apt to be read as criticism requiring instant defense, the Middle Eastern way of life values and uses indirect ways of saying the same thing.

b. It is “natural” for an Arab to speak with double meaning--those of us from the United States, who fail to watch for this and listen for this can make unnecessary mistakes. An Arab, then, learns to be a diplomat in the cradle. Every remark is tactful...and has a second message. The tact protects the other person’s public image, avoids insult, and shows the Arab is cultured.

c. Americans traditionally speak much more directly – perhaps because of the many languages in our history. No insult is meant, but when other people are unfamiliar with our ways, directness is usually misunderstood.

d. If we say what we intend to “tactfully,” there will probably be less misunderstanding. At the same time, it means we have to learn to listen more carefully than we are used to or we may miss the message. Our children are encouraged to speak up. The Arab child id told this is rude. The differences begin, then, in our childhood learning.

8-4. MEETING PEOPLE.

a. Shaking Hands:

(1) We usually learn to shake hands only the first time we are introduced to someone. The Arab shakes hands every time he meets you and every time he leaves you. This applies whether he meets you on the street, in the office, at a conference, restaurant, or at home.

(2) The pattern there is to shake hands on meeting, chat a bit, and shake hands again on leaving – even if you meet ten times a day.

b. Conversation:

(1) Just as we have our own local idea of what kind of question is personal and what kind is not, so do the Arabs. A general rule is to take the lead from the Arab, discussing what he brings up in social conversations. For him, what are general questions about age, family and his female relatives may be seen as very intimate questions.

(2) Basically, it would be unwise to ask about his family or himself in front of other people or loud enough from them to hear you.

(3) For example: Just before a weekly meeting of a field operation, an American was chatting with the other members at the meeting. When almost everyone had arrived, the American turned to the last arrival and asked, "How's the wife, Omar?" Omar flushed a deep red and mumbled something incomprehensible (a strong clue your foot is in the wrong place). But the American smiled and nodded as if he understood the mumble and turned away.

(4) The Arab staff members knew Omar's wife had been in the hospital for six weeks. But the American's question in a public meeting was considered embarrassingly crude. The subject of any women connected to an Arab is very intricate and closely tied to his personal dignity and his ego – his public "appearances".

(5) In this case, the American meant well. But because of local ways of life, he has asked what was a private question in public, in a loud voice, and in a closed room where a business meeting was underway and not everyone there was a close friend of Omar's.

(6) The delicate question was tied to honor and to the shame of Omar – in a sense, also to the Arab males present – yet it was asked casually, as if it were not important and not personal.

(7) The normal way locally would have been to ask the question in a low voice, standing a foot from his employee or sitting close to him, and holding or patting the employee's shoulder or arm while asking and listening. This would be read as sincere concern, the behavior expected of a supervisor in the Arab world.

c. Feet: Never sit with your feet up – on a desk or furniture or anything.

d. Touching: The Arab touches more between the same sex, showing liking – not sex. They hold hands, hug each other, kiss, if close friends. If an Arab does not touch you, he does not like you – or he may be trying to restrain himself, because you are not used to being touched. Contact between the opposite sex in public is considered close to obscene.

e. Distance: Instead of standing at arms length from someone as we do, the Arab stands about a foot away, closer if it is a very personal conversation. When we stand our distance away, he feels as if we are across the room. By standing so that you are talking slightly over one shoulder, you can take the closer distance. As it sends an important signal, it is worth trying to make the closer distance.

f. Friendship:

(1) We often send out close friendship cues unintentionally, for our traditions lead us to do more for casual friends than people will do for close friends in any other societies. However, when we don't follow up, as they see it, they think we are hypocrites or that we have decided we do not want them for a friend. To the Arab, our approach to friendship seems quite incomprehensible.

(2) An Arab must know your social, professional, and academic background and age before he talks to you. He would like to know, because it matters in his world, how much influence and to what people you and your family are connected to – personal references. Do you know people in the Department of State? Officials in his country? Only after he has this information and has some time to judge you personally, will he settle down to direct business, and then conduct it at times more quickly than we would for he knows the important things.

(3) This means that on arrival, you must take time to let the Arabs you will be working with get to know you. This is business, not just chit-chat, as in the United States.

(4) The Arab cannot afford to misjudge you. If you leak confidences when you drink, if you make “remarks” to other Americans about him or Arabs--any traits like this, you could hurt his career, his family, and his trust in you. If he misjudges you, his whole family could suffer and his position. So naturally, he will apply his learned rules to you before he settles down to sharp business bargaining.

(5) Any Westerner who would like the benefits of a “real” Arab friend needs to realize the friendship has more intensity and involves a system of balancing favors against obligations. We trade “favors” and so do they.

g. Hosts and Guests:

(1) When we invite someone we are fairly definite. We ask someone over at a specific time or we send him a written invitation.

(2) In the Middle East, the invitations seem vague to us, and the rules governing them complex. In the Arab world, you must show hospitality when on your territory – you own home, your office. This necessity is tied to protecting his public image, his dignity, and his status. ***Failure to be hospitable is one of the major social “sins” of the Arab world.***

(3) A true story of a man in ancient Arabia, Hatem At-Taei shows the pure meaning of hospitality and it’s importance to the Arab.

(4) Hatem loved and owned the fastest and most beautiful, most famous horse of his time. One day a stranger stopped by Hatem’s tent around dinner time. Hatem insisted, despite all protests, that his visitors stay for dinner.

(5) After dinner was over, he asked the visitor his business and was told the King wished to have Hatem’s famous stallion. In anguish, Hatem revealed that having nothing else for his guest, he had his stallion killed to serve for dinner. (Isfahani 1284-1285A.H.)

(6) Points to keep in mind from this story are several. An unexpected stranger arrived near dinnertime. The host insists, despite protests, in spite of the personal cost, the guest may stay. The host prevails for it is his land, his home. Hatem does not hesitate, either, for his whole public image and his status are more important than his personal feelings.

(7) Today, the host and guest roles in the Middle East are ruled by many subtle and unmentioned rules, which everyone there absorbed in childhood. Just as we automatically stand at arms length from someone we are talking with, having absorbed this rule without it being mentioned in childhood, so have the Arabs learned the rules.

(8) Take a chance meeting in a restaurant. The person already there becomes the host. The host offers his table and refreshments. The new arrival can say “yes” if he is free, or decline gracefully and with thanks if he is joining someone else.

(9) If two people of unequal financial status dine, the higher status person normally takes on the host role and pays. However, the guest must try to pay, even to physically pulling at the bill, until his offer is refused. This way the public image and dignity of the lower position person is protected.

(10) A casual visitor to our home may or may not be offered food or drink. The Arab always offers. He does not say, “Would you like...”, but “What will you have – coffee or tea?” And often, it will be brought in without asking. The guest may apologize and say he cannot stay, but he must at least have a sip before leaving.

(11) If you are casually asked over for a drink to a middle-class Arab home, no hour will be given. The unwritten rules are: a guest is welcome at anytime, not just at 8 p.m., the usual time. However, if you do drop in anywhere around 8 or 9 p.m. for drinks, you should expect (and provide if you are a host), a huge meal. You would come close to offending the Arab if you do not eat something. Of course, as you arrive, you shake hands and chat. When you leave, you shake hands and say, “Thank you very much,” but do not add, “... for the meal or drinks.”

(12) Should an Arab co-worker stop by your door around a meal or break time and ask if you’re going to lunch or coffee, he must, by his rules, pay for your lunch and vice versa. The broad rule of hospitality applies here too. To insist on “dutch treat” or the like, means that you do not like him or want him around...to him.

h. Relating to People:

(1) The Arab way of life teaches him to relate more to people above and below than to peers or co-workers. In the family, the child is apt to be closer to his elders and not to relate as closely to his brothers and sisters. The older child is above the younger, the boy above the girl. This pattern threads through the whole way of life...at home or at work...when two people come together, one is above the other.

(2) We, of course, relate more closely to our own age group...almost opposite to the Arab way. The implications of the Arab way are, for instance, that you have more responsibilities with age and position. You are expected to be closer to your superiors than to your co-workers and to be like an elder brother or father to those working for you.

i. Time:

(1) Haste makes waste. Our foreign speed not only will not work in the Arab world, it will be misinterpreted as an insult, as hustling. Thus, the very approach, which leads to success in our world may lead to disaster in their world.

(2) The Arab approach to time is much looser, more relaxed. “On or about” time, rather than “exactly at ten.” An appointment for 10 usually means around 10:30 or so. If you arrive too early, which might well be “on time” for us, you may send the message that you are very, very, eager to please the other person...even too eager.

(3) If you have a driver who keeps showing up “late”, such as at 8 instead of 7:30 each morning, tell him to come at 7! This way you blend two worlds.

j. Training Programs and Consultant Services:

Plan to Use More Time: Regardless of the project, you will be working with people using a second or third language, which automatically slows the pace. Also, people whose visual patterns are right to left, the opposite of ours. And finally, often with people who have not grown up with technical skills from childhood, despite a natural aptitude for these skills. All of this will probably quintuple the time factor.

8-5. Planning:

a. In the Arab world, the planning process is done differently. Projects are shaped in the actual situation where they will be, not shaped months and years ahead of time on paper. Commitments beyond a week or so are not as firm as we would consider them. The Muslim religion prohibits tampering with the future and also does not bind its followers to any contract, which circumstances force them to agree to and which is unfavorable. As soon as possible, they are obligated to break unfavorable agreements. Thus, a 99-year contract does not have the firmness it would in our own system.

b. When we plan, we tend to follow a certain pattern. When the need to make a decision occurs, the decision-maker coordinates with his staff and his experts. Once the decision is made, preparation begins on paper with schedules and phases whose precise dates are important to us. If the date of 1 June is the implementation date, we expect to start then, no later – but earlier may be good. Then, on 1 June, the pieces are in place and minor adjustments are made. Precision in time and measurements is important here.

c. When the Arab makes his decision, little action is taken until somewhere around the specified date, about a week or so before – if circumstances still seem good. The planning we do on paper, they do in a situation. After the machinery comes, the situation is observed and if another piece is needed, it is ordered then, if experts, trainers, or staff are needed, they are requested. In the actual situation, the operation is formed and shaped. Actually, if the starting date were earlier than for an American approach, the finish date might well end up the same.

d. Both patterns have their advantages and weaknesses, but in the Arab world, you will find yourself working their way. Anticipating this can save a great deal of frustration as well as avoiding major capital losses.

8-6. ANALYTICAL APPROACHES. Experience with training programs involving Arab students learning to fly tends to support the belief that Arab thinking, before detailed exposure and learning technology, is not analytical. Students learning to fly the most basic trainer and then transferring to the next step up on the trainer aircraft do not tend to transfer their knowledge. The first plane is learned as a whole unit. Instructors, who assume they are applying the learning to the new aircraft, have found this does not happen and, therefore, review all the basic points again before proceeding. We assume that once you learn the basic function or rules regarding an aircraft wing, it will generally apply to all aircraft. This is a learned transfer and simply must be taught when foreign students are unaware of it.

8-7. INSTRUCTORS.

a. Lest an instructor or teacher be thought too proud, too much above ones self, we have a humble reply, “I don’t know, but I’ll find out.”

b. An Arab will misinterpret this reply to the point that the student or trainee or requestor will no longer grant you status. This may be tied to looking at the whole, rather than the part. Either you are an expert – or you are not.

c. What do we do then? If you do not know something, you do not publicly admit it, but rather, say something like, “I’ll show you where to get that information.” “I have a meeting shortly, will you return this afternoon.” Whether or not the person guesses you do not know, the important point is to keep up appearances if you are to continue to be effective in the Arab system. Avoid applying our rules to their way of life and losing out. Experts know everything, not slices.

d. “Do You Understand?” Our answer to this question stresses accuracy. If we do not understand, we say so. In the Arab world, naturally “appearances” have more priority than accuracy, the answer, should you ask the question, will always be, “yes”. Sometimes, when an Arab becomes used to our ways in this country, he may say, he does not, but normally, it is rude to say so. To admit to not understanding carries two implications. First, you did not explain properly, which puts you down in public; and secondly, that he is not competent, which hurts his appearances.

e. “No.” We have a hesitation in saying a flat “no” to someone when they ask us if we can do something and there is a definite rule saying that we can’t. In the Arab world, a flat “no” is a signal you wish to end a relationship. The Arab way of saying “no” is to say, “I’ll see what I can do,” (no matter how impossible the task may be). After several queries, if the answer is still “I’m checking,” or the like, it means, “no.” But it also means, I am still your friend.

8-8. GENERAL.

a. The above guidelines are...more or less...true, just as the American tendency to “get straight down to business” is more or less true.

b. We have learned only the American options. There are many other equally viable options. We have to keep this in mind when associating with other people in the world.

c. Be alert for culture shock in yourself and others around you. When someone starts swearing at others, saying they’re too stupid to learn, or crude people...culture shock is there. That person is having difficulty “getting through” to people using his own learned pattern and has not adapted his patterns.

d. Be more alert for subtle signals. For instance, when an Arab suddenly changes a subject, it is likely to mean, he does not wish to continue the subject. Back off and try to figure out why. If he brings up an apparently unrelated subject or speaks to someone else in front of you, he may be sending an important message.

e. The two most American patterns that will give you trouble, will probably be...slowing down...and being indirect, i.e., tactful at all times.

CHAPTER 9

SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA--DO'S AND DON'TS

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9-1. DO

- a. Do give small, inexpensive gifts to enhance friendship. Gift giving is a way of life in Africa and remuneration for accomplishment of insignificant tasks or services is often expected.
- b. Do ask an African several times when inviting him to a party or dinner. Africans have a false sense of modesty, they will say no when they mean yes in this social setting.
- c. Do just invite men to dinner or a party, not the wife. African heads-of-household decide whether wife and children will come.
- d. Do always invite to the table if an African visits you during mealtime. This is an expected friendship enhancement.
- e. Do limit what you offer an African to drink. They tend to over imbibe alcoholic beverages.
- f. To please the palate, plan to serve Africans beef stew or chicken extensively; beef stew with onions, tomatoes, and peppers. Chicken is usually fried with oil and curry. All meat should be cooked well done – no blood. Rice and other white starches are also favorite foods.
- g. Employ lengthy handshakes with Africans. A short shake can indicate that you don't want to get to know them.
- h. Become knowledgeable of Africa's long cultural heritage. Avoid focus and run-in's over the past violent colonial era.
- i. Admire an African's possessions – the inexpensive items – with moderation. This will please them. Moderation is the keyword here. If not, they may feel obliged to give you the admired object.
- j. Be yourself. Africans are past masters at detecting phonies and insincerity.
- k. Begin relationships with formality, refer to rank and title. Speak softly.
- l. Become especially knowledgeable about the tremendous impact of the slave trade on Africa and the African's great sensitivity toward this subject.
- m. Recognize that much of the African's sometimes "brashness" and outspoken materialism stems from most African countries' recent independence and nationalistic "growing pains."
- n. Be aware of the importance of family and tribal ties to the African. These will come first.

o. Be aware of how different religions and traditional beliefs are intertwined for the African, guiding him in different directions under crisis conditions.

p. Be aware that traditional beliefs such as “witchcraft” and the “living dead” (ancestors to be consulted, especially available so long as remembered) are very important to Africans.

9-2. DO NOTS

a. Don't discuss polygamous marriages or herbal medicine taboos.

b. Don't try to find out too much about an illness or other sensitive areas of death and bride price. Food is a much safer subject. Food is a much safer subject.

c. Don't joke about sex. Be careful about any efforts toward being humorous. Our humor is frequently misunderstood.

d. Don't discuss race or politics, particularly where the Republic of South Africa is involved.

e. Don't try to be too friendly. Africans are status conscious and rather formal. Take a modest indirect approach. Africans expect it.

f. Don't use your left hand in greeting or handling an African object. The left hand is believed by many to carry evil connotations.

g. Be sensitive toward rubbing your nose or winking. These signs are viewed as an invitation to sex.

h. Avoid sighing or clicking the tongue. This is an indication of ridicule, while laughing at one's mistakes is usually acceptable for them to “save face.”

i. Don't ask why too often. Likewise, don't ask too many specific questions of an African when you can avoid it. This denotes superiority and is demeaning to him and threatens his holistic image. He might be wrong and become embarrassed.

j. If you can avoid it, don't ask an African what tribe he is from. This can imply a savage image and or prying into his past too much. Ask, instead--What region are you from?

k. Avoid asking about wife, sister, or daughter unless you have a very friendly, personal relationship with an African.

l. Avoid putting an African's family or friends “in the limelight” too much. For many, the feeling is that this attention invites spirit world envy and spiritual threats.

CHAPTER 10

CULTURE STEREOTYPING AND FOREIGN POLICY

by Fouad A. Al-Farsy

H.E. Dr. Al Farsy is Deputy Minister of Information of the kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The following remarks were presented at Morehouse College in Atlanta in conjunction with the opening of the exhibit, "Saudi Arabia Yesterday and Today" in that city.

It is natural and healthy for citizens to take pride in the achievements of their cities and their country. Such justifiable pride is one of the emotions, which the people of Atlanta share with the people of Saudi Arabia. It is only right that Atlanta, one of America's leading cities, should wish to make known its outstanding record of sustained progress to a wider audience. Just as, I am sure you will understand, the citizens of Saudi Arabia are eager to show the world what, with the help of God, we have achieved.

We believe, I think with good cause, that the pace of economic and social development in the Kingdom over the last three decades has been without parallel anywhere in the world. But there is also a more serious motive, and I am here to tell you what it is. There is a sincere wish in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to build bridges across the gaps that divide our two cultures and to point out that, in some cases, these gaps are more imagined than real.

Before I embark on this challenging task, I would like to comment on three aspects of my subject:

- 1) Misconceptions about nations in general, about national stereotyping.
- 2) Misconceptions about Saudi Arabia and its citizens.
- 3) Why these misconceptions worry us so much.

10-1. CULTURAL MISCONCEPTIONS.

a. When I first visited the United States of America in 1969, I really didn't know what to expect. Or perhaps, I did not know what to expect, for I, like so many others who do not know America and its people, had been subjected to the national stereotyping, which was then current. Americans, so I had heard, were brash, uncultured, unsophisticated, and largely ignorant of the world outside.

b. May I say, without giving offense, that such a description may well be true of some Americans. But then, it is also true of some Saudis, and, no doubt, is true of the many hundreds of Americans I have met and to [sic] to know. It certainly wasn't true of the family with whom I stayed in 1969. And all my experiences of America since then have only served to destroy the stereotype I brought with me and to replace it with a rounder and, if I may say so, much warmer image. And I learned something else from my subsequent visits to the United States. I learned that there is much more in common between us as people than divides us as nationals from different cultures.

c. I am not, of course, arguing that there are no differences between the American way of life and the way of life in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. That would be foolish. But I am saying, and I shall return to this point, that there are a surprising number of shared values, which should serve to bring us together and should enable us to show understanding of the differences.

10-2. MISCONCEPTIONS ABOUT SAUDI ARABIA.

a. Now let me talk briefly about the misrepresentations of the kingdom and its citizens that concern us. The image of one country and its people amongst peoples of another country is largely created and sustained by the media. At the very least, the media furnish a good indicator of what that image is. So what I intend to do is to give you a description of the average Saudi Arabian citizen as depicted by the media. For this description, I have drawn on an analysis of the popular and the quality press in the United States of America and in Britain, with confirmation of this image for fictional representations in films and television dramas.

b. From such a study, based largely on the popular press, one might conclude that Saudi Arabia and its citizens are (in alphabetical order) extravagant, greedy, hostile, hypocritical, intolerant, puritanical, ruthless, uncivilized, undemocratic, unstable, and violent.

c. In the quality press and the broadcast media, much of this "popular" stereotype is confirmed (in more restrained terms), but there are some positive additions. First, the Kingdom is portrayed as active on the diplomatic front, generally in a constructive way (in seeking peace with justice in the various inter-Arab and other Middle East conflict situations). Second, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is recognized as a major source of revenue (especially through arms purchases).

d. Returning to the "popular" image, is it possible to explain why a country--which has had generally friendly relations with the United States, which in many areas of foreign policy and in its general outlook is supportive of the West, which by any standard has been most generous in its aid to the developing world (giving up to five times as much as the United States as a percentage of its gross national product)--why such a country and its citizens should be characterized in so negative a fashion.

10-3. WHY THESE MISCONCEPTIONS WORRY US.

a. Before I take a closer look at this stereotype of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia as described a moment ago, I would just say a word about why we think our image in the United States is important, and why we think it worthwhile to make an effort to set the record straight. To do this, we need to focus for a few minutes on what unites, rather than divides up.

b. At the most fundamental level, the majority of people in both the United States and Saudi Arabia are united by a common morality, the basis of which is religious in nature. The shared belief in the dignity of the individual human being is a moral value common to the three great monotheistic religions, which were first propagated in the Middle East. The relevance of a shared system of moral values cannot be emphasized too greatly in an assessment of the relations between the two countries.

c. Perhaps the most obvious example of the shared value system is to be found in the common commitment of aid to nations, which have not been blessed with material wealth. Since 1974, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has been one of the largest donors of foreign aid, both in relative and in absolute terms. In relative terms (as measured by the percentage of GPN contributed in foreign aid), the top three positions have been shared by Saudi Arabia, the UAE and Kuwait (7 percent of GPN). In absolute terms, only the United States surpasses Saudi Arabia. Saudi aid given to developing countries grew from \$355 million in 1973 to more than \$3 billion in 1978. In addition to bilateral aid, Saudi Arabia is a major contributor to the Islamic Development Bank, the International Monetary Fund, the World Health Organization, the Red Crescent (the Muslim equivalent of the Red Cross), multilateral emergency funds, UNESCO and the World Food program. All this has been achieved under the leadership of King Fahd. Furthermore, the Saudi aid program has been increasingly direct towards addressing the pressing economic and social problems of Africa.

d. In the world of politics, we also find large areas of common ground. Saudi Arabia holds, as a primary political objective, stability in the Middle East. Both the United States and Saudi Arabia are opposed to those elements in the Middle East (political or otherwise), which are committed to destabilizing the region. As a major supplier of the West's energy and as a major purchaser of Western services, it is in the interest of both the United States and Saudi Arabia that the causes of tension should be reduced by diplomatic means whenever possible.

e. In terms of economic interdependence, the case is clear. Because the Kingdom holds 25 percent of the world's oil reserves and because the Kingdom, in its determination to develop its economy for the benefit of its citizens, needs the expertise of the West, there is an economic interdependence which binds our two countries together. Saudi Arabia's oil supplies are crucial to the economies of the Western world. Equally, Saudi Arabia is a major customer for the western world's expertise, goods, and services. It is in the interest of both the United States and Saudi Arabia to maintain and strengthen these economic ties.

f. In the military field, there is again, a large area of common ground. Because of the political and economic community of interest between the United States and Saudi Arabia, there are common military interests. The interrelationship between oil supplies, military sales, and the extensive banking activities between these two countries have served to cement our mutual interests over an extended period of time. In the exploitation of the Kingdom's infrastructure and industry, Saudi Arabia has looked to the United States as a major supplier of advice, expertise and qualified manpower. And, as the West has purchased the Kingdom's oil and as the Kingdom has purchased the West's skill and expertise, a mutually beneficial relationship has developed.

g. As we have seen, the development of the Kingdom's oil resources, in particular, laid a firm foundation for cooperation between the United States of American and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The formation of the Arabian American Oil Company (Aramco), originally known as Caltex, brought Saudi Arabians and Americans together in the exploitation of the vast oil reserves of the Kingdom. Still today, cooperation between the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the major American oil companies is a significant factor in the world's oil markets.

h. So why is the image of the Arab world in general and Saudi Arabia in particular so bad? The answer lies, we believe, in a combination of factors (political, economic, social, and religious), that I shall try to identify. Many of the factors could be broadly categorized under the heading "cultural dissonance" --differences--in culture, which either genuinely provoke hostility or which simply lead to misunderstandings.

10-4. THE STEREOTYPE.

a. Let us take a look at each of the general factors, which have helped to form the Saudi Arabian image in the West, trying to see how the negative stereotype has arisen. My aim will be to address each of these areas frankly, to show that there are two sides to every argument, and to demonstrate that, beneath many of the seemingly vast chasms between us, there is common ground, that will, at least, allow us to communicate with each other, if not always to agree.

b. I shall attempt the task I have set myself by looking at four perspectives on Saudi Arabia, first from the point of view of the West, then from the Arab point of view. In carrying out this exercise, I shall not pull any punches or avoid any subjects, which might be thought "difficult."

10-5. WESTERN VIEWPOINT.

a. Political Perspective

(1) The Middle East is perceived as a highly volatile and dangerous region of the world. Not only are there wars and major conflicts (the Iraq-Iran war, the civil war in Lebanon; the Intifada, the Palestinian uprising against the Israelis in the occupied territories), but there are also many extremists for whom, apparently, indiscriminate killing is a way of life. The region is, therefore, unstable and violent. Since the West has vital interests in the region, preeminently oil, this instability and violence is seen as threatening.

(2) Inasmuch as the Middle East is considered by some as the most likely venue for the start of a superpower confrontation, the Middle East can also be seen as a global threat to peace. Furthermore, many of the Arab countries in the Middle East are presented as undemocratic. They have not adopted Western forms of democratic representation and, since freedom and democracy are closely linked in the Western mind, it is concluded that they, or rather the people within those countries, are not "free".

b. **Economic Perspective.** In the context of economic affairs, media coverage of Saudi Arabia centers not surprisingly, on oil. The Kingdom is seen as the leading force in the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), and organization, which is widely portrayed as an "evil cartel." The oil-price rises in the 1970s, which had an impact not only on Western governments and industry, but directly on motorists, are well remembered, and the actions of OPEC in raising prices were, and still are, widely depicted as economic extortion.

c. Social Perspective

(1) From the point of view of media coverage, this is the most sensitive and vexed area of all. The stereotype of the rich Arab oil sheik, absurdly extravagant, traveling abroad and squandering money on luxuries, buying property at grossly inflated prices, embarrassing shop and hotel staff with disproportionate gratuities, and indulging in every conceivable worldly pleasure, is well-entrenching the popular imagination and manifested with monotonous regularity in, for example, the Western newspaper cartoons. It would not be surprising if such a caricature, suggesting incalculable (and, it is assumed, unmerited) wealth, prompted some degree of envy. But envy alone is not enough to explain the general antipathy towards Saudis/Arabs. There are far more serious causes. There are genuine cultural differences, which engender hostility.

(2) First, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (and the Islamic world in general) is seen as repressive in its attitude toward women. While Western women, through the feminists movement, have fought for a greater degree of independence and increased opportunities in the work place, the attitude of Muslims to women, which tends to maintain the view that woman's primary responsibility is to their family, has often been cited as a major example of the irreconcilable differences between the two cultures.

(3) Another supposed irreconcilable difference, already mentioned earlier, is the "undemocratic" nature of the Saudi Arabian and most other Arab governments. In this context, it is argued that personal freedom is given a low priority in the Arab world and the, therefore, the governments in those countries are repressive.

(3) Third, there is the question of the penal system. In the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, punishment for crime, based on the Holy Koran, is seen by the West as harsh and is often construed as barbaric. Murderers and rapists are publicly executed. The penalty for proven adultery can be death. Amputations

(of the hands of thieves) and public floggings also form part of the penal armory. Such are greatly at variance with current approach of the West to the sentencing of criminals.

(4) Furthermore, the Kingdom prohibits the production and consumption of alcohol is so firmly interwoven into social life, and, in particular, for Westerners, who have resided in the Kingdom, this divergence of attitude sometimes seems to be the most difficult of all social differences to accommodate.

d. Religious Perspective

(1) Here we need to look at the image of Islam as presented in the West. The coupling of the words "Islamic" and "Muslim", with the words, "extremism" and "terrorism", is common place in the Western Media. The result of such journalistic pairings is to create an image of Islam as a bloodthirsty religion in which the lives of innocents have little or no value.

(2) This then, is a brief overview from four different perspectives, of how the Western media portray Arabs in general and Saudi Arabia in particular. Let me, at once, admit that, in all racial caricature and stereotyping, there had to be a grain of truth. But the consistently one-sided, negative interpretation of almost every aspect of Saudi/Arab life merits further analysis.

(3) I now wish to examine each of the perspectives identified above, but this time, from the Saudi/Arab viewpoint.

10-6. SAUDI/ARAB VIEWPOINT.

a. Political Perspective

(1) Of course, the Middle East is highly volatile region, but that does not mean all states within it are violent or unstable. The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has been a model of stability, with an uninterrupted organic development within the tenets of Islam since its inception. Of course, Saudi Arabia has not adopted the democratic institutions of the West, but it would surely be the height of cultural arrogance to argue that the combative bi- or multi-party system of the West is the only way to run a country for the benefit of its citizens--or, indeed, that it is the only way to give the people a voice in how the country is run.

(2) It is arguable that the consensus politics of the Kingdom, with ready access for all citizens to senior government officers, including the head of state, and the traditional Arab mechanisms for consultation at all levels of society on all issues, actually provides a more effective channel for democracy than a single vote cast for one monolithic political party every few years.

b. Economic Perspective. Of course, oil is crucial to the needs of the developed world, but it is widely recognized by all those competent to judge that, within OPSEC, Saudi Arabia has consistently argued for moderation, trying, against considerable opposition on all sides, to strike a balance between the interests of producing and consuming nations.

c. Social Perspective

(1) In the area of social stereotyping, we must deal with a number of factors. The most pervasive: wealth. Some Arabs and some Saudi citizens enjoy wealth and some of them have flaunted theirs. But the same is true of every country in the world. There were, after all, some Americans in Britain, after World War II, and some British in India during the period of the Raj, who, with vast relative wealth, showed little sensitivity to the relative poverty in Britain or the absolute poverty in India, which

surrounded them. The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia should not need such an argument. The number of Saudi citizens who flaunt their wealth is a tiny minority and, in any case, the wealth this tiny minority squanders almost invariably passes into and thus, benefits the economy of the host countries as earned income from abroad.

(2) At the more serious level, there is the question of the Islamic attitude toward women. First we should draw attention to the financial security and independence, which women enjoy under Islam and in the Kingdom Saudi Arabia. We should then emphasize the high level of educational opportunity that Saudi Arabia now provides for its female citizens. It is true that women are still restricted in career opportunities, but even here, the case is overstated. With, at least, some women holding leading positions in business and even in Aramica, the state oil company, the obstacles of advancement are clearly no longer insurmountable.

(3) Nevertheless, there is a significant difference. The family is still considered the basic social unit under Islam, and it is widely believed by Muslims that, for the family unit to be stable and to provide full opportunities for all its members, it is necessary for most women to find a major part of their fulfillment by accepting and discharging a primary obligation to the family.

(4) Western society seems to have rejected this view (although in only relatively recent times), but it is at least arguable (and is indeed argued by many men and women in the West) that this shift in attitude has not been an unqualified success. It is never easy to be sure of the causative processes in social change, but it seems most unlikely that the increasing social instability, the increasing crime rates, the increasing materialism and the erosion of moral values widely noted by social commentators in the West are entirely unconnected with the undermining of the family as society's basic unit.

(5) We hear that in many British and American cities many women and many of the elderly are afraid to walk the streets at night. We read of single-parent families reliant on public or private social services, struggling against the odds to provide the security of a two-parent unit within an extended family. We are told the crimes of violence on the street occur with increasing frequency, despite determined governmental efforts to deal with the problem. None of this sounds, to the Muslim mind, to be an obvious social advance.

(6) I am not, of course, arguing that the West or western media should admit the error of their ways. It is perhaps possible that the social problems described above have nothing whatever to do with the weakening or dismantling of the conventional family unit, which seems inevitable to accompany the "liberation" of women. But I am suggesting that only a very prejudiced mind would argue that the Muslim attitude towards women and their role within society is self-evidently socially "wrong".

(7) Then there is the Kingdom's Islamic penal system. This is not, perhaps, the place to enter into a detailed explanation of the religious and cultural basis for the punishment of criminals under the Shariah, but it is, I think, worth pointing out that the penal system where the prescribed punishments are clear to all and, with the context of the values of that society, seem to be appropriate to the offense, has certain distinct social advantages in terms of strengthening the values of that society and deterring citizens from offending against its laws.

(8) The Western media tend to focus on those aspects of the Islamic penal code, which are most at variance with Western thinking, ignoring the subtlety and flexibility of the system. The punishment for adultery is a case in point. Adultery in the West is not considered a crime. Islam, on the other hand, mindful of the need for society to protect the family, condemns it. But Islam is not unaware of human frailty. To prove adultery, it is necessary that four people should witness the act of adultery itself,

assuredly a demanding requirement for the proof of guilt. Unless a couple willfully flaunt their offense, thus openly challenging the authority of Islam, they are unlikely to face the prescribed punishment.

(9) As we have said before, it is never easy to trace cause and effect in social phenomena, but it's fair to point out that the incidence of crime in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is extraordinarily low, compared with Britain or the United States of America. There may well be other factors, which account for this difference, but it is not possible that a system of punishment that is clear and unambiguous, albeit tempered, when appropriate, with flexibility, understanding and compassion, makes a substantial contribution.

(10) While on this subject, it is worthwhile commenting that some aspects of the Islamic code of punishment may well be more in line with popular opinion in the West than is generally supposed. For example, capital punishment for murder has been reintroduced in several states in America and every public opinion poll in Britain on the question of capital punishment has shown a substantial majority in favor of its reintroduction for certain offenses. In cases of proven rape, the Islamic punishment would, at the least, seem to show more respect for the rights of women than the derisory sentences not infrequently passed on rapists in the West.

(11) Finally, we should add that, as in the West, all criminal cases are dealt with under due process of law and that the sentence of the court is subject to a comprehensive appeals procedure. Of course, the differences in attitude are real and should not be underestimated. The penal code in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia places much greater emphasis on the protection of the individual and society, and much less on exploring the motivations of the criminal. All we would argue here is that the Western media tend to distort the Islamic penal system, ignoring its merits and presenting only those aspects, which are most at variance with the Western culture.

(12) On the subject of alcohol, there is unlikely to be a meeting of minds, but this much can be said without fear of contradiction. Alcohol is a drug, legalized in the West, which is implicated in many thousands of instances of civil offenses and criminal acts (e.g., violence in the home, civil disturbances, motoring offenses, sexual offenses) in every country, which permits its sale. Taken in excess, it can lead to the destruction of families and careers and contributes to the hardships of poorer sectors of the community by absorbing financial resources better spent on necessities. While it may be impractical for historical, cultural, and social reasons for Western countries to prohibit alcohol, it is surely not unreasonable for those countries that can prohibit it to do so.

d. Religious Perspective

(1) Finally, there is the religious perspective, under which heading we noted the Western media's practice of coupling the words "Islamic" and "Muslim" with the words "extremism" and "terrorism". Such words as extremism and terrorism are relative and, in any case, involve a value judgment. One man's extremist is another man's moderate; one man's terrorist is another man's freedom--fighter.

(2) But leaving such niceties aside and accepting the need for compression in journalistic writing, we concede that such terms can be justified when they are used to distinguish between Muslim extremists and either Muslims, who are not terrorists or other terrorists who are not Muslim. That is not, however, the effect such couplings have had. They have tended to encourage the view, certainly in the popular mind, that all the followers of Islam are extremist and all Muslims are, actually or potentially, terrorists. (The same is true of the oft-used designation "Arab terrorists", where, again in the popular mind, "Arab" is not so much used as an identifier, but more as a kind of racial opinion.)

(3) This is the saddest distortion of all. Islam is a religion of justice tempered with compassion. It has nothing to do with the indiscriminate slaughter of innocents, and terrorist outrages are condemned as widely and as energetically (and the perpetrators pursued as relentlessly) in the Muslim world as they are in the West. There are approximately one billion Muslims and 200 million Arabs, the vast majority of who are law-abiding citizens. To stigmatize such a large proportion of the world's population, because of the actions of a tiny minority is, of course, absurd, especially when it is remembered that it is largely the Arab countries, which are threatened by acts of terrorism perpetrated by Arabs.

10-7. CONCLUSION.

a. We had now looked, albeit briefly, at how the West (primarily Britain and the United States) sees the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the "Arab world," and how Saudi Arabia and the Arab world react to Western perceptions. It is clear that there are major cultural differences; it is entirely legitimate that such differences should generate some cultural friction; and it is entirely predictable that the Western media should reflect this friction. But the cultural differences do not, in our view, justify the consistently hostile attitude of much of the Western media to the Arabs, certainly not when the areas of common interest and mutual benefit in political and economic terms are taken into account.

b. The primary cause of this hostility is, it seems to me, the one major political issue on which the United States and Saudi Arabia disagree. This is not the place to attempt a detailed consideration of the plight of the Palestinians, but this much I will say. There are some aspects of America's Middle East policy, which Saudi Arabians find very hard to understand. We see America, the champion of freedom and the right of all peoples to self-determine, give vast financial and military support to Israel, which denies the Palestinians basic human rights. At the same time, we see the American Congress very often oppose sales of arms to Saudi Arabia, arms, which that same Congress is happy to give to, -- not sell -- but *give*, to Israel.

c. Saudi Arabia has never occupied anyone's territory. It has never invaded anyone's airspace. It has never carried out military strikes, preemptive or otherwise, on any other country. It has always used its considerable diplomatic clout to work for just solutions. Israel, on the other hand, has routinely adopted violent means to pursue her ends, from the formation of the state of Israel, through the invasion of Lebanon, to the ruthless suppression of the Intifada. America treats Saudi Arabia as though it were a militaristic regime, which might use its weaponry irresponsibly and deals with Israel, though it had an unimpeachable record of restraint and a commitment to solve all political problems by negotiation.

d. What has all of this to do with an exhibition of the achievements of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia? The answer is perfectly straightforward. It seems to us that those who are determined that America's support Israel should remain largely uncritical are equally determined that the image of the Arab world and of Saudi Arabia should be viewed through a distorted lens. If the Arabs are against Israel and America supports Israel, then America must be against the Arabs. Just as the media looks for the positive in Israel's actions, managing to glamorize, on occasion, even the killing of women and children, so the media must seek and emphasize the negative in the Arab world. Hence, the largely negative image of the Arabs in the media.

e. That is why I am here, and why the Kingdom has mounted an exhibition, which tells something of our history and our way of life. First and foremost, we would like recognition of those values we share. And then, we would like a real understanding of the differences between us, viewing them not as insurmountable obstacles to the forming and strengthening of friendship between us, but seeing them as genuine cultural differences, which can be debated in the context of the values and interest we share.

f. Is it really so important? Does it really matter? I think it is and it does. The world must now be seen as a small place in which the actions of one nation must affect the lives of others. Interdependence must now be the key word, whether we are talking about the sensible management of a finite natural resource like oil-or about wider issues of the environment and international relations in general.

g. Both the United States of America and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, each in its own way, have come to recognize the interdependence of all nations on the planet. The Kingdom has used its diplomatic influence to bring about the peaceful resolution of international conflicts. It has recognized the duty of the rich to help the poor; and it accepts that the future peace and prosperity of the planet must lie in confronting all the challenges which face mankind, whether they be political, economic, or social, with wisdom and justice.

h. No country and no individual is perfect. But if, in a modest way, this exhibition tells those who visit it that the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is not an alien society, but one in which men of goodwill share the same goals as, men of goodwill everywhere, the time and trouble will have been well worthwhile.

CHAPTER 11

WORKING WITH OTHER CULTURES

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11-1. HELPFUL HINTS - JAPAN AND PHILIPPINES.

HELPFUL HINTS – JAPAN	HELPFUL HINTS – PHILIPPINES
<p>Strong Confucian-Buddhist influence --Tradition- time honored family relationships</p> <p>Highly developed system of social interaction --Subtle signs of agreement/disagreement --Complex rules of social behavior --Acknowledge domination/submissiveness</p> <p>Respect for religion very important --Born Shinto – die Buddhist --=May be Christian, but acknowledge Buddha</p> <p>Patience valued</p> <p>Harmony in social setting valued</p> <p>Confrontation avoided</p> <p>Reverence towards elders, experience and authority</p> <p>Public display of affection avoided</p> <p>Loud, boisterous language is avoided</p> <p>Gifts a good idea when visiting Japanese home</p> <p>Men lead—take precedence over women</p> <p>Lavish praise should be. Avoided --Especially for an individual in front of his/her group</p>	<p>Filipino unique --Sea/geographical location --Ethnic Malay --Prolonged Spanish colonial influence</p> <p>Beware external appearances --Western clothes --Good English --Strong affinity towards us lifestyles</p> <p>Values smooth interpersonal relationship</p> <p>Don't joke. About personal matters – easily offended</p> <p>“Hiya” or loss of face or insult may be insurmountable</p> <p>Use go-betweens to avoid confrontation</p> <p>Value conformity – socially acceptable behavior</p> <p>Don't be rugged individualist – not appreciated</p> <p>Rich language – strong verbal play</p> <p>Look for cueing – indirect expression of want Emotional</p> <p>Being firm and sympathetic fosters understanding</p> <p>Keep in mind – informality invites intimacy</p>

11-2. HELPFUL HINTS – SOUTH KOREA.

- a. Strong Confucian influence
 - (1) Family the cornerstone of Korean society
 - (2) Father is dominant
- b. Highly developed system of social etiquette. Designed to protect the honor and position of individual.
- c. Fatalistic
- d. Proper social relationships all important
- e. Kibun – face, sense of self-dignity and feeling
- f. Keeping Kibun – most important
- g. More important to “feel right” than to “be right”
- h. Flattery important
- i. Impatience considered a major sin
- j. Elders must always be honored
- k. Retirement at 61 years
- i. Ceremony is always important
- m. Wife is a private matter – husband represents family
- n. Having sons is important
- o. Wives generally don’t attend socials
- p. Women have their own social life
- q. Principle role of women is procreation and family
- r. Men enjoy parties-male affairs
- s. Privacy essential part of Korean life

11-3. WORKING WITH INDOCHINESE. The information provided is meant to serve as a guide or framework for the professional working with Indochinese. This information is by its nature generalized and should be treated as such. Each client will differ in background and level of acculturation.

a. Customs

(1) Family

(a) To outward appearance the father is the head of the house.

(b) The mother, however, controls the purse strings and has a great deal of input into decision making.

(c) Family relationships are strong and extend beyond the nuclear family.

(d) Discipline is strict and administered both by parents and older siblings. Older siblings and relatives often act as “parents” in cases when true parents are not available.

(e) Decision-making is made by the parents.

(2) Hospitality

(a) Greeting and partings should always include each person present and always begin with the eldest person present.

(b) During home visits, you can usually expect to be offered something to drink (coke, orange juice, etc.). In order to show respect for the household, the beverage should be.

(c) It is not unusual to be presented gifts by the family with whom you are working.

(3) Social Interactions

(a) Avoid jumping into the subject matter immediately. Pleasantries and inquiries will open many doors down the road.

(b) The “Indochinese are reserve and are hesitant to open up with persons outside of their family.

(c) Females are frequently accompanied by a male family member. This is especially true in the case of young women. It may facilitate creating the initial relationship if the “protector” is allowed to be present initially.

(d) The Indochinese often talk around the subject matter.

(e) The sense of punctuality is much different between the Indochinese and American cultures. The Indochinese are often late for appointments, however, this is not normally a rejection or insult.

(f) Younger persons are taught not to have eye to eye contact with an older person when talking to them. This is not necessarily a form of evasion.

(g) The Indochinese will avoid contradicting you and will therefore, agree with you on most subjects, as least verb

(h) The smile is the covering of all feelings. It does not indicate agreement.

(i) Males should avoid any behavior that can be interpreted as flirtation with female clients.

(4) Professionalism

(a) You will be respected by the nature of your position, however, you are restricted to maintaining that position. The Indochinese do not dichotomize professional and personal lives.

(b) Quiet, calm, demeanor is the most effective attribute. Raising your voice or showing anger lowers your stature in their eyes.

b. Counseling Hints

(1) De-emphasize set length sessions. Emphasis should be placed on meeting objectives.

(2) You should keep the schedules you establish. Be on time, even if they are not.

(3) Be patient! Remember that these clients need social chit chat and that they are usually working in a second language.

(4) Speak slowly and clearly. Use simple vocabulary and short sentences.

(5) Avoid negative questions, i.e., Don't like your coffee?

(6) Listen to the entire response to your questions, since the typical response will begin with yes, even if the response is no, i.e., Yes, I have no bananas.

(7) Make certain agreements and expectations are clearly understood by both parties. Have your clients paraphrase the agreement, not just acknowledge the agreement.

(8) Prescriptive techniques often work more effectively. Authority is expected to be directive in nature.

(9) Indochinese often do not know how to explain their feelings about situations.

(10) Include the decision-makers of the household in any agreements. Allow them privacy to discuss decisional or choice situations.

11-4. HELPFUL HINTS – INDONESIA.

- Islam primary religion – unifying factor
- 300 ethnic and tribal groups – 400 languages
- Six major islands – 13,000 smaller islands

- Great diversity in culture
- Animism prevalent at all levels of society
- Over 70 percent live in rural areas
- Indonesian member of community first –individual second very group oriented
- Indonesian conforms to norms of village at all times
- Refrain from introducing new or strange things
- Symbols of prestige in village are bigger and better things
- New things take second place to symbols of prestige
- Being an individual makes person “maku” or ashamed
- Worst thing is shaming someone
- If you have serious disagreement – use third person as intermediary
- Don’t be loud or aggressive
- Their religion impacts on all facets of their social life
- Don’t pay too many compliments
- Each person has his position – recognize his position
- Maintain dignity of your office or position

11-5. THE JAPANESE CONCEPT OF “I.” The Japanese Concept of “I” is based on Buddhism, Confucianism, and Feudalism

a. One of the most notable and significant differences between the East and West is the concept of “I”. Simply stated, the West has “I” and East does not.

b. A serious question to the ancient Egyptians (in this instance, designating Egypt as West) was “What is Man?”--and they built the Sphinx. On the Temple of Delphoi, the ancient Greeks inscribed the words “Know Thyself.” Many Biblical quotations express the idea of the Dignity of Man, i.e., “We are sons of God, our Heavenly Father,” “Our names are written in heaven,” “The hairs of our head are numbered,” and many other similar words. More recently, there is Descartes’ “I think, therefore, I am;” Capitalism’s “Free Competition,” Democracy’s “Dignity of Man”—all express the importance of Man.

c. In the West, there is only one “I” while Japan had numerous “I’s” according to social strata. Compared to the independent “I” of the West, Japan has only class “I’s.” The capitalization of “I” in English seems to be the subconscious emphases of “I”.

d. The three main sources of Japanese thinking are:

(1) **Buddhism**—(which came into Japan at the beginning of the 6th century,) as the foundation of world outlook,

(2) **Confucianism**—(adopted by the Japanese in the 5th century), the foundation of social conduct, and

(3) **Feudalism**—(based on Confucianism and started the end of the 16th century, feudalism was rigidly consolidated during the Tokugawa period, which began in 1603.

These three are very different in nature, **Buddhism being a religion, Confucianism, social ethics, and Feudalism, a political system;** the one common element among them is the **negation of self—or “I”.**

e. Though these three sources were utilized by rulers of old Japan, it must be remembered that unless the common people – the “ruled” – had potentiality a mental background ready to accept and keep the “non-self” philosophy and “I”-less society, the rulers could never have succeeded in their endeavors.

f. Again, some readers may think that Buddhism, Confucianism and Feudalism are things of the past, which have nothing to do with modern post-war Japan. However, if they turn their eyes from external affairs to the deep undercurrent which motivates our way of thinking and our actions, they will find that Buddhism, Confucianism and Feudalism are still alive and very strong in our daily lives. They are so completely imbued into our blood that we do not even think of it, unless in reflection.

g. It is impossible to deal with these three great problems in this short paper, but we shall examine them only from the angle of Negation of Self.

h. **Buddhism**

(1) According to Buddhism, Man is “ghost” which appears momentarily on transient and ever mutable relations, then disappears in an instant into Nothingness. “I” is a temporary name given to the floating consciousness evaporated from all types of ever-changing objective conditions which merely reflect—and often imperfectly—upon the floating consciousness. Both the donor and recipient are imperfect shadows in the gigantic movement of time and space. The only reality is the eternal and constant change and motion—from eternity to eternity. All phenomena is vanity; the earth, itself, is only a tiny point which evolves into nothing in the boundless ocean of time and space. Thus, why should this tiny “I” be so arrogant, so audacious as to place itself against Eternal Change and claim “Dignity of Man”?

(2) All cares, worries, anger and hatred come from this illusion of Dignity of Man, which must not be damaged in any way. Man’s salvation would be to emancipate this “I” from the yoke of illusion and hallucination.

(3) “Hotoke” (a Japanese word for Buddha) means to “untie” this “I” from the chains of illusions. The Sanskrit word, “Nirvana”, a state of enlightenment, means to “blow out” this “I”. “Muga” (non-self), “Botsuga” (resignation from “I”), “Gedatsu” (emancipation from carnal desires), Shinshin Datsuraku (falling off of soul and body), “Shukahu-ichinyo” (subject and object are one), “Jita-funi” (you and I are one)—all are the fundamental points of Buddhism.

(4) One catechistic point for meditation in Zen Buddhism reads, “A man stands on a bridge between two mountains (noumena and phenomena). The bridge and mountains run, but the water never runs.” This means that a man on a bridge points to the rapids down below and says, “The water is running,” but actually, it is not the water which is running, but the bridge, the man and the mountains are running. All disappear but change never changes.

(5) “Mujo-kan” is the beginning and the end of Buddhism. It is mutability, finitude, transitoriness; it is more than the exclamation of Heraclitus, “Panta Rehi.” Change is the only reality. Nothing else has entity.

(6) How can “I” have its place in this philosophy?

i. **Confucianism.**

(1) **Confucianism is neither a religion nor a systemic philosophy.** It is political ethics—or ethical politics. It is a gentleman’s code of ethics—the code of the ruling class. China at the time of Confucius was in political and social chaos. Confucianism was the stabilizing force of the people. **Its fundamental purpose was to promote peace among men**—between the ruling class and the ruled classes of people—and to establish a peaceful country. If each person does only as he wishes, this would be All against All, and there would not be peace. Consequently, a definite standard for the actions of the people, over and above personal feelings and desires must be established, and which, if adhered to, would eliminate all conflicts. Confucianism, the outgrowth of this, spread far and wide.

(2) This standardization, however, was not horizontal, but vertical. It was a triangular organization with the ruler on the top and the people underneath. If one looks up to his superior and follows his instructions, the superior will look upon the subordinate with mercy and the subordinate will be loyal to his superior. This is expressed in the Five Cardinal Actions of Human relations, i.e., master vs. retainers, father vs. son, husband vs. wife, the old vs. the young, and the senior vs. junior. If the subordinate is loyal, he will be treated with mercy; if both maintain this attitude, all will run smoothly and be peaceful.

(3) **One must refrain from expressing personal feelings or opinions as it may be wrong or may hurt others.** Peace is more precious and valuable than good opinions. Confucius said, “The people may be made to follow a path of action, but they may not be made to understand it.” He also said, “He who is not in any particular office has nothing to do with plans for the administration of its duties.” This is somewhat similar to the philosophocracy of the ancient Greeks. Confucius also said, “Of all people, women and lower men are the most difficult to behave toward. If you are familiar with them, they lose their humility. If you maintain a reserve toward them, they entertain grudges against you.”

(4) One discloses his low caliber by showing his anger, joy, sorrow, or merriment in trivial matters. **A gentleman does not disclose what is inside him.** How can “rugged individuals” be developed in this atmosphere?

j. Feudalism.

(1) From the beginning of the 12th century to the end of the 16th century, Japan was in a “warlike age” and war-lords rose and fell, conspirators killed close friends and relatives, the lower class of Samurai of yesterday became the ruler of today. This period was literally an age of wars of All against All.

(2) **Tokugawa Iyeyasu** finally put an end to this chaos and united Japan in 1603. **His foremost act was the stabilization of peace and order in Japan.** Iyeyasu, a brilliant statesman, together with his advisors began to literally infuse Confucianism into the veins of the Japanese people. This was not only encouraged, but almost forced upon both the Samurai and the common people. This was State Learning and Confucian scholars were in the top positions in both local and national governments. Buddhism was discouraged and there were almost no great priests to appear during the Tokugawa period, which lasted for 264 years. However, countless numbers of Confucian scholars appeared and many valuable books were written. All learning during this period was of Confucianism. As the Nara and Kyoto periods were totally Buddhist, the Tokugawa period was totally Confucian. Even the textbook given to the children of common people was “Rongo”, written by Confucius. The sayings of Confucius were quoted by the people in their daily lives, and lived accordingly.

(3) **Vertical morality of obedience**, mercy, loyalty, patronization, “Giri” and “Ninjo,” Rei (moral protocol), etc. were ingrained into the minds, hearts, and souls of the populace, both Samurai and the common people. Each organization throughout Japan was built on and conducted in feudal philosophy. In fact, Japanese feudalism was perhaps the most pure and strict in the history of the world.

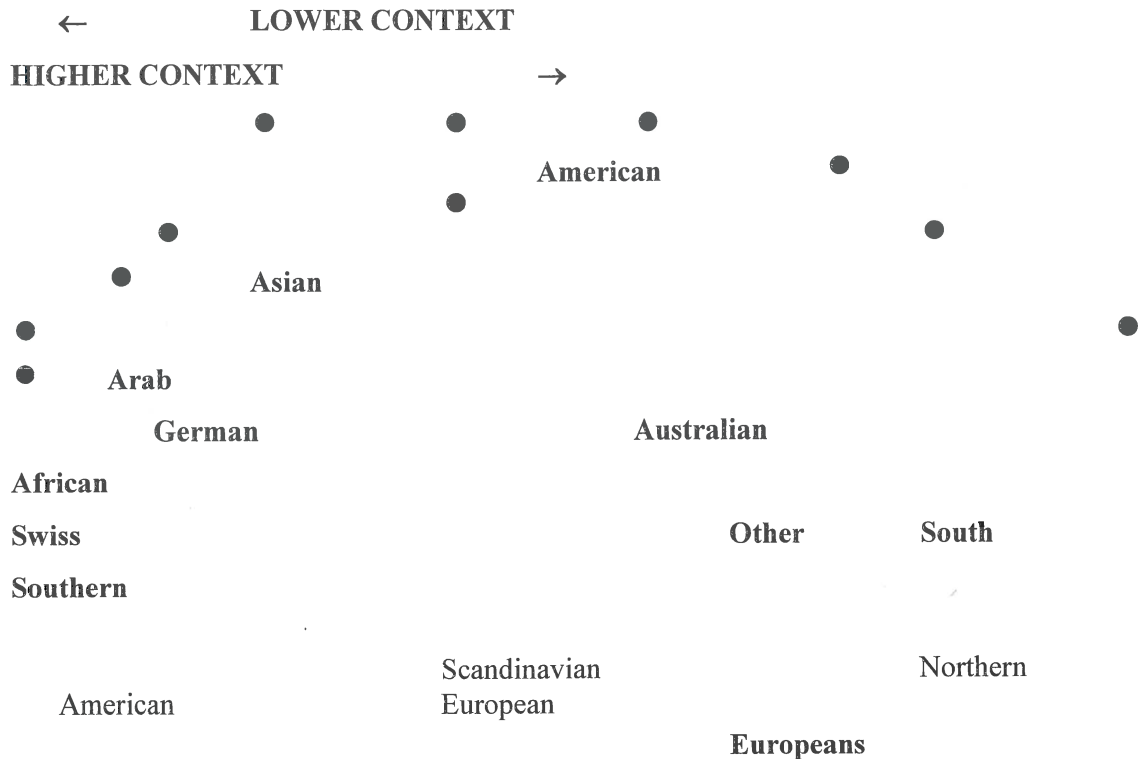
(4) This vertical organization exists, and not men. The thought and actions of the people are determined by the structure—not by the men in it. Even morality is structural. (The pre-war patriotism collapsed along with the downfall of the Japanese Empire.) As the structure things—so do the people. In unison, we went to war; now, in unison, we are against war. The structure may be a military clique, a political party or a labor union; whatever it is, it is the holder of “power.”

(5) How can “I” develop in this climate?

k. **Conclusion.** It is difficult to determine whether the lack of “I” is the cause of the effect of Buddhism, Confucianism, and Feudalism, but in any case, it is the reality. Every Japanese has a sensitive antenna and feels “the trend of time”, and acts accordingly. He does not—and can not—think for himself, but is always guided by, or haunted by “mood” or “kimochi”, which is super “I”.

11-6. HIGH/LOW CONTEXTS.

Where different cultures fall on the context scale.



LOW-CONTEXT CULTURES

(Information must be provided explicitly, usually in words.)

- ◆ Less aware of nonverbal cues, environment and situation
- ◆ Lack well-developed networks
- ◆ Need detailed background information
- ◆ Tend to segment and compartmentalize information
- ◆ Control information on a “need to know” basis
- ◆ Prefer explicit and careful directions from someone who “knows”
- ◆ Knowledge is a commodity

HIGH-CONTEXT CULTURES

(Much information drawn from surroundings. Very little must be explicitly transferred.)

- ◆ Nonverbal important
- ◆ Information flows freely
- ◆ Physical context relied upon for information
- ◆ Environment, situation, gestures, mood all taken into account
- ◆ Maintain extensive information networks

