

or notions of *family* and *race* can be construed as being an intuitive apprehension of social categories (Feld 1994).

In other domains, cultural input is selectively attended to such as it *violates* the expectations of intuitive ontological-religious ontologies, for instance, postulate agents whose physical or biological properties are counterintuitive, or whose ordinary expectations about intentional agents. Such violations are very few in number and account for most of the variants in religious systems (Boyer 1994). Their divergence in individual religious representations can be demonstrated experimentally (Barett and Keil 1996).

In some domains more complex processes are involved. In the case for scientific theories and other forms of expert knowledge that diverge from intuitive ontology. These systems of representations generally require considerable social support (intensive tuition and specialized institution-like schools). They generally include an explicit acknowledgment of their divergence from intuitive ontology, and are a METAREPRESENTATION of ordinary representations about the natural world. This is why such systems typically require LITERACY, which boosts metarepresentational abilities and provides external memory storage, allowing incremental additions to cultural representations.

Human cognition comprises a series of specialized abilities. Transmission patterns probably vary as a function of which domain-specific conceptual predispositions are activated. So there may be no overall process of cultural transmission, but a series of domain-specific *cognitive* processes of transmission. Models of cultural evolution are tautological if they state only that whatever got transmitted has been better than what did not (Durham 1991: 10). This is where cognitive models are indispensable. Empirical study of cognitive predispositions provides independent evidence for the underlying mechanisms of cultural evolution.

See also ADAPTATION AND ADAPTATIONISM; COGNITIVE PSYCHOLOGY; COGNITIVE ARTIFACTS; DOMAIN SPECIFIC-NAIVE BIOLOGY; NAIVE MATHEMATICS

See Boyer

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Cultural Models

See METAPHOR AND CULTURE; MOTIVATION AND CULTURE

Cultural Psychology

The most basic assumption of cultural psychology can be traced back to the eighteenth-century German romantic philosopher Johann Gottfried von Herder, who proposed that “to be a member of a group is to think and act in a certain way, in the light of particular goals, values, pictures of the world; and to think and act so is to belong to a group” (Berlin 1976: 195). During the past twenty-five years there has been a major renewal of interest in cultural psychology, primarily among anthropologists (D’Andrade 1995; Geertz 1973; Kleinman 1986; Levy 1973; Shore 1996; Shweder 1991; Shweder and LeVine 1984; White and Kirkpatrick 1985), psychologists (Bruner 1990; Cole 1996; Goodnow, Miller, and Kessel 1995; Kitayama and Markus 1994; Markus and Kitayama 1991; Miller 1984; Nisbett and Cohen 1995; Russell 1991; Yang forthcoming) and linguists

(Goddard 1997; Wierzbicka 1992a), although relevant work has been done by philosophers as well (Harre 1986; MacIntyre 1981; Taylor 1989). The contemporary field of cultural psychology is concerned, as was Herder, with both the psychological foundations of cultural communities and the cultural foundations of mind. It is concerned with the way culture and psyche make each other up, over the history of the group and over the life course of the individual.

The word "cultural" in the phrase "cultural psychology" refers to local or community-specific conceptions of what is true, good, beautiful, and efficient ("goals, values and pictures of the world") that are socially inherited, made manifest in the speech, laws, and customary practices of members of some self-monitoring group, and which serve to mark a distinction between different ways of life (the Amish way of life, the way of life of Hindu Brahmins in rural India, the way of life of secular urban middle-class Americans).

A community's cultural conception of things will usually include some vision of the proper ends of life; of proper values; of proper ways to speak; of proper ways to discipline children; of proper educational goals; of proper ways to determine kinship connections and obligations; of proper gender and authority relations within the family; of proper foods to eat; of proper attitudes toward labor and work, sexuality and the body, and members of other groups whose beliefs and practices differ from one's own; of proper ways to think about salvation; and so forth.

A community's cultural conception of things will also usually include some received, favored, or privileged "resolution" to a series of universal, scientifically undecidable, and hence existential questions. These are questions with respect to which "answers" must be given for the sake of social coordination and cooperation, whether or not they are logically or ultimately solvable by human beings, questions such as "What is me and what is not me?", "What is male and what is female?", "How should the burdens and benefits of life be fairly distributed?", "Are there community interests or cultural rights that take precedence over the freedoms (of speech, conscience, association, choice) associated with individual rights?" and "When in the life of a fetus or child does social personhood begin?" Locally favored and socially inherited "answers" to such questions are expressed and made manifest (and are thus discernible) in the speech, laws, and customary practices of members of any self-monitoring group. In sum, local conceptions of the true, the good, the beautiful, the efficient, plus discretionary "answers" to cognitively undecidable existential questions, all made apparent in and through practice, is what the word "cultural" in "cultural psychology" is all about.

The word "psychology" in the phrase "cultural psychology" refers broadly to mental functions, such as perceiving, categorizing, reasoning, remembering, feeling, wanting, choosing, valuing, and communicating. What defines a function as a "mental" function per se (over and above, or in contrast to a "physical" function) has something to do with the capacity of the human mind to grasp ideas, to do things for reasons or with a purpose in mind, to be conscious of alternatives and aware of the content or meaning of its own experience. This is one reason that "mental" states are

sometimes referred to as "intentional" or "symbolic" states. Cultural psychology is the study of those intentional and symbolic states of individuals (a belief in a reincarnating soul, a desire to purify one's soul and protect it from pollutions of various kinds) that are part and parcel of a particular cultural conception of things made manifest in, and acquired by means of involvement with, the speech, laws and customary practices of some group.

It has been noted by Clifford Geertz, and by others interested in lived realities, that "one does not speak language; one speaks a language." Similarly, one does not categorize; one categorizes something. One does not want; one wants something. On the assumption that what you think about can be decisive for how you think, the focus of cultural psychology has been on content-laden variations in human mentalities rather than on the abstract common denominators of the human mind. Cultural psychologists want to know why Tahitians or Chinese react to "loss" with an experience of headaches and back pains rather than with the experience of "sadness" so common in the Euro-American cultural region (Levy 1973; Kleinman 1986). They seek to document population-level variations in the emotions that are salient or basic in the language and feelings of different peoples around the world (Kitayama and Markus 1994; Russell 1991; Shweder 1993; Wierzbicka 1992a). They aim to understand why Southern American males react more violently to insult than Northern American males (Nisbett and Cohen 1996) and why members of sociocentric subcultures perceive, classify, and moralize about the world differently than do members of individualistic subcultures (Markus and Kitayama 1991; Triandis 1989; Shweder 1991).

It is precisely because cultural psychology is the study of the content-laden intentional/symbolic states of human beings that cultural psychology should be thought of as the study of peoples (such as Trobriand Islanders or Chinese Mandarins), not people (in general or in the abstract). The psychological subject matter definitive of cultural psychology thus consists of those aspects of the mental functioning of individuals that have been ontogenetically activated and historically reproduced by means of some particular cultural conception of things, and by virtue of participation in, observation of, and reflection on the activities and practices of a particular group. This definition of research in cultural psychology sets it in contrast (although not necessarily in opposition) to research in general psychology, where the search is for points of uniformity in the psychological functioning of people around the world. Without denying the existence of some empirically manifest psychological uniformities across all human beings, the focus in cultural psychology is on differences in the way members of different cultural communities perceive, categorize, remember, feel, want, choose, evaluate, and communicate. The focus is on psychological differences that can be traced to variations in communally salient "goals, values, and pictures of the world."

Cultural psychology is thus the study of the way the human mind can be transformed, given shape and definition, and made functional in a number of different ways that are not uniformly distributed across cultural communities

around the world. "Universalism without the uniformity" is one of the slogans cultural psychologists sometimes use to talk about "psychic unity," and about themselves.

See also CULTURAL EVOLUTION; CULTURAL SYMBOLISM; ETHNOPSICOLOGY; HUMAN UNIVERSALS; INTENTIONALITY

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Cultural Relativism

How are we to make sense of the diversity of beliefs and ethical values documented by anthropology's ethnographic record? Cultural relativism infers from this record that significant dimensions of human experience, including morality and ethics, are inherently local and variable rather than universal. Most relativists (with the exception of developmental relativists discussed below) interpret and evaluate