

# *Social Psychology Across Cultures*

Analysis and perspectives



PETER B. SMITH

*University of Sussex*

MICHAEL HARRIS BOND

*Chinese University of Hong Kong*

5.5



HARVESTER  
WHEATSHEAF

New York London Toronto Sydney Tokyo Singapore

# Contents

<i>Acknowledgements</i>	xiii
1 <i>Introduction</i>	1
The world-view of the social psychology textbook	2
An instructive cross-cultural episode	5
Aftermath	7
A typical result?	7
2 <i>The world of social psychology</i>	9
The where and when of social psychology	9
Beginnings	10
The move to America	11
Spreading the word	11
How well do the classic studies replicate?	13
The effects of mere exposure	13
Social loafing	15
Conformity and independence	16
What happens to social deviates?	17
Obedience to authority	19
Leadership style	22
Group decision	23
Group polarization	24
Group conflict and co-operation	26
Some second thoughts on replication	28
A closer look at the problem	29
Systematic programmes of replication	32
A theory-driven programme of research	33
3 <i>Culture: the neglected concept</i>	35
What is culture?	35
National cultures	37

Nations and cultures	37
Hofstede's classic study	38
Evaluating Hofstede	41
Further studies of values	43
Culture as a theoretical cure-all	46
The search for universals	46
The emic-etic distinction	47
Cultural causation of behaviour	49
Levels of analysis	49
Values and behaviour	52
 4 <i>The search for universals of social behaviour</i>	 55
Gender relations	55
Uniformities or differences?	55
Gender stereotypes	57
Generalities or detail?	57
Emotional expression	58
Decoding emotion	60
Displaying emotion	61
The 'inscrutable' oriental	62
Personality traits	63
Extraversion-introversion	64
Starting from the emic	65
Evaluating the Big Five	66
Aggression	68
Murder	68
Insults	69
Expressing or suppressing aggression	69
Pro-social behaviour	70
Some interim conclusions	71
 5 <i>Going back to one's roots: the search for indigenous psychologies</i>	 75
European indigenous psychologies	76
Social identity theory	77
The minimal group paradigm	78
The wider applicability of Tajfel's theory	79
Intergroup relations	80
In-group derogation	82
Linking values and intergroup relations	82
Implications for collectivist cultures	83
The theory of social representation	84

Moscovici's formulation	85
Representations of the individual	86
Health and illness	88
Social representations and the future of cross-cultural psychology	88
Indigenous psychologies in developing countries	89
Conclusion	90
 6 <i>Social cognition</i>	 93
The self in its social context	93
The independent self	94
The interdependent self	95
Describing oneself	96
Self-monitoring	98
Clothing the self	98
The self in its physical context	99
Proximity	100
Homes and territories	102
The meaning of spatial positioning	103
Possessions	103
Perceiving others	104
Selecting what we attend to	106
Some choice language	107
Emphasizing attributes which are culturally relevant	108
The impact of physical appearances	109
Attributing success and failure	110
In search of the self-serving bias	110
Limitations of the modesty bias	112
Comparing oneself and others	114
Reasons for valuing achievement	115
Progress review	115
 7 <i>The individual and the group: pathways to harmony</i>	 119
The nature of group membership	119
Social mobility and social change	120
Distributive justice	121
In-group preferences	122
Out-group preferences	124
Co-operation and competition	125
Putting competitiveness into context	127
Co-operation among children	129
Co-operation and the identity of the partner	131
Negotiation	132

Setting the goals of negotiation	132
Negotiating styles	133
Conflict resolution	136
Extending the range of cultural explanations	137
Intimate relationships	138
Is romantic love a culture-bound concept?	139
Existing relationships	140
Conclusion	141
 8 <i>Social influence processes</i>	 143
Communication style	143
High- and low-context cultures	144
Self-disclosure	145
The preservation of face	145
Is silence golden?	147
The varieties of truthfulness	148
Time perspective	149
'Monochronic time and polychronic time	149
Looking ahead	150
Conformity revisited	151
Minority influence	154
Where should minority influence be strongest?	155
Hierarchy and leadership	156
Leadership functions and leadership roles	157
Leadership effectiveness	158
When is leadership needed?	159
Conclusion	161
 9 <i>The characteristics of cross-cultural interaction</i>	 163
Meeting others	164
Encountering the stranger	164
Identifying the other	166
Identity cues	166
Beliefs about out-group members	168
Stereotypes	168
Ethnocentrism	171
Communicating with foreigners	172
Communication	172
The context for communication	174
The culture of situations	176
Communication breakdown	177
Disconfirmed expectations and misattributions	177
The ultimate attribution error	178

The language barrier	179
Corrective feedback	184
Pushing for preferred relationships	186
One more time: Mr Chan and Mrs Robertson	187
Language	187
Proxemics	188
Time	188
Attributional style	189
Praise and compassion	189
Other issues?	190
Conclusion	190
 10 <i>The consequences of cross-cultural contact</i>	 191
Culture shock	191
Cross-cultural outcomes	192
Domains of intercultural effectiveness	193
Outcome studies	193
Cultural loss?	199
Cultural gains?	201
Improving outcomes	203
Organizational considerations	204
Conclusion	205
 11 <i>The future of social psychology across cultures</i>	 207
Social psychology as history?	207
Implications	208
How do cultures change?	209
The 'character' of nations	209
The convergence hypothesis	210
Modernization and westernization	211
The constellation of individual modernity	213
Internationalism	214
The evidence against convergence	215
Economic development and values	216
Variability of the modernization syndrome	217
Traditionalism and modernity as unrelated	217
Migration and psychological change	218
A middle way between convergence and divergence	219
Specific functional convergence	220
Future contributions	221
A psychological theory of culture	221
Setting an example for current social psychology	222
Expanding our understanding	223

Conclusion	225
<i>References</i>	227
<i>Name Index</i>	263
<i>Subject Index</i>	269