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Selfways: Diversity in modes of cultural participation

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One of the powerful ways in which cultural systems come to influence
individual behavior is through their influence on one's way of being a
person in the world – what is often called "self-functioning." The self-
system is a primary locus of sociocultural influence – the basis of culture-
specific being. It is where the individual, the biological entity, becomes a
meaning-full entity – that is, a person, a participant in a social world
(Weigert, Teitge, & Teitge, 1990). Our emphasis here is not the typical one
– on the self-system as an individual project – but rather on the self-system
as a dynamic collective process. Locating our approach within the growing
interdisciplinary field of cultural psychology, we are concerned in this
chapter with how the self is realized through participation in cultural prac-
tices (see also Fiske, Kitayama, Markus, & Nisbett, in press; Kitayama,
Markus, Matsumoto, & Norasakkunkit, in press; Oyserman & Markus, 1993;
Markus, Kitayama, & Heiman, 1996; Shweder, 1990; Shweder & LeVine,
1984; Shweder & Sullivan, 1990). In this chapter, we consider European-
American, Japanese, Chinese, Korean, and African contexts, as well as
gender in a European-American context.

   To analyze the ways in which participation in sociocultural groups and
contexts constitutes the self, we will (1) develop the notion of culture-
specific selfways and (2) selectively review the recent burgeoning literature
on cultural variation in ways of being. In previous comparisons of selves in
American, Japanese, Chinese, and Korean cultural contexts, the focus has
been on the contrast between those patterns of cultural participation that
construct the person as an independent, autonomous entity and those that
construct the person as an interdependent part of a larger social order.
However, in our review of these contexts, we suggest that, taken together,
this work reveals that there are multiple ways to construct interdependence
and independence and that constructions of both can be found in all
cultural contexts. Although much less developed than the work on Asian
selves, there is also a growing literature on selves in Indian, Arab, Mexican,
and African contexts (Abu-Lughod, 1986; Delgado-Gaitan, 1994; Derne,

1992; LeVine et al., 1994; Oyserman, 1993; Parish, 1991); from these we have chosen to focus on selves in African contexts as one potential source of models of self that highlight ways of being that have not yet been captured in the most recent analyses of self. Moreover, although one's region of origin can be an important source of self-relevant meanings and practices, it is hardly the only one. People live by the meanings and practices of multiple sets of cultural contexts. In an initial effort to exemplify the complexities faced by everyone in coming to terms with these multiple, sometimes competing cultural meanings and practices, the chapter will also explore the selves of women living in a European-American context.

Selving as sociocultural

Many current approaches to the self focus on the dynamic and recursive process of organizing, integrating, or meaning-making in individual experience – what might be called the process of "selving." The influence of the self can thus be seen in intrapersonal behavior – self-relevant thinking, emotional regulation, and motivation, as well as in interpersonal behavior – social perception, and social interaction (Banaji & Prentice, 1994; Greenwald & Pratkanis, 1984; Kihlstrom & Cantor, 1984; Markus & Wurf, 1987; Rosenberg, 1979). In other work, the self is described as an active, multifaceted phenomenon – as a set of internalized images, schemas, conceptions, prototypes, theories, goals, or tasks (Carver & Scheier, 1981; Epstein, 1973; Greenwald, 1982). For example, the self is sometimes viewed as a collection of domain-specific individual interpretive structures that are repositories of knowledge and general sources of guidance, direction, and action (Fiske & Taylor, 1994; Holland & Quinn, 1987).

Although it would seem that an awareness and an appreciation of one's self as an individualized continuous entity and as an intentional agent arises from highly personal, idiosyncratic experience, this experience is always grounded in one's relative positioning in sociopolitical and historical contexts (see also Miller, 1994a,b; Oyserman & Markus, 1993). In fact, the more one explores individual subjectivity and agency, the more one discovers relations with other people, society, and history. Selves develop and are manifest in interaction with others – with individual others, with small groups, and with large faceless collectives. Theorists, psychologists, anthropologists, and sociologists alike generally acknowledge that the self is a social phenomenon. Cultural anthropologists and social psychologists, for example, have always held that one cannot be a self by oneself (Baldwin, 1911; Baldwin & Holmes, 1987; Brewer, 1990; Cooley, 1902; Hallowell, 1955; Lebra, 1994b; Mead, 1934; Rosaldo, 1984; Shweder & LeVine, 1984). Current research in cultural psychology reveals that even extreme individualism is a form of cultural participation and requires interdependence

among a set of participants who share a system of consensual meanings and behavioral practices. In recent theorizing, however, researchers have sought to become more specific about the ways in which sociocultural contexts give rise to the self and how, in turn, these selves maintain, create, and transform culture (Oyserman & Kemmelmeier, 1995; Oyserman & Markus, 1993).

What a cultural perspective can add to current views of the self is the understanding that the structures and processes of the self are cultural and historical constructions. Particularized senses of the self – self-concepts and individuated identities – are always grounded in the complex of consensual understandings and customary behavioral routines relevant to being a self in a given sociocultural and historical context. Such sociocultural understandings and practices will influence the form and function of the psychological processes that comprise the self – what people notice and think about, what they feel moved to do, what they feel, how they feel, and how they organize, understand, and give meaning to their experiences.

By sociocultural and historical *context* we can mean any category, group, or period that at least some of the members of that society recognize as socially significant and with which some can identify themselves (Whiting & Child, 1953); some possible examples in the United States are Asian-Americans, women, Catholics, baby boomers, and professional athletes. However, context can also refer to life factors to which communities may attach little self-meaning, but that nonetheless help shape people's selves. These contexts are less obvious but could include, for example, being the second child in a family or being a person who relocates frequently. It is likely, however, that the power of a given context to shape selves is dependent on how pervasively shared it is and on the ways it is recognized and marked. Moreover, sociocultural contexts can be described separately, but they are never experienced separately; being Korean will be experienced differently by a 30-year-old woman than by a 50-year-old man. Similarly, being a 30-year-old American will be experienced differently by someone with a high school degree than by someone with a master's degree. Further, the ways in which individuals participate in culture reflect their power and status in society (i.e., gender, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, age, sexual orientation), so that the effects of cultural participation will seldom be totalizing or uniform.

From this perspective, all selves are culture-specific selves that emerge as people actively adjust to their cultural environments, and all experience is at once both individual and cultural (Markus & Kitayama, 1991; Miller, 1984; Oyserman & Markus, 1993; Rogoff, Radziszewska, & Masiello, 1995). Notably, sociocultural meanings and practices are not applied after behavior has occurred and cannot be separated from the experience – the cultural cannot then be separated or held constant (Fiske, 1993; Miller,

1994a; Shweder, 1990). As D'Andrade and Strauss (1992) suggest, psyche can be seen as an internalization of culture, while culture can be viewed as an externalization of psyche. Thus, processes of the self are thus constructions that bear the mark of past constructions and, at the same time, constructors that provide stability to the present and a course of action for the future. They are, as Bourdieu (1991) characterizes it, "history turned into nature" (p. 7).

Selfways

Cultural and social groups in every historical period are associated with characteristic patterns of sociocultural participation or, more specifically, with characteristic ways of being a person in the world – what we will call here *selfways*. These culturally constructed patterns, including ways of thinking, feeling, wanting, and doing, arise from living one's life in particular sociocultural contexts – that is, contexts structured according to certain meanings, practices, and institutions and not others. Selfways include key cultural ideas and values, including understandings of what a person is, as well as senses of how to be a "good," "appropriate," or "moral" person. According to Taylor (1989), "To know who you are is to be oriented in moral space, a space in which questions arise about what is good or bad, what is worth doing or not, what has meaning and importance for you, and what is trivial and secondary" (p. 28).

For the people of a particular cultural group, their shared ideas about "how to be," who they are and where they belong, what is possible for them and what is not, are reflected in an array of culturally significant metaphors, images, stories, proverbs, icons, and symbols, as well as in their foundational texts. Currently in the United States, for example, it is important to be an independent, positively unique individual who is separate from others. These core cultural ideals can be found, for example, in the Declaration of Independence and the Bill of Rights. And "goodness" or morality in the United States involves maintaining independence and protecting the "natural rights" of each individual (Shweder, Mahapatra, & Miller, 1990). In Japan, being a "good" person requires maintaining interdependence and fostering empathic connections with others. The core cultural idea of cultivating the individual through virtuous action is anchored in the writings of Confucius and Mencius and finds expression in an array of economic, political, and social institutions. And such ideas are explicitly fostered, for example, in the textbooks used in moral education classes in Japanese elementary schools.

Cultural contexts diverge not only in their understandings of what the "good" or "moral" self is thought to be, but in what type of entity or phenomenon the self is assumed to be. In European-American contexts,

the person has often been imagined as a machine – most recently as a computer – that carries its basic operating instructions on the inside, that controls behavior, and that functions the same way no matter where it is located or what it stores. But other understandings of the person are possible. For example, in many Asian contexts, the self is metaphorized not as a machine, but as something from nature, like a plant. In this view, the soil (or the culture) is essential for the plant's development, nourishment, and cultivation. The plant metaphor suggests that a person is porous and open, rather than bounded, and it blurs the inside–outside, self–society, and person–environment distinctions that are deeply embedded in European-American understandings.

In tandem with shared meanings and understandings, selfways are also manifest in everyday actions – in practices of language, caretaking, schooling, religion, work, and the media. Practices as defined by Miller & Goodnow (in press), are "actions that are repeated, shared with others in a social group, and invested with normative expectations, meaning, or significance that go beyond the immediate goals of the action" (p. 7). For example, in the United States, notions of independence are elaborated and given life in a broad net of social customs and institutions with a pervasive range of influence. These range from linguistic practices, for example, the constant, decontextualized "I" of English, to routine social practices like telling guests to "help themselves" and providing newborns with their own rooms, to the more formal practices of societal institutions like the legal system, which identifies and protects "individual rights" (for further development of these ideas see Markus & Kitayama, 1994). Sustained participation in these practices has clear psychological consequences – it is associated with apprehending and experiencing the world in terms of bounded separate individuals and with the development of the psychological processes of independence, autonomy, control, and efficacy.

In Japan, social customs and institutions foster relationality, belonging, and improving the fit between what one is doing and what is expected. Children are taught to appreciate living in human society and encouraged to read the minds of others; and individuals and institutions alike are often required to engage in cycles of self-reflection and self-criticism. Sustained participation in the practices of interdependence is associated with apprehending and experiencing oneself as part of a larger social whole and with the development of resonant psychological processes such as empathy and self-improvement.

As an example, Figures 2.1a and 2.1b outline a few probable features of current Japanese and European-American selfways. The goal is to provide some representation of the sociocultural and historical forms – from the official and the formal to the local and everyday – within which the experience of the self is manifest. In characterizing selfways, the emphasis here is
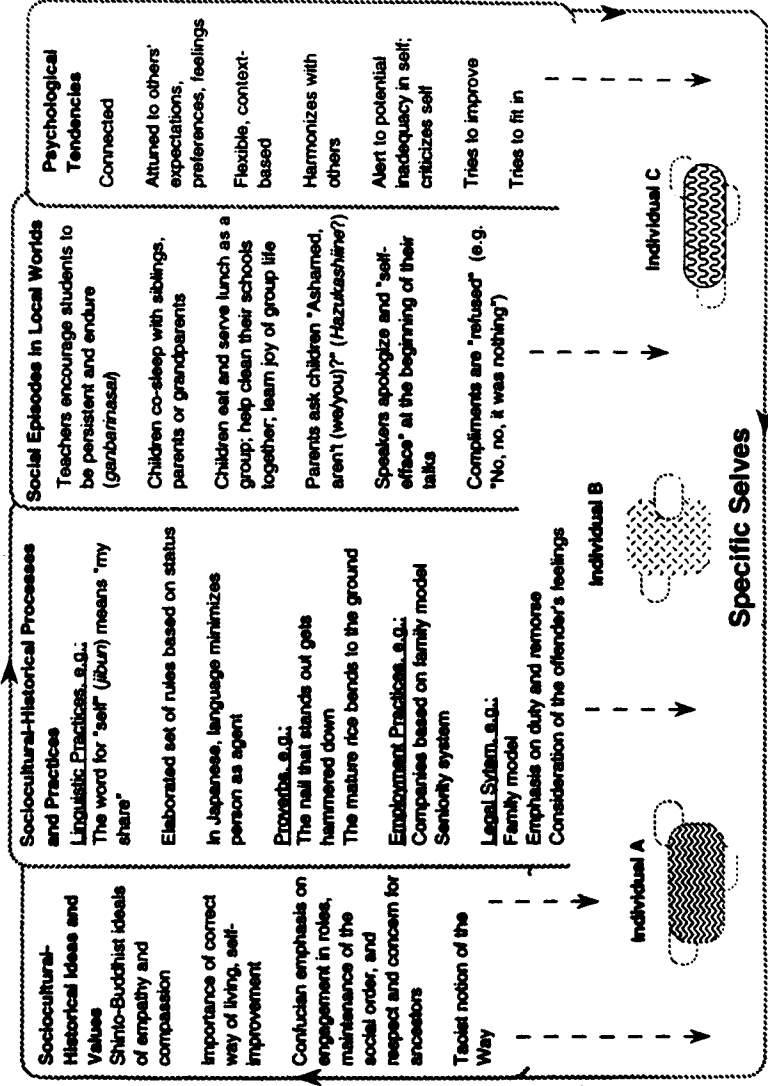
Sociocultural-Historical Ideas and Values

Shinto-Buddhist ideas of empathy and compassion

Importance of correct way of living, self-improvement

Confucian emphasis on engagement in roles, maintenance of the social order, and respect and concern for ancestors

Taoist notion of the Way

Sociocultural-Historical Processes and Practices

Linguistic Practices, e.g.:
The word for "self" (jibun) means "my share"

Elaborated set of rules based on status

In Japanese, language minimizes person as agent

Proverbs, e.g.:
The nail that stands out gets hammered down

The mature rice bends to the ground

Employment Practices, e.g.:
Companies based on family model
Seniority system

Legal System, e.g.:
Family model
Emphasis on duty and remorse
Consideration of the offender's feelings

Social Episodes in Local Worlds

Teachers encourage students to be persistent and endure (ganbarinasai)

Children co-sleep with siblings, parents or grandparents

Children eat and serve lunch as a group; help clean their schools together; learn joy of group life

Parents ask children "Ashamed, aren't (we/you)?" (Hazukashiine?)

Speakers apologize and "self-efface" at the beginning of their talks

Compliments are "refused" (e.g. "No, no, it was nothing")

Psychological Tendencies

Connected

Attuned to others' expectations, preferences, feelings

Flexible, context-based

Harmonizes with others

Alert to potential inadequacy in self; criticizes self

Tries to improve

Tries to fit in

Specific Selves

Individual A

Individual B

Individual C

Figure 2.1a. Features of Japanese selfways.

Sociocultural-Historical Ideas and Values

Protestantism; a personal God

Cartesian view: I think, therefore I am. Importance of beliefs, logic, analysis

Declaration of Independence; Bill of Rights

Individual rights to freedom, liberty, pursuit of happiness, privacy

Sociocultural-Historical Processes and Practices

Linguistic Practices, e.g.:
Frequent use of the decontextualized "I"

In English, focus is on person as agent

Advertisements, e.g.:
Just do it (Nike)
Different is good (Arby's)
Have it your way, right away (Burger King)
Don't blend in (The Beverly Center, LA)
Find your own road (BMW)

Legal System, e.g.:
emphasis on free will, individual rights the individual as a moral agent

Social Episodes in Local Worlds

Guests told to "help themselves"

Infants and children sleep in their own rooms

Colleagues compliment a speaker after his/her talk

Parents allow even young children to choose which shirt to wear, which cup to use, etc.

Children participate in activities such as "show and tell" in the classroom

Job applicants write cover letters that articulate and emphasize their strengths

People ask "Are you happy? Are you having fun?"

Psychological Tendencies

Tries to be separate from others; bounded, stable, consistent

Attribute based: traits, preferences, goals

Articulated, elaborated

Tries to be "in control"

Tries to maintain sense of self as positive and unique

Tries to maintain self-esteem

Specific Selves

Individual A
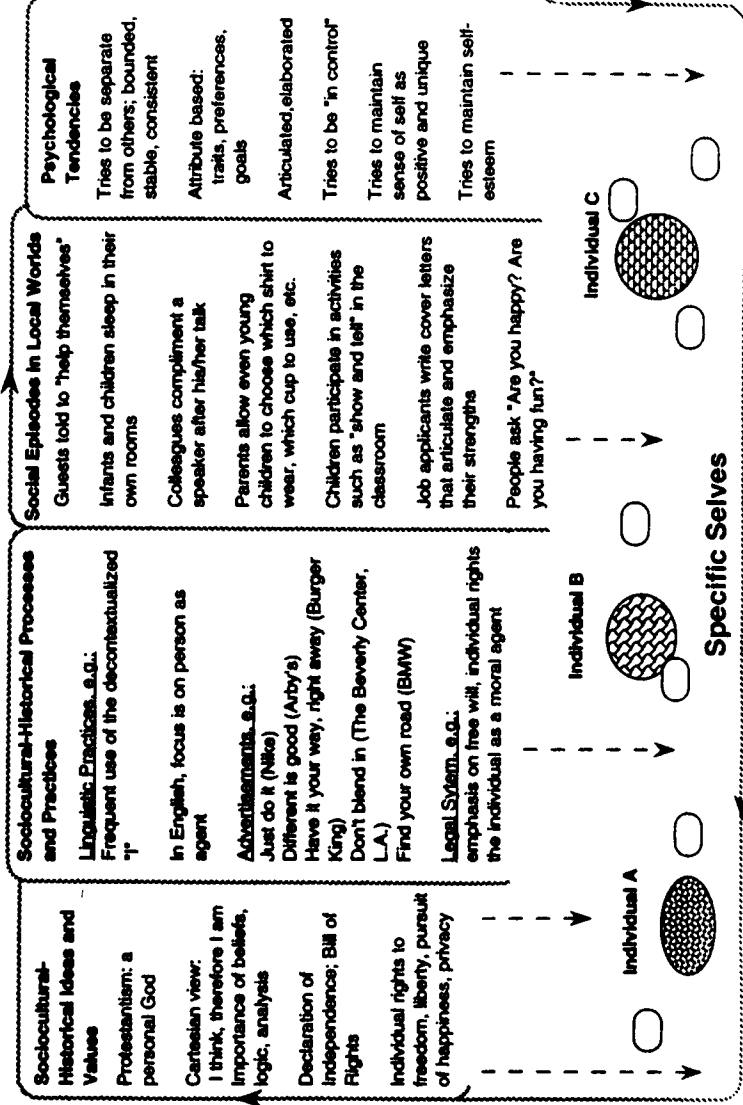
Individual B

Individual C

Figure 2.1b. Features of European-American selfways.

on a dynamic recursive process in which sociocultural participation in a given cultural system of meanings, practices, and institutions affords and fosters characteristic psychological tendencies that in turn serve to integrate the person into the meanings and practices of a cultural community (see also Bourdieu, 1972; Giddens, 1984; Fiske et al. (in press); Martin, Nelson, & Tobach, 1995; Quinn, 1994; Sumner, 1906). Selfways are ongoing, collective behavioral processes – processes created and shared with others who are part of an interdependent social system and who are required for their operation (see also Kitayama and Markus, 1994, Kitayama et al., 1995; Miller, Bersoff, & Harwood, 1990; Miller & Goodnow, in press). Further, people are often not aware of the operation of these selfways, which are transparent (D'Andrade & Strauss, 1992; Holland & Quinn, 1987). Because selfways are lived, they include many ways of being and doing that do not lend themselves immediately or easily to verbal expression. A sense of the collectively constructed nature of the self is not normally experienced, but may be highlighted, for example, when one tries to be an American self while participating in Japanese situations and practices, or when trying to be a Japanese self while participating in American situations and practices.

Selfways are to be distinguished from individual selves, which of course take on a variety of forms depending on the configuration of selfways and individual experiences. Thus, a focus on the sociocultural grounding of the self does not deny the individuality, idiosyncrasy, and uniqueness that can be observed in even the most tight-knit and coherent collectives. Every person participates in a variety of combinations of significant sociocultural contexts, which in American society could include, for example, specific groups like the family or the workforce, as well as contexts defined by ethnicity, religion, profession, social class, gender, birth cohort, and sexual orientation. At least some of the remarkable variation among people results because they are unlikely to participate in the identical configuration of group memberships. Even those living within similar configurations of cultural contexts will obviously diverge in the specifics of their everyday experiences and, moreover, will differentially attend to, elaborate, reflect on, and contest some features of these experiences and not others. Consequently, from the American perspective in which an aversion to uniformity is pervasive, there is little danger that people of the same sociocultural and historical niches will be clones of each other.

Nevertheless, any particularized sense of the self will be grounded in some consensual meanings and customary practices and will necessarily bear some important resemblances to similarly grounded selves. While any two American selves will differ from one another in countless ways, as will any two Japanese selves, the fact of cultural participation in either current systems of American or Japanese practices and institutions will produce some important uniformities. In Figures 2.1a and 2.1b, specific individuals' selves are indicated near the bottom of the figure. For example, people living in Japanese cultural contexts (see Figure 2.1a) are likely to share a sense of a fundamental interdependence with others, and this is shown graphically in the specific selves – individuals A, B, and C (here, shaded areas that represent selves overlap unshaded areas that represent important others). People engaged in systems of Japanese practices, meanings, and institutions (relevant examples are listed in Figure 2.1a) will develop a characteristic set of psychological tendencies – a sense of their connectedness, need to fit it, and tendency to harmonize with others (see the rightmost column of Figure 2.1a). These cultural constraints and affordances on ways of being leave unspecified many features that will be realized depending on the flow of individual lives. Yet some aspects of these culture-specific ways of being should be evident even as people pursue projects of independence and the maintenance of autonomy. Similarly, Figure 2.1b shows individuals A, B, and C (here, shaded areas that represent specific selves do not overlap unshaded areas that represent important others) – people meaningfully engaged in European-American contexts. They will share a set of characteristic psychological tendencies – a sense of separation from others, of boundedness, and of being "in control" even while they seek out and maintain interdependence with others.

Selfways are conceptually similar in some respects to a variety of other cultural concepts including folkways, cultural imperatives, cultural schemas, cultural models, designs for living, ethos, cultural modes of operation, core psychological tendencies, and lifeways. All of these terms reflect an effort to find a way to label patterns of being that pervade thought and action. Sumner (1906) developed the notion of folkways, which are built up through minute acts. Folkways result in habits in individuals and customs in groups and they change as life conditions change. More recently, Quinn (1994) described what he calls a "lifeway – a socially learned way of construing, approaching, and moving through one's world, in domains of experience as different as perception and interpersonal relations" (p. 39). A lifeway is similar to a "habitus," which Bourdieu (1990) defined as a "system of acquired dispositions functioning on the practical level as categories of perception and assessment or as classificatory principles, as well as being the organizing principles of action . . . constituting the social agent" (p. 13). Like these concepts, the notion of selfways attempts to bridge the divide between thinking and other activities typically called "doing" or "being" and to see the self not just as an entity directing behavior, but also as a set of processes emerging from patterns of social action (see Cole, 1990; Giddens, 1984; Wertsch, del Rio, & Alvarez, in press). Cognitive activities are not privileged or isolated, but are among the repertoire of processes that constitute the self.

The study of the nature of affordances and constraints on the individual provided by particular selfways is just now beginning. In the sections that follow we will selectively review some of the most recent literature on cultural variation in self-concept and self-functioning. In each case, we will attempt to identify some of the meanings and practices that comprise selfways and that provide the sociocultural ground for the self.

Selves in European-American contexts

The North American context, particularly the European-American middle class, is characterized by selfways that promote the independence of the self from others (see Figure 2.1b). In very tangible ways, reality comes packaged in terms of individual selves – American selving, when done "properly," maintains and promotes this individuality. Many psychological tendencies and behavioral routines emphasize the notion that the individual is and should be the fundamental unit of society. In this mode of being, the subjectivity of the person is sensed as a more or less integrated whole configured by attributes and values, which is contrastively set against others or society as whole (see Geertz, 1975). The self is the meaningful center of the individual and is understood to be rooted in a set of internal attributes such as abilities, talents, personality traits, preferences, subjective feeling states, and attitudes. A major cultural task, one that is often mutually pursued by caretakers, friends, and teachers, is to continually identify these attributes and then ensure that they are persistently expressed and affirmed. These attributes are assumed to be the defining features of the self – to provide a basis of one's uniqueness – and also to be the source of one's current, past, and possible actions.

For example, in a recent representative sample of 1,500 U.S. adults, Herzog, Franks, Markus, and Holmberg (1994) found that most respondents had no difficulty responding to a request to "tell me about yourself." Self-concepts were dominated by reports of physical and personality attributes, as well as mentions of family roles. One respondent, for example, said, "I'm very dependable as far as being a mother and a housewife. I'm very interested in my home and the five children that I've raised. I get along well with my neighbors. I'm friendly, and I'm doing pretty good as a widow. I'm helpful to my mother, and I'm happy as a whole." Another responded, "I think basically I'm healthy and good-natured. I'm a Democrat, an intellectual, interested in people and reading." And another said, "I'm extremely outgoing, vivacious, and thin. I'm naive and gullible and very insecure and pretty." Depending on people's age and educational background, between 60 and 72% of the responses given were attributes or roles. The remaining responses focused on actions of the self – describing the self in terms of what the individuals were doing, rather than who they

are, for example, "I've just gotten a divorce. I work for a chip company" or "I do a lot of camping." More detailed analyses of these data revealed that some of the variation in the characteristics of response (e.g., attributes versus actions, or number of responses) could be explained by educational background, gender, and ethnicity. But across the board, these adult respondents seemed to approach the self as an object that could be isolated, dissected, and analyzed. Although there were certainly some people who when asked to characterize themselves, said, "I don't know," "I can't," or "I never thought about it," such responses were infrequent.

Successful selving as typically indicated by measures of well-being, life satisfaction, and self-esteem appears to depend on one's capacity to express and affirm one's defining positive attributes continuously and confidently (Herzog, Franks, Markus, & Holmberg, 1994; Myers, 1993; Taylor & Brown, 1988). The Herzog et al. (1994) study suggested that the self-concepts of Americans contain about four to five times as many positive attributes as negative ones. The positivity that characterizes the American self-concept is tied to the seemingly pervasive need for self-enhancement and the overarching concern with maintaining a positive view of the self (Greenberg & Psyzczynski, 1985; Lewicki, 1984; Steele & Lui, 1983; Tesser & Campbell, 1983).

Most American children seem quickly to develop habits of identifying positive features of their own behavior, come to believe they are better than their peers, and each develop an identity or "self" in a way that is attribute-based. They are often in situations in which they are required to compare themselves with others, and they are encouraged to feel good when they have reason to believe that they have some attributes that distinguish them from others in a positive manner. Although U.S. educators are not always in complete agreement over the effectiveness of various classroom practices, in the past few decades U.S. children have been constantly praised and rewarded for work they have done. Very often the positive reinforcement is not particularly contingent on actual performance but is directly focused on encouraging the child to feel good. It is through ideas and practices repeatedly amplified in the media, in the home, and on the playground that many children come to develop articulated selves that are distinctly positive and attribute-based.

Several other features of selves in a U.S. context are also readily apparent. Regardless of age, most respondents, when given the opportunity to describe themselves fully and in their own terms, describe not only their present selves but their notions of what they could be, would like to be, ought to be, or are afraid of being. Selves are assumed to function as incentives or as guidelines for behavior, providing images of future selves in desired or undesired end states. Bruner (1990) has noted that such conceptions are probably related to the U.S. "passion" for keeping one's op-

tions open and the "desire" to see the self as unrestricted or unconstrained by the current situation. From a very early age, U.S. children are asked what they want to be or do when they grow up. Constructing specific, well-articulated, self-relevant goals and working to achieve them is associated with everything good in American selfways – intelligence, success, autonomy, efficacy, control, maturity. To be in control, to be agentic, to have freedom of choice is to selve in the culturally appropriate way. These states foster, and are fostered by, well-developed notions of one's ideal or possible selves.

The expanded scope that a cultural perspective affords reveals that, in a U.S. context, selves are importantly shaped by structures and practices of the market system. A consumer society constantly cultivates the value of choice and the preferences by which to make these choices. Choice and practices of choosing function to articulate and reify the self as a distinct entity. For example, choice – picking one's favorite, having it your way, the availability of a wide variety of styles, flavors, colors, and so on – is central to many domains of U.S. life. Choice is important because it allows people to selve – to manifest their individuality, to express themselves, and to be active agents who control their own actions. Choosing involves knowing, revealing, and making good on one's constituting preferences or attitudes. The frequent opportunities to choose make real a referent "I" that "has" preferences and also give rise to a sense of agency and control. In this way there is a lock and key arrangement between elements of self, self-processes, and the recurrent social practices that constitute everyday social life.

The practices associated with choice and choosing foster a person's defining preferences and attributes. In turn, the presence of these self-defining attributes requires channels or choice situations so that they can be expressed and affirmed. Practices of choosing are likely to be of significance to the well-documented importance of self-efficacy, the belief that one has control over one's behavior and that one has the ability to achieve certain outcomes (Bandura, 1977, 1986). Recent studies suggest, in fact, that a belief in one's self-efficacy is so axiomatic to being in the U.S. context that, without this belief, one's physical health is at serious risk (Wiedenfeld, O'Leary, Bandura, & Brown, 1990). A detailed focus on selfways has the potential to further a comprehensive understanding of how and why a clear positive self-concept, a sense of self-efficacy, and of being in control are empirically linked to all forms of well-being in European-American contexts.

Another predominant feature of the self in European-American contexts is the persistent need for consistency and stability. Empirical research on the self reveals that evidence of malleability or variability in the self is often downplayed or actively contested. The psychological tendency toward consistency is extremely robust and well-documented and has been discussed

as a universal human motive. Many studies (e.g., Swann, 1985) report findings which indicate that when people receive information that challenges a prevailing conception of the self (e.g., being told that they are not as dominant or as academically competent as they thought), they feel threatened or anxious and try in whatever way possible to reaffirm the self. The desire for a consistent self is tied to the notion that the self, by cultural definition, is whole, stable, and integrated, rather than fragmented and distributed. Practices designed to establish that one is not inconsistent, two-faced, indecisive, or hypocritical can be found in all domains of U.S. life. For example, expressing one's views in one situation but keeping quiet in another is often interpreted as a deficit – a failure to have the courage of one's convictions – rather than as social sensitivity. Related to the press for consistency is the tendency to characterize oneself in fairly general terms without attention to the situational variability. In the Herzog et al. (1994) study, for example, the large majority of respondents described themselves in fairly abstracted terms and did not qualify or contextualize their self-descriptions. Responses of the type "With my family, I am outgoing" or "At work, I am very serious" were in the minority. It is of course possible that more detailed and in-depth interviewing would elicit more qualified responses, but these data suggest the influence of selfways that hold that individuals should not be bound to particular situations and that personal attributes should transcend particular interpersonal relationships.

Although becoming independent and free from the control of others is fostered in many U.S. practices and institutions, developing and maintaining relationships is also a dominant theme of U.S. life. Most Americans know that relationships are critical for healthy self-functioning. Herzog et al. (1994) described a set of descriptors that were endorsed by nearly everyone and thought of as important to one's self-evaluation regardless of age, gender, ethnicity, or level of schooling. These self-descriptors were: caring (87%), responsible (85%), being a friend (84%), being a parent (81%), involved in family (79%), and loved (78%). Notably, this shared view of self does not center on autonomy or independence, as might be expected from respondents participating in the highly individualist U.S. culture. Instead the common descriptors appear to reflect a concern with community, interdependence, and relationships. Although fully 68% of these respondents did claim that the label "independent" was very descriptive of them, this rate of endorsement does not equal the endorsement rates for being responsible, caring, and a friend.

Whether or not respondents "actually" believed themselves to be relational, the convergence in these self-descriptions suggests that being a self in the United States in the 1990s includes some attention to relationships with others, and given the social reality of the connectedness of people everywhere, it would be surprising were this not the case. Yet the nature of

connection American-style requires further examination. It may be that the primary emphasis is not on the relation itself, but instead on the individuals themselves who "have" relationships. Relationships may be important because individuals can gain the required psychic attributes of security, contentment, and feelings of being loved and needed or because they can affirm their views of themselves as responsible and caring. Or the focus of many of these responses may reflect an awareness of being part of a relationship, but the relationship may be framed as a goal to be pursued in an independent and agentic fashion ("I help others no matter what") and may differ from interdependence as practiced within a more collectivist selfway.

Selves in Japanese contexts

A rapidly expanding literature in psychology, anthropology, and philosophy is now leading to a reasonably nuanced understanding of the cultural form of Japanese selves. Recent careful analyses of Japanese settings (Bachnik, 1994; Kondo, 1990; Lebra, 1993, 1994a,b; Lewis, 1995; Peak, 1987; Rosenberger, 1992) reveal a pervasive concern with the attention to the relationality of social life. Markus and Kitayama (1991) suggested that Japanese selfways emphasize the fundamental relatedness of individuals to each other and that the relationship rather than the individual may be a functional unit of consciousness (see Figure 2.1a). Specifically, they claim that

experiencing interdependence entails seeing oneself as part of an encompassing social relationship and recognizing that one's behavior is determined by, contingent on, and to a large extent, organized by what the actor perceives to be the thoughts, feelings, and actions of others in the relationship. (p. 227)

This does not imply, as some of the first analyses of Japanese selves seemed to indicate, that selfways will completely determine the content of self, such that Japanese selves should be imagined as completely group oriented or lacking in individuality or independence; nor does it imply that Japanese selves are typically experienced in terms of their social roles, responsibilities, and empathic relations. It does imply that the selving process – the ways of being a self – are different from those of North America in that they do not emphasize and reify the individual, but explicitly highlight being as the state of "being-in-relation." In this mode of being, subjectivity is sensed as interdependence with a larger whole that includes the person and others and is configured by a constant referencing of the self to the situational setting or context.

In Japan – in contrast with many mainstream cultural contexts within the United States – the very task of child rearing is not one of making a dependent baby into an independent person, but instead one of developing an asocial baby into a social being (Caudill & Weinstein, 1969). The

need to maintain a connection and harmony with others is highly elaborated, and maintaining interpersonal obligations and relationships is practiced in every sphere of daily social life. These practices foster selves that are relatively malleable and dynamic. Constructing a European-American-style, distinct, and attribute-based self is typically neither highlighted nor thought to be a mature, fully cultivated form of human agency. Instead, attempting to do so is commonly understood as a sign of immaturity because it marks one's failure to take a full perspective on the relationship in which the self is realized. Japanese-style agency finds its expression and meaning in the sense that the self is both fully afforded and thus appreciated by the community in which the self is a participant, and that the self serves flexibly in that capacity to maintain and further the welfare of its relationships and community.

According to Bachnik (1994) the key to understanding Japanese selves is in realizing that selving is this context is always situated and indexical – there is no fixed point. According to this view, "The self is characterized by embeddedness in context and 'shifting' so that relationships between individuals and interactively defined meanings are prioritized over the individual self and 'private' meaning" (p. 18). The self of a given situation is produced by "indexing self, in relation to society, as well as the converse: society in relation to the self" (p. 25). But what counts as self and what counts as society is variable depending on the situation; thus, the self outside of a specified social context can be thought of as a part that becomes whole when engaging in an encompassing social relationship or situation. Other theorists of Japanese selves refer to the self as indeterminate, multiple, and moving, and all of these characterizations are consistent with the absence of a constant or fixed "I" or "you" (Kondo, 1990; Lebra, 1994a; Rosenberger, 1989).

In a study comparing the self-descriptions of American and Japanese college students, Mullally, Markus, and Kitayama (1996) found that when describing themselves, Japanese students made proportionately more references to other people than did European-American students. Over 50% of their responses (e.g., "I try to make my parents happy"; "I view things differently from other people"; "I cook dinner with my sister") included references to others, whereas only 24% of the European-American statements included such references. Yeh (1995) in another comparative study of self in Japan and the United States found that Japanese respondents struggled with direct questions about the self and that their answers seemed vague, partial, and indirect. Further they required a much longer time to generate any type of answer. Yeh notes that the direct, certain, opinionated self-disclosures of the Americans would typically be seen as rude and inappropriate in a Japanese context; for example, one American in response to the query "How would you describe yourself to yourself?"

began by saying, "How long an answer would you like? I could talk all day about myself, you know, it's my favorite topic." Yeh concludes that the interview format typically used to reveal the self assumes that the respondent has a conceptualization of the self and will be at ease with introspection and self-disclosure. It is a method that is rooted in a Western communication style and one not likely to produce comparable results in divergent cultural contexts.

Efforts to explore Japanese selves empirically have been most successful in highlighting the fact that the typical methods for examining the self-concept – free descriptions of the self, the Twenty Statements Test (TST) (i.e., answering the question "Who am I?" 20 times or endorsing uncontextualized psychological attributes) – are methods that are tied to European-American presuppositions that the self is bounded and stable and transcends both relationship and situation. Such methods are decidedly less well matched for selves that are explicitly conceptualized as dynamic, indexical, and contextualized. Cousins (1989) found that when asked to describe themselves on the original TST, Japanese high school and college students gave concrete and specific self-descriptions ("I play tennis on the weekend"). In contrast, the U.S. descriptions included more psychological trait characterizations ("I am optimistic," "I am friendly"). Yet when a specific interpersonal context was provided so that respondents could envision the situation (e.g., "me at home") and, presumably, who was there and what was being done to whom or by whom, this pattern of results was reversed. The Japanese showed a stronger tendency to characterize themselves in psychological trait terms than did Americans. For these respondents, the contextualized format was apparently more "natural" because it located the self in a habitual unit of representation, namely, in particular interpersonal situations. In contrast, the abstract situation-free self-description task appears to be a better match to the global characterizations that are apparently commonplace in U.S. self-referental thinking.

A study by Cross, Kanagawa, Markus, and Kitayama (1995) investigates the context sensitivity of selving in another way. They asked Japanese and U.S. college students to complete the TST in one of four different social contexts: alone, with a friend, in a classroom with other students, and in a professor's office. Across the four conditions, they found that Japanese students were most likely to describe themselves in terms of preferences ("I like ice cream") and in term of everyday activities ("I listen to music on the weekend"), whereas U.S. students were most likely to characterize themselves in terms of psychological attributes ("friendly"). Although it is "natural" for U.S. students to see themselves in terms of global and situationally consistent dispositions, it is decidedly less natural for Japanese, who typically require knowledge of the context before determining what should be indexed as self. In this situation, descriptions of one's preferences and

recent activities do not invite comparisons or result in a direct contrast between self and others and, thus, are safe and socially inconsequential. Further, Cross et al. (1995) found that to a significantly greater extent than the U.S. students, the Japanese respondents gave different types of self-descriptions in the different contexts. For example, although these students were unlikely to mention their strengths in the three conditions with peers, they did describe their abilities in the condition with the professor. Such findings suggest that although the Japanese can and do characterize themselves in positive ways, such as "I am a good student" or "I am a strong athlete," they will do so only in those situations in which it is appropriate to construct such a self. Such findings suggest that the emphasis on relationality thought to be characteristic of Japanese cultural contexts will be found not in the specific content of their self-descriptions, but instead in the prevalent process of selving, that is, a tendency to create and present a self that is in tune with what is expected of a good self in a given situation, mode, or form of response. Constructing a self or answering a "Who am I" question involves an assessment of what a situation is about and how to be part of it. So in this sense, the response references the situation, rather than a separate or independent notion of the self.

These types of differences in self-description can be more fully understood by considering the meanings and practices associated with the self-ways in each context. In a European-American middle-class context, the dominant modes of cultural participation involve discovering, confirming, and expressing the positive attributes of the self. In Japan, cultural participation often involves attending to the other, becoming interdependent with the other, and being empathic with the other; this requires knowing and meeting both the covert and overt expectations of others. Self-esteem or self-worth in a Japanese context are less tied to the realization that one's own goals have been met and are more tied to the general understanding that one is doing what is required in a given situation. For example, as a child, being part of a family often means thinking about the family and one's place within it and doing what is proper for this situation. It involves considering such questions as What do my parents want me to do? and Did I do what they wanted me to do? Indeed, cultural differences appear to exist in the prominence of other-appraisal relative to self-appraisal. Schoneman (1981) found that when U.S. college undergraduates were asked to choose the most important reason why they ascribed various personality traits to themselves, they chose "self-observation" 70% of the times, followed by "social feedback" (19%) and social comparison (11%). Takata (1987) repeated the procedure of Schoneman (1981) in Japan and found that "self-observation" was used less frequently (50%), but both "social feedback" (24%) and "social comparison" (26%) were used more frequently.

Most social situations in Japanese life are associated with a more or less explicit set of expectations, and thus other-appraisal is a well-practiced habit of mind. Cultural participation entails discovering what is missing or lacking in one's behavior and then closing the gap between the actual and expected behavior (Kitayama & Markus, 1994; Kitayama, Markus, Matsumoto, & Norasakkunkit, in press; Markus & Kitayama, 1994). In contrast to Americans, who seem to be very well tuned into positive features of the self, Japanese respondents may be tuned into negative features of the self within a given context. Negative features, typically, are those that keep them from being a good part or member of the encompassing social unit. Yeh (1995) found that the Japanese respondents in her study made very few direct, positive statements about the self, instead giving negative descriptions of the self ("I think too much" or "I'm somewhat of a selfish person") or they negated negative statements ("I'm not lazy"). Accordingly, it may not be feeling good about the self – the basis of U.S. self-esteem – that is critical, but instead the confirmation that negative features are absent in the self. In fact, self-criticism is valued, desired, and promoted in Japan. School children are often instructed to think about what they did wrong and how to improve their performance in the following day. Adults also engage in self-criticism: Professional baseball players, for example, are required to recount publicly the flaws in their own playing.

A constant focus on expectations and whether they are being met appear to go hand in hand with an almost exclusive focus on self-improvement in Japan. For example, Kitayama and Wakabayashi (1996) analyzed the content of essays written by incoming students of a Japanese junior high school and found that the vast majority of the essays followed a script of self-improvement, in which the students discussed their negative aspects (misbehaviors or mistakes) early in the essay and concluded with remarks about how these negative aspects could be corrected or improved in the future. This importance of self-improvement can be seen everywhere in Japanese life. For instance, a recent advertisement urging Japanese workers to stop working and take their vacations exhorted, "Let's become masters at refreshing ourselves" (*New York Times*, May 1995). The tendency to focus on where one needs improvement, while discounting the positive – a tendency that appears as self-depreciation from a U.S. perspective – works well to establish the person as a member in good standing in a given context. Seeing the self as good or appropriate involves persistently trying to adjust oneself to ensure a harmonious fit with others in a given interpersonal situation. This can be contrasted with self-improvement in the United States, which is typically cast in terms of individual achievement.

Kitayama and Karasawa (1995) recently explored self-evaluation in several domains hypothesized to be central to the Japanese self. These included role performance, affective engagement, and ordinariness of the

self. Respondents were asked to respond to items written in either affirmative or nonaffirmative language. With respect to the domain of role performance, for example, one item read, "I can perform social roles expected of me by others," whereas another read, "I don't like to be constrained by social roles." With respect to the ordinariness of the self, one read, "I can do anything as well as ordinary people," whereas another read, "I sometimes feel like a dropout." Respondents were also asked to rate themselves on a scale of well-being (e.g., "I feel I am quite content with my life"). A high self-evaluation was achieved by affirming the positively phrased items (direct self-affirmation) or by denying the negatively phrased items (indirect self-affirmation). For Japanese students, the partial correlation between indirect self-affirmation and well-being was substantially higher than the correlation between direct self-affirmation and well-being. Although data for U.S. students were not collected in this study, Kitayama and Karasawa predicted that, in the United States, it should be direct self-affirmation rather than indirect self-affirmation that is most closely associated with subjective well-being. Further, reanalyzing data collected by Miyamoto, Nakada, and Horino (1994), Kitayama and Karasawa (1995) observed the same pattern for physical health of both Japanese college students and older adults. Those who indirectly affirmed themselves by denying the presence of negative attributes in the self were much healthier (as measured by fewer reports of many physical symptoms including headaches, coughing, and shoulder pain) than those who did not. In fact, there was virtually no relationship between direct affirmation of the self and physical health.

Studies that find differences in the content of selves have led investigators to consider the broader cultural contexts within which people are living and to delineate the connections between the cultural criteria for selfhood and well-being. For example, U.S. and European psychologists have repeatedly demonstrated a powerful and presumably universal motive – to believe that one is somewhat better than one's peers (Harter, 1990) – that is among the most robust and well-documented findings of psychology. American children as young as age four believe themselves to be better than their peers. U.S. adults typically consider themselves to be more intelligent, friendlier, and more attractive than the average adult (Myers, 1989). Further, they have more positive expectations for themselves and their futures than they have for other people, and to maintain these ideas they engage in downward comparison, assessing their own state by referring to someone who is less fortunate. The general tendency for self-enhancement can also be identified in biases dubbed as "optimism." People in North American populations tend to overestimate the likelihood of desirable and fortunate events happening to themselves and to underestimate the likelihood of comparable undesirable and unfortunate events (e.g., Weinstein, 1987).

The reason that being positively different from, or superior to, others produces a good feeling about the self has rarely been considered. Typically, it has been regarded as self-evident that being different in a positive sense produces a good feeling. From a perspective that conceptualizes the self as importantly tied to cultural participation, it is clear that feeling positively about the self arises from individuals' active pursuit of adaptation to immediate cultural environments that give rise to and promote the independent autonomous individual. Yet it is evident that self-worth or self-acceptance may assume a very different form for people living in systems with different predominant modes of participation. Desirable self-feelings may be a function of good social relationships (fitting in, maintaining harmony in one's relations, occupying one's proper place, engaging in appropriate action). Kitayama, Markus, and Matsumoto (1995) found that, among Japanese college students, the frequency of experiencing generalized forms of good feelings such as happiness and elation is strongly correlated with the frequency of experiencing socially engaged forms of good feelings, such as feeling friendly and feeling respect for others; however, the correlation was much lower for socially disengaged forms of good feelings, such as pride and feeling on top of the world. This correlational pattern was in stark contrast with the pattern found for an American sample, in which the generalized good feelings were primarily related with the socially disengaged, rather than engaged, good feelings.

In two studies Heine and Lehman (1995) examined optimism among Japanese college students and non-Asian Canadian college students. They found that Canadian students estimated the chance of positive events (e.g., "You will enjoy your career") occurring to them to be significantly greater than the chance of these events occurring to the average students and, simultaneously, the chance of negative events ("Sometime in the future you will do something that will make your family ashamed of you") occurring to them to be significantly lower than for the average student. In the Japanese sample, this bias was significantly attenuated and in some cases reversed to show a significant pessimistic bias. The Japanese respondents showed a significant optimism only in their estimation of the likelihood of negative events. Further, consistent with the idea that self-enhancement serves the function of bolstering one's self-regard, the Canadian sample showed a highly significant correlation between perceived threat of the negative events and the extent of optimism. Thus, the more threatening the events, the more likely that the respondents underestimated the likelihood of these events occurring to them. This correlation was not evident for the Japanese sample.

The same point has been made in the domain of attributing success and failure. Examining European-American samples, social psychologists have repeatedly found self-serving or self-protective biases, in which individuals

take credit for success by attributing it to their own abilities or effort and, less frequently, avoid blame for failure by attributing it to situations or chance. Kitayama, Takagi, and Matsumoto (1995) have recently reviewed 23 Japanese studies on the same topic and found unequivocal evidence that Japanese individuals explain their success in terms of situational factors and their failure in terms of a lack of ability or effort. Further, this self-deprecating or critical attribution pattern was evident even in those cases in which respondents knew that their responses were completely anonymous and was especially pronounced in studies in which an arbitrary experimental task was used to manipulate success and failure. When attribution of an outcome in daily events (especially attribution of academic performance) was examined, Japanese individuals tended to regard effort as the primary cause for both success and failure, reflecting the assumption pervasive in Japanese culture that effort is required for success and the fact that many Japanese children who succeed in school attribute their performance to effort. Overall, no evidence for self-serving or self-protective attribution bias is found in Japan.

Such findings suggest that self-enhancing biases that have been so pervasively demonstrated may not be universal human motives, but instead may be tied to particular selfways. Each cultural context is associated with some notion about what it means to be a person and how to understand one's own and others' actions. Through various types of emotional socialization, as well as through ongoing social and linguistic practices, these ideas are incorporated into the emotional system so that it feels "good" to behave in accordance with these selfways and it feels "bad" when one cannot or does not. In this way, selfways shape one's sense of the good by specifying one important set of criteria for what is "good" (and also how, when, and why to feel this way).

According to this analysis, relative sensitivity to positive or negative self-relevant information is in itself a mode of cultural participation (Kitayama, Markus, & Lieberman, 1994; Markus & Kitayama, 1994). If European-American selfways include objectifying the person and identifying positively valued internal attributes, caretakers are quite likely to draw attention to children's positive features by encouraging and complimenting them. The child may in turn develop a habitual intentional orientation toward positive self-relevant information, as indeed many U.S. educators have recently argued (e.g., Damon, 1995). By contrast, in selfways that involve adjusting oneself to significant social relationships, caretakers may be more likely to draw children's attention to shortcomings, problems, or potentially negative features that have to be corrected or behavior that has to be improved to meet the expectations and norms of a given relationship. As a consequence of this pattern of living, children may develop a habitual intentional orientation toward negative self-relevant information. Consis-

tent with this idea, European-American practices are often centered around distinguishing oneself and standing out from the rest, whereas Japanese practices are often framed in terms of *hitonami* (average as a person); to the extent that one is average, one is relieved. From a Japanese perspective, being different entails the risk of being excluded.

Kitayama et al. (in press) argue that selfways are manifest not just in individual reactions but also in socially shared situations that create and maintain cultural perspectives. Accordingly, the tendency for self-esteem enhancement observed among many groups of Americans may result not just from internalized psychological tendencies, but also from the fact that U.S. life includes a relatively greater number of social acts and situations that are conducive to self-esteem enhancement. Japanese social life most probably is not organized to provide frequent opportunities for self-esteem enhancement and is categorized and identified with respect to other imperatives and tendencies. To explore these ideas empirically, Kitayama et al. (in press) presented Japanese and U.S. college students with a set of situations and asked them to indicate how much their own self-esteem would increase, decrease, or not change because of the situation (e.g., "I ace a serve in tennis" or "I am ignored by other people at a party"). The situations consisted of equal numbers of self-esteem–increasing and –decreasing situations generated by separate groups of American and Japanese students. When rating, the American students showed a highly reliable tendency for self-enhancement. That is, they anticipated that their self-esteem would increase more in the success situations than it would decrease in the failure situations. This effect was completely reversed among Japanese students, who anticipated that their self-esteem would decrease more in the failure situations than it would increase in the success situations – a tendency toward self-depreciation.

Following from our hypothesis that many commonly occurring situations within a given cultural context will be those that afford the predominant way of being, Kitayama et al. (in press) found that situations generated by Americans – U.S. made situations – were more likely to be rated by both U.S. and Japanese students as situations that would increase one's self-esteem. Situations generated by Japanese – Japanese made situations – were more likely to be rated as situations that would decrease self-esteem.

Selves in Chinese and Korean contexts

Although there is a rapidly growing interest in self and identity in Asian contexts, beyond the studies we have reviewed for Japan there is still relatively little empirical work on selves in Chinese, Korean, or other Asian contexts. At this early point in study, it is possible to see some aspects of selving in Chinese and Korean contexts that are similar to those in Japa-

nese contexts, but also some that appear to diverge and may be the source of important differences. Similar to the Japanese tradition, many Chinese and Korean selfways are grounded in the Confucian tradition, which begins with explicit attention to the all-important social order. In contrast, the Western philosophical traditions that are incorporated within European-American selfways also concern themselves with the social order, but typically the focus is on how the social order can be reconciled with the all-important individual order. In the Confucian tradition, the emphasis is on the achievement of virtue through the development of the individual into a "social man" (Yu, 1992).

Maintenance of the social order is thought to be grounded in five key relationships: father–son, emperor–subject, husband–wife, elder–younger, and friend–friend. Notably, four of these five relationships are asymmetrical and reveal the inevitability and desirability of hierarchy within the Confucian tradition. These hierarchical relationships are cultivated in daily practices at the level of the family and the nation and, when functioning properly, are assumed to preserve harmony and order. Following from this, Chinese and Korean selfways, like those in Japan, involve an orientation toward others with the assumption that what is good for the group is also good for the self, which by definition is "a part" of the group. The nature of relationality within the Confucian philosophical tradition clearly requires in-depth analysis, but it is quickly evident that selfways that incorporate these ideas are likely to be strikingly different from selfways that incorporate Western ideas of the "natural rights" of individuals.

Empirical research supports a strong other- and family-centeredness in Chinese and Korean selfways, suggesting that rather than being conceived and experienced as separate entities, selves are lived as relational parts of a greater whole. In support of this, Ip and Bond (1995) reported that in response to the TST, Chinese participants were more likely to refer to social roles (e.g., "I am a daughter") and to qualify these social roles (e.g., "I am Jane's friend") than were U.S. participants. Accordingly, Maday and Szalay (cited in Kim & Choi, 1994) found that the first associations with the word "me" were "family" and "love" for Koreans, but "I, person, individual" for Americans. These differences in associations may reflect a difference in the self's boundaries, such that Korean selves blur with the family, whereas U.S. selves are defined most fundamentally as an entity separate from others.

Just as the Korean concept of me at a basic level appears not to entail the sharp distinctions from close others implied in the European-American concept of me, the Korean concept of *woori* (we-group) differs qualitatively from European-American notions of the group. Choi and Choi (1990) reported that when asked what the word *woori* (in Korea) or "we" (in Canada) signifies, 55% of Koreans' responses emphasized the theme of "affection" (*cheong*), "intimacy," "comfort," and "acceptance." In contrast,

60% of Canadians' responses centered around the concept of the group as "I and others," "two people," "people and me," or "individuals." Thus, as Choi, Kim, and Choi (1993) explained, the Canadian concept of group seems to be that of a "simple aggregate of individuals" or a collection of separate entities organized around shared interests, whereas the Korean concept of group is that of a relational plurality in which group members are not truly "individuals," but are connected in a fundamental way to other members of the group. In fact, according to Tu Wei-Ming (1994), it is the nature of people to work through groups and they must be part of groups – families, communities, and nations – to be themselves. To European-Americans, however, because individuals are conceived of and experienced as separate and bounded, groups are typically regarded and lived as only collections of people. This concept of the self and the group as separate entities thus implies that conflict is inevitable between what is good for the group and what is good for the individual. In Korean cultural contexts, individuals may experience themselves as tightly linked to the collective; and the collective is such an integral part of the self that distinctions between the two may not always be regarded as relevant.

Studies with respondents living in these Asian contexts reveal that the relations between self and other are experienced somewhat differently than appears typical among European-Americans. Many European-American practices emphasize the separation among even close individuals. For example, Tesser (1986, 1988) has found that when a close other excels in a domain that is irrelevant to that person, he or she will share in the other's good feelings. However, when a close other performs well in a domain that is relevant to an individual, the person tends to disparage the other's performance in an effort to boost his or her own self-evaluation. In a replication of this study with Taiwanese participants, Cross, Liao, and Josephs (1992) found, however, that Taiwanese males were more positive about their friend's performance when the task was relevant to the self, than when it was not. Such findings suggest that, within Asian contexts, selfways that draw sharp boundaries between close others and the self are apparently less pervasive.

Persistent direct comparisons with others may work against maintaining empathy, which Lebra (1994b) has argued is a psychological mainstay for those in a Japanese cultural context. When selfways emphasize being part of the group, standing out or being different even in a positive sense may not be valued. Instead, selfways may give rise to what from a Western perspective appears to be "self-effacement" (Takata, 1987; Weisz, Rothbaum, & Blackburn, 1984) but that also could be considered "harmonization with others" (Markus & Kitayama, 1991). For example, when answering the TST, Chinese respondents made fewer positive statements about themselves than did their U.S. counterparts (Bond & Cheung, 1983; Ip &

Bond, 1995). Ryff, Lee, and Na (1995) also found that Korean respondents were more likely to endorse negative than positive statements about themselves; in contrast, U.S. respondents showed the opposite pattern. Furthermore, in a series of open- and closed-ended questions regarding parenting experiences, the majority of self-evaluations that Korean parents gave were negative, whereas the majority of self-evaluations that U.S. parents gave were positive (Schmutte, Lee, & Ryff, 1995). The Korean parents also reported less fulfillment than the U.S. parents and were less likely than the U.S. parents to report that their children had fulfilled their hopes. Stigler, Smith, and Mao (1985) found similar results among Chinese and U.S. elementary school children in their self-perceptions of competence. The Chinese students rated their competence lower than did their U.S. counterparts in the cognitive, physical, and general domains. At this point, summarizing across the studies of selves in Asian contexts, it seems that being a member in good standing in these contexts requires deemphasizing the self and adjusting oneself to the immediate situation of which one is a part. These are orientations that are at odds with the very practice of self-description and with tasks that require evaluating and categorizing the self in individualized and abstract terms.

In European-American contexts, selfways do not typically elaborate how to fit in properly to maintain the harmony of a given social situation. In fact, very often the best place for a person is one that is separate and standing out from others. In contrast, in many Asian contexts, such a position seems hardly natural or desirable. Recent studies of Asian child-rearing and schooling practices suggest a clear emphasis on knowing one's place within the social order, and this is particularly evident in Chinese cultural contexts that reveal an explicit high regard for self-improvement, order, and hierarchy.

In a study comparing middle-class European-American families in Chicago and middle-class Chinese families in Taipei, Taiwan, Miller, Fung and Mintz (1996) observed that Chinese children and caretakers make explicit references to rule violations and cast the children as transgressors. In European-American families, during storytelling the child is cast in a favorable light and the focus of the story in on revealing the child's preferences or the strengths of his or her unique personality. The Chinese appear to use an explicitly evaluative, overtly self-critical framework with the child. For the Americans, an implicitly evaluative, overtly self-affirming framework is evident during storytelling. Shame for the Chinese caretakers involves the threat of ostracism, but it also reminds children of their interdependent status and functions to keep them from disgrace or from losing their all-important connection to others.

In a study of Chinese-American and North American mothers' beliefs about what is important for raising children, Chao (1993b) found that

Chinese-American mothers stressed sensitivity to others' expectations and to the demands of the situation. Chao noted the following eight themes: (1) cultivation of a good relationship with the child, (2) education for the child, (3) a balance of obedience and agency, (4) respect for others, (5) the child's ability to get along with others, (6) good moral character, (7) self-reliance, and (8) maintenance of Chinese culture. In contrast to the Chinese-American mothers' belief in teaching children to harmonize and adjust themselves to others, the European-American mothers' responses revealed an orientation around the child and nurturing and building the child's self. Chao identified the following nine themes: (1) creation of an environment that is consistent and in which the child feels loved and safe, (2) building of self-esteem and confidence, (3) creation of an environment for learning and exploring, (4) good moral character, (5) dealing with emotions with the child, (6) independence, (7) creation of an environment centered around and sensitive to the child, (8) family and community, and (9) fun and enjoyment for the child. The different emphases in what is important in raising children underscore ways of selving organized around a concern for the relation between self and others and hierarchy for the Chinese-American mothers, versus a concern with independence and building a strong, positive self for the European-American mothers.

Chao (1993a,b) also found an emphasis on order and respect for hierarchy among Chinese-American mothers. They scored higher on scales of parental control, authoritarianism, and what Chao calls "Chinese child rearing ideologies" than their European-American counterparts. Thus, Chinese-American mothers were more likely than U.S. mothers to endorse items such as "I have strict, well-established rules for my child" and "I do not allow my child to question my decisions" (parental control); "I make sure I know where my child is and what he is doing at all times" and "I teach my child that in one way or another punishment will find him when he is bad" (authoritarianism); and "Mothers can teach children by pointing [out] good behavior in other children," "When children continue to disobey you, they deserve a spanking," and "Children should be in the constant care of their mothers/family members" (child-rearing ideologies). Furthermore, Rohner and colleagues found that, in contrast to Americans, Korean adolescents found parental control to be evidence not of hostility and mistrust, but of love and concern (Rohner, 1984; Rohner & Pettengill, 1985). Notably, parental practices that emphasize strict control can also be found within some European-American contexts but they do not seem to be explicitly in the service of cultivating the social order. Instead, they may be in the service of developing the self as a moral, disciplined, and strong agent who will not be easily influenced by others.

Schooling practices, like child-rearing beliefs, also provide an important

window into the functioning of selfways. Studies of preschools in China, Japan, and the United States (Peak, 1987; Tobin, Wu, & Davidson, 1989; Wu, 1994) found that in contrast to U.S. teachers, who highlight individual creativity and self-actualization, both Japanese and Chinese teachers highlight the joy of group life. However, the conception of what it means to be a good group member, as reflected in the teachers' disciplinary practices, seems to differ in emphasis between Japanese and Chinese classrooms. In the Japanese classrooms, teachers maintained as low a profile as possible, not interfering even in the disputes between students so as to encourage children to learn to work together to smooth out their problems. For example, Tobin, Wu, and Davidson (1989) described one child who behaved in a very disruptive way, shouting out answers in class, stepping on another child's hand, and throwing flash cards over a balcony. The teacher's response to this was to ignore his behavior; further, when a girl came to report on him, the teacher told her that she should go do something about the situation herself. The teacher's approach to the child's misbehavior seems to reflect an effort to encourage children to foster harmony in horizontal relationships within their peer group. In fact, Japanese teachers defend large class sizes with the view that small classes encourage an orientation to and dependence on the teacher. In contrast, Chinese teachers believe they should be strong leaders, purposefully directing the children in their interactions with each other so that students will learn their proper roles in a system of vertical hierarchies and relationships. Having watched a videotape of the Japanese child misbehaving, a Beijing teacher remarked:

I think it's terrible that the teacher just stood there while the children fought. If you let a child behave that way in preschool, he will think that it is acceptable to be that way, and he will develop a bad character that may last his whole life. When children misbehave, teachers must correct their misbehavior immediately and make it clear to the children that their behavior is not acceptable. (p. 95)

The Japanese teachers, conversely, believed that children "naturally" want to fit in with others and, with time, will eventually come to regulate themselves, and develop habits of tuning into others and caring for the social order.

Though our analysis of the culture-specific meanings and practices relevant to being a self to this point has focused on single cultural contexts, we have stressed that people's lives are grounded in multiple sets of sometimes conflicting selfways. The daily lives of Asian-Americans in the United States, for example, are often patterned according to Asian practices and meanings (e.g., children attend additional Chinese-language schools on Saturdays), as well as those more typical to European-American contexts (e.g., adolescents expect to be able to go on dates during high school). At this early point, it is only possible to speculate about how numerous competing

selfways may come to help construct individual subjectivity. Preliminary empirical findings, however, suggest that Asian-American selves show influences of both sets of selfways (Pelham, Hetts, & Kuwano, 1995; Rhee, Uleman, Lee, & Roman, 1995; Zane, Sue, Hu, and Kwon, 1991).

Selves in African contexts

As the chapter to this point reflects, the majority of research on cultural variation in the self has centered on U.S.–Asian comparisons. In developing a perspective on the cultural grounding of the self, it is obviously useful to analyze a wide variety of cultural contexts. Selfways in African contexts reveal some important similarities to those that characterize Asian contexts, but also some features that are notably different from either European-American or Asian contexts. Although we have grouped studies from the continent of Africa together, it is, of course, the case that Africa includes 47 countries encompassing a variety of religions and ethnicities, and it is likely that some of the observations here are appropriate for only particular cultural groups within Africa. Indeed some recent discussions suggest that differences between African and European philosophies are overdrawn and represent a deliberate effort on the part of pan-Africanists to distinguish African perspectives from those characterizing their European colonizers. Consequently, to an even greater extent than is the case for our discussion of the selfways in other cultural contexts, our discussion of African selves must remain both highly speculative and broadly outlined, drawing on what is known about the philosophy, religion, and daily activities of groups of African peoples to infer the processes and contents of their selfways.

Theorists of African philosophy such as Mbiti (1970), Dixon (1976), Akbar (1984), Jackson (1982, 1988), Karp and Bird (1980), and Paris (1995) have contended that African philosophies are widely divergent from individualistic Western world views. African philosophies, in contrast to Western philosophies, draw no sharp boundaries between the individual and the group, but instead stress the collective as a critical point of reference and unit of meaning. According to Mbiti (1970), in African societies "Whatever happens to the individual happens to the whole group, and whatever happens to the whole group happens to the individual" (p. 108). Paris (1995) explains:

Though difficult for Western minds to grasp, Africans have no conception of person apart from the community. This means more than the maintenance of a symbiotic relation between the individual and the commmunity. Such implies a prior separate state. No such separation is possible in African thought. The two are related as opposite sides of the same coin. The one implies the other. (p. 111)

E. M. Tema notes that "an African is never regarded as a loose entity to be dealt with strictly individually" (cited in Paris, 1995, p. 101). For example,

Evans-Pritchard (1956) describes a situation in which funeral ceremonies were held for a Nuer man who was thought to be dead, but who lived and later returned to the community. Rather than receiving a warm welcome when he returned, the man was considered to be an embodied ghost – not a real self – because, to his relatives, his soul had left when they performed the ceremonies for his funeral. Since in this African cultural context selfhood is overtly constructed, conferred, and taken away by the community, the man's physical presence in the community did not automatically restore his selfhood.

Dixon (1976) corroborates this notion of connection, explaining, "The individual's position in social space is relative to others. He does not and cannot exist alone except corporately. The individual is not a human being except as he is part of a social order" (p. 63). Importantly, in many African societies, it is the social order and hierarchy inherent in it that greatly influence just how an individual exists in terms of others; due to the construction of factors such as gender, age, and family, individuals are not regarded as fundamentally equal beings and, instead, are expected to play their appropriate roles in order to maintain the social order (Fortes, 1959; La Fontaine, 1985; Morris, 1994; Paris, 1995).

Recent studies of daily life in African communities reveal practices that diverge widely from those in European and North American communities (Jacobson-Widding, 1990; LeVine, 1982; LeVine et al., 1994; Nsamenang & Lamb, 1994; Oloko, 1994) and seem to incorporate and objectify ontological presuppositions that people are not sharply defined individual entities, but rather connected, integral elements of vertically organized collectives. As a consequence, West Africans, for example, are much less likely to engage in practices of characterizing themselves or expressing themselves. In fact, in many West African villages self-disclosure or talking about the self is regarded as dangerous and foolhardy. In these contexts, knowledge is power – a power that can be used to control and thwart others – and thus it is more than rude to ask many West Africans to characterize themselves (Fiske et al., in press). Child-rearing practices and ideologies, like those of the Gusii of Kenya and the Nso of Cameroon, also reinforce a strong emphasis on the self's place and, hence, obligations in the hierarchy and the collective. The Gusii and the Nso, for instance, both entrust the care of younger siblings to older siblings. This practice seems to serve at least two functions in fostering an interdependent concept of self: (1) Adult caregivers do not typically play with the children, but instead, maintain their distance – this is thought to preserve their children's respect for them and their higher position in the social hierarchy; and (2) a reliance on and explicit approval of older children taking care of younger siblings creates and reinforces a hierarchy between siblings that is fundamental to their societies. Nsamenang and Lamb (1994) state that

without functional integration into "this" or "that" social stratum, individuals are considered mere "danglers" to whom the designation of *person* does not appropriately and fully apply. Therefore, human offspring need other humans to attain full selfhood: A sense of self cannot be attained without reference to the broader community. (p. 137)

Gusii interactions with their infants also underscore the importance of knowing one's place in the social order. When Gusii parents do interact with their infants, they avoid praising them, avoid heightening positive affect in them, and provide comfort quickly only when the infants are distressed, aiming instead to moderate affective states (LeVine et al., 1994). These practices would seem to reflect a way of selving that downplays individual "needs" or triumphs and instead focuses on maintaining affective states and behaviors that are not disruptive to others. In line with this are Nso parents' and grandparents' ideologies about what constitutes a "good" or "bad" child. Characteristics that arise from maintaining and preserving a social order that precedes the person and that is vital for the person's existence define the "good" – obedience and respect, filial service, hard work, helpfulness, honesty, and intelligence. Characteristics of the "bad" child include disobedience, disrespect, laziness, fighting, greed, playfulness, fearfulness, and inquisitiveness (Nsamenang & Lamb, 1994).

A divergence in selfways is placed in high relief in an examination of the conflict resolution practices of various groups in the lower Congo. Judicial systems in the West, in which people are held individually responsible for their actions, presumably reflect a way of selving in which people are considered to be distinct and separate moral agents. In the lower Congo, in contrast, it is the senior members of the matrilineage who argue for the "actual" adversaries in a conflict and it is the clan as a whole that wins or loses (Jacobson-Widding, 1990). Jacobson-Widding explains that "it is the entire matrilineage who is *the jural person*. All its members are considered *jurally the equal by outsiders* (cf. Fortes 1953). Thus, in strictly jural terms, no one has an individual identity. Moral and plural personhood is defined in collective terms" (p. 36). Thus, the jural practices of people in the lower Congo maintain an understanding and practice of self that functions primarily as a hierarchically ranked member of the group.

Interdependence with respect to one's specific place in a clear hierarchy is evident in many African societies' highly elaborated belief systems and practices involving ancestors. To make a broad generalization, many African peoples, such as the Tallensi and Kallabari (Fortes, 1953), the Lugbara and the Taita (La Fontaine, 1985), believe that their ancestors play an active part in their lives in some manner, often as moral guardians and enforcers of the social order (Fortes, 1959; Morris, 1994; Paris, 1995). Relationships and collectives do not exist only in the living, but extend to include ancestors, thus perpetuating the fulfillment of obligations and roles they require. For

instance, Jacobson-Widding (1990) explains that peoples of the lower Congo believe that good spirits "are lumped together in an ancestral collectivity whose main task it is to continue to keep their clans together, by the exercise of reason" (p. 38). In contrast, the evil spirits are thought to operate individually to afflict and scare people. Fortes (1959) explains that with the Tallensi, ancestors tend to afflict people not because they have not done good deeds, but because they have in some way violated or been disruptive to "right" relationships within the social order. Fortes (1959) stresses the influence of ancestors in the maintenance of the collective, arguing that "the individual has no choice. Submission to his ancestors is symbolic of his encapsulation in a social order which permits of no voluntary alteration of his status and social capacities. It is the common interest, the collective purposes that prevail" (p. 33). The function of ancestors as keepers and enforcers of the collective in many African societies lends support to the conceptualization of the self as continuous beyond individual boundaries and individual lifetimes. In this way, the self is not an entity that exists on its own, but only insofar as it connects the past to the future.

Personhood is not always automatic in African societies, as it generally is in the West, but rather contingent upon such factors as gender, social position, age, and the production of offspring. So, for example, being female, a rainmaker, or a diviner may disqualify a person from full status as a person in some African societies (e.g., among the Lugbara, Tallensi, Taiti) (Fortes, 1959; La Fontaine, 1985; Morris, 1994). Furthermore, offspring are commonly considered essential to complete personhood, precisely because individuals are not "true" members of their communities if they are not connected to the future as well as the past and if they do not fulfill their role in building the collective. According to Collard (1980), among the Guidars, there is an explicit recognition of the impact of children upon their parents, so that whether the firstborn is a girl or a boy will significantly and permanently alter the nature of the parents' cultural participation. Thus, children are believed to influence the parents' personhood in a way that most Western theories of socialization have yet to consider. In many African societies personhood is conferred as a consequence of living out a proper life, which is realized only by overt participation in the social order (e.g., through marriage and parenthood). In describing the Tallensi, La Fontaine (1985) notes that

no matter how loved and admired an individual may be, if he or she fails to fulfil the ideal pattern of life and leaves no children, then full personhood has not been attained . . . It is the long-drawn-out character of this transformation of the individual into a person which characterizes non-Western societies. In Western societies the conferring of a name serves to achieve the same end; personhood and individuality are thus identified from the beginning. . . . By contrast, for the Tallensi, personhood is finally validated at the death of the individual. (p. 131)

He also notes that

as more social relations are added through life, personhood approaches comple-
tion, but the critical feature is the social relation with the next generation whereby
society is continued into yet another generation. Not every individual is fully a
person, or even a person at all, in societies which define human beings by their
place in a social chain linking past with present. (p. 137)

In many African cultures, individuals in certain social positions may never
achieve full status as community members. This underscores the rooted-
ness of African selves in hierarchy and in collectives. Moreover, the fact that
complete personhood also depends on parenthood implies that the self is
not "really real" until it is in connection with others. From this initial
analysis, such conceptions seem significantly at odds with notions of the self
as an actor, centrally involved with remaining unconstrained by others.

Yet another distinctive feature of African philosophies in comparison
with Western philosophies and one with compelling consequences for self-
ways is that no sharp boundaries are drawn between the spiritual and the
material, or the mind and the body. As Dixon (1976) states, "There is no
distance, no discontinuity, no gap, no empty perceptual space between the
self and the phenomenal world. The self is one with it" (p. 61). In this
sense, physical objects may be imbued with the power of and over the self.
For example, Jacobson-Widding (1990) documents that people in the low-
er Congo meticulously take care to avoid stepping on someone else's shad-
ow or having their own stepped on, especially by others in a superior status;
this is because having one's shadow stepped on is thought to empower the
other person with one's own agency. Similarly, she explains that the very
possession of photographs of other people diminishes the power and life
essence of those in the photographs. Indeed, a popular practice among
people in the lower Congo is to display pictures of smiling, enthusiastic
faces from magazines, in order to extract the power and life force from
them. Read (1955) explains another instance of a holistic concept of the
self, in which personality is melded with the physical among the Gahuku-
Gama:

To an extent which it is perhaps difficult for us to appreciate and understand, the
various parts of the body, limbs, eyes, nose, hair, the internal organs and bodily
excretions are essential constituents of the human personality, incorporating and
expressing the whole in each of their several parts. It follows that an injury to any
part of the body is also comparable to damage to the personality of the individual
sustaining the injury. (p. 128)

In vivid contrast to the concept of self in most Western societies, these
practices that accord individuals' power, life essence, and personality to
objects in the physical world indicate that African ways of selving may not
create severe boundaries between what is of the mind or spirit and what is
of the body or material world.

Gendered selves in European-American contexts

We have suggested that certain ways of growing up and living in the United
States afford and support a distinct, independent, articulated, agentic, and
positive self. Yet growing up and living in the United States as a woman
entails participating in the culture in ways that are importantly different
from those typical for men. Although both women and men live within a
system saturated with gender-specific messages about how to be and
though the meaning of gender and gender expectations are currently
being renegotiated in many spheres, women's lives are still distinctly differ-
ent from those of men: For example, women are typically responsible for
raising children and for maintaining relationships, are often in low-power,
subordinate, and gender-segregated positions within society, and earn less
money than do men (Chodorow, 1978; Eagly, 1987; Miller, 1986; Ridgeway
& Diekema, 1992). As a consequence of these different ways of living,
numerous theorists, feminist and nonfeminist alike, have posited that, with-
in North American contexts, women's ways of knowing, thinking, feeling,
and behaving are more likely than men's to emphasize maintaining rela-
tions and connections to others (Bakan, 1966; Belenky, Clinchy, Gold-
berger, & Tarule, 1986; Chodorow, 1978; Cross & Madson, in press; Gil-
ligan, 1982; Gilligan, Lyons, & Hanmer, 1989; Markus & Oyserman, 1989;
Miller, 1986; Sampson, 1988; Stewart & Lykes, 1985). Notably, our discus-
sion of women's ways of being here refers only to white, middle-class wom-
en and will doubtlessly be qualified when other sociocultural contexts such
as ethnicity and education level are considered.

Because women in European-American contexts participate in selfways
that afford the independence and autonomy of the self, they appear –
consistent with the findings reviewed in the section on European-American
selves – to have selves that are strong, positive, and articulated. Yet because
women participate in selfways that highlight relationality (e.g., they fulfill
roles that are defined by caring for and nurturing others), we suggest that
their selves will also emphasize the fact of their connection (see Cross &
Madson, in press). The relationality of the selves that characterizes women
in European-American contexts can thus be distinguished from the rela-
tionality of Asian selves. In the latter, a primary emphasis is on fitting in or
being part of a relationship, whereas in the former, connecting and relat-
ing to others is constructed and given meaning as a distinguishing attribute
of the self (e.g., "I am caring toward others"). McGuire and McGuire
(1987), for example, found that in open-ended self-descriptions, girls men-
tioned other people 50% more often than did boys and made more refer-
ences to close others, whereas boys made more references to "people
in general." Similarly, Lyons (1983) found that adult women's self-
descriptions were more often framed in terms of relations with others,

whereas adult men's self-descriptions were more often framed in terms of separateness from others. Further, Thoits (1992) reported that women considered aspects of their identities that were related to relationships as more important than did men.

In a study of women in five cultural contexts (Australia, the United States, Hawaii, Japan, and Korea), Kashima et al. (1995) found that women scored higher on a measure of relatedness than men, agreeing more strongly with statements such as "I feel like doing something for people in trouble because I can almost feel their pains." Similarly, Kato and Markus (1995) found that items relevant to maintaining bonds with others (e.g., "I feel guilty when someone asks me for a favor and I have to say 'no' ") are more strongly endorsed by women than men. In an experimental setting, women thought more about their fellow participants than did men, as well as thought more about the thoughts and feelings of their experimental partners (Ickes, Robertson, Tooke, and Teng, 1986). In a meta-analysis on research concerning empathy, Eisenberg and Lennon (1983) found that despite no clear indication of gender-related differences in studies utilizing physiological or nonevident observation, when directly questioned, women reported feeling more empathy for others than did men. Further, in an analysis of self-esteem (Josephs, Markus, & Tafarodi, 1992), high-self-esteem men showed the tendency toward false uniqueness, or distinguishing themselves from others, while women with high self-esteem emphasized their connections with others.

The emphasis on relationality that characterizes the lives of many U.S. women gives rise to thinking of the self as a relational entity and also to a set of practices that promote relations. For example, the gendered character of selfways is reflected in and maintained by communication practices, both nonverbal and verbal, such that women more than men tend to engage with others in ways that encourage positive and smooth relations. Hall and her colleagues (Hall, 1984; Hall & Halberstadt, 1986; Stier & Hall, 1984) performed meta-analyses in which they found that women were better than men at decoding and communicating nonverbal cues. Women were more expressive facially, in gestures and in head movements, and also smiled and laughed more than men in social settings. They gazed at other people more and were gazed at more than men. Finally, women nodded and leaned forward more than men. The women's behavior, relative to the men's, could be seen as engaging others and maintaining positive relations with them.

Like nonverbal communication, women's verbal communication practices have been characterized as relationship fostering and enhancing (Maltz & Borker, 1982; Smith-Lovin & Robinson, 1992). In contrast, men's communication style has been characterized as status defining and compet-

itive. Women are more likely than men, for example, to use the pronouns "you" and "we," to pause in order to allow others to have a chance to speak, to ask for another's opinion and to use tag questions, to respond to other's points and to back channel, to qualify their statements and use extremely polite forms when making requests. These verbal tendencies may illustrate an active effort on the part of women to promote harmonious relations with other participants and to acknowledge and respect their concerns, desires, and rights. Besides being less inclined to show this verbal form of sensitivity to others, men are more likely to interrupt the speech of women and to challenge and ignore their statements. These practices, which feature disconnection and competition, support a sense of self as separate and distinct from others (Belenky et al., 1986; Bradley, 1981; Brouwer, Gerritsen, & De Haan, 1979; Crosby & Nyquist, 1977; Eakins & Eakins, 1978; Fishman, 1978; Hirschman, 1973; Kalcik, 1975; Lakoff, 1975; McConnell-Ginet, 1975; McLaughlin, Cody, Kane, & Robey, 1981; McMillan, Clifton, McGrath, & Gale, 1977; Tannen, 1990, 1993, 1994; Stewart & Ting-Toomey, 1987; West, 1979; West & Zimmerman, 1977; Zimmerman & West, 1975).

Studies that observe men and women in natural settings support the finding that women's social interactions are more interdependent in nature. For example, encounters between physicians and their patients reveal that these gendered patterns of communication surfaced in daily interactions (Hall, Irish, Roter, Ehrlich, & Miller, 1994). In this study, female physicians asked more questions about medical and psychosocial issues, used more connection-promoting language, made more positive statements, back channeled more, and smiled and nodded more than their male counterparts. Wheelan and Verdi (1992) reported that in initial same-sex sessions of groups at a conference, women made more interdependent and pairing statements than did men, and men made more work-related statements than did women. Finally, Eagly and Johnson (1990) found that women in leadership roles are more likely than men to lead in a democratic style, welcoming collaboration in decision making, whereas men are more likely than women to lead in an authoritative style, controlling decision making more single-handedly.

If women indeed engage in relationships differently than men, we would expect to find differences in how people experience their relationships, depending on whether the relationships are with a woman or a man. In fact, women do describe their friendships with women as notably strong, supportive, meaningful, and rewarding in comparison to their friendships with men and relative to men's descriptions of their friendships with either gender (Reis, Senchak, & Solomon, 1985; Sapadin, 1988; Winstead, 1986; Wright & Scanlon, 1991). Moore and Boldero (1991) similarly found that girls, relative to boys, considered their relationships to be closer and valued

this intimacy more. Importantly, Wright and Scanlon (1991) found that women's friendships appear to be not only expressive, but instrumental in nature, with women reporting that their strongest friendships are with people who possess both highly feminine and masculine qualities. Further, people who spend more time with women report less loneliness than those who spend less time with women. Notably, women report being significantly lonelier when they spend relatively large amounts of time with men (Wheeler, Reis, & Nezlek, 1983).

Concluding remarks

An analysis of cultural variation in selves leads almost inevitably, at least in the minds of psychologists, to a consideration of universals in self-functioning and process. Is there anything about selves and selving that is likely to be true across sociocultural contexts? We suggest that at a relatively high level of abstraction, several universals can be identified. First, selving is not just a cognitive activity, but a dynamic collective behavioral process. Second, because selving requires others, it is not a private endeavor but instead a group project. Third, a self, however it is experienced, is constructed and engaged only through cultural participation – doing what is required to be part of its groups and collectives. Others are always necessary to realize the self – but the form this sociality takes depends on characteristic patterns of cultural participation (see also Greenfield & Cocking, 1994; Kim, 1987; Markus & Kitayama, 1991; Triandis, 1989).

This set of potential universals leads us to rethink some of the current prevailing generalizations about self (see Banaji & Prentice, 1994; Markus & Wurf, 1987). The self is typically conceptualized as a dynamic entity that interprets and organizes self-relevant actions and experiences, that has motivational consequences, and that mediates and regulates most significant intrapersonal and interpersonal processes. Current self-theory also outlines a whole host of self-relevant mechanisms and processes, such as self-enhancement, self-verification, self-consciousness, self-control, self-actualization, and self-handicapping. This conceptualization of the self may be most appropriate for European-American selves, but may require significant modification to be broadly applicable. On the basis of the studies reviewed here, it is evident that these processes appear "obvious" and "natural" in those cultural contexts in which one is encouraged to create a distinct and objectified self. To the extent that the self is interdependent with others, it seems likely that there will be many fewer concerns with enhancing and actualizing one's identity, because the need to create an autonomous self is not a cultural imperative.

Together, the data presented here, although disparate and fragmentary, suggest that selves are realized through participation in cultural practices,

and thus their content and structure may vary significantly by cultural context. We have defined *selfways* as characteristic patterns of engaging in the social world. These modes of being incorporate the meanings and practices of the significant social contexts within which individuals participate. These selfways provide a guiding orientation to one's subjectivity and thus structure feeling, knowing, wanting, and doing. An important result of a comparative analysis of a social behavior within a cultural context that is different from one's own is that the vast network of meanings and practices that comprise one's own typically transparent selfways becomes visible.

According to our analysis, given one form of cultural participation – one mode of being – the subjectivity of the person may be sensed as a more or less integrated whole, configured by beliefs, values, and motives and experienced as contrastively set against the society (see Figure 2.1b). Given another mode of cultural participation and another mode of being, subjectivity may be sensed as a perceived oneness, but as a oneness that is an interdependent part that must continually reference, adjust, and harmonize with the larger whole (see Figure 2.1a). Within these two modes of being, the resulting psychological systems will have characteristic tendencies that resonate with the supporting cultural systems. In the first case, feeling, thinking, wanting, and doing will be oriented in the direction of a sense of separateness of self and other; in the other, these processes may be oriented toward a sense of connectedness with others and a form of intersubjectivity. And based just on the cultural contexts reviewed here, it is easy to imagine yet other modes of being and variants on those described. In characterizing the way the cultural system provides the framework within which the psychological system develops, we are drawing on a perspective developed by Bartlett (1932) when he characterized the precise role of the relationship between culture and memory:

Every social group is organized and held together by some specific psychological tendency . . . which gives the group a bias in its dealings with external circumstances. The bias constructs the special persistent features of the group culture and this immediately settles what the individual observes in his environment. It does this markedly in two ways. First by providing that setting of interest, excitement, and emotion which favors the development of specific images, and secondly, by providing a persistent framework of institutions and customs, which acts as a schematic basis for constructive memory. (p. 255)

Certainly groups are characterized by more than one psychological tendency. Yet we find Bartlett's analysis of the ways in which the psychological system is a part of the cultural system to be useful. To understand seemingly universal cultural phenomena – achievement, attachment, choice, conformity, trust, conflict, obligation, agency, empathy – it is important to understand the orienting selfways of the given context. For example, within European-American contexts, even social behavior that promotes connec-

tion with others is patterned within a framework that emphasizes the autonomy of the self. Thus, cooperating with and helping others may be construed as a volitional and intentional act (e.g., "I helped another"), which further promotes the agency of the self and the reality of the objectified "I" (Miller, 1994a). Similarly, in Japanese contexts, even social behavior that is disruptive to relations with others – conflict, nonconformity, rebellion – will be organized and structured by the selfways of interdependence. So, for example, the focus in conflict may be on the prevention of further conflict through nonconfrontation, avoidance, or mediation by a third party rather than on the resolution of conflict through self-assertion, self-expression, discussion, and debate (Lebra, 1984).

Knowledge of prevailing selfways can obviously provide only so much information about a given person. Because individuals' daily lives are inevitably varied, so are individuals' subjectivities. However, we believe that characteristic patterns of cultural participation have been largely ignored. Selfways are crucial to understanding the subjectivities of all cultural participants. Even resistance will be patterned by the very selfways people "reject." And thus, contesting one's group membership or cultural context can only be partially "successful"; because selving is inherently a group project, one is always afforded and constrained by others. In fact, the current theoretical preoccupation with the constraints on the self provided by others and the "natural" desire to resist them may be a product of the European-American cultural view that the self is experienced as separate and autonomous from others.

Our review points to the need to look more broadly at how selves are realized through cultural participation. Selfways need not entail the cognitive activities of abstracting, labeling, or generalizing about the self. For many, the self is not experienced as a cognitive entity, separate from one's body actions, but instead is enacted and embodied. Selving can be accomplished primarily through doing, that is, participating in recurrent social activities that structure daily life. As Green, reflecting on Inuit life, remarked: "I have sat down many times and thought over the differences or the distinctions between my people's way or life and your way of life . . . We are the people who are free to go hunting every day" (cited in Brody as cited in Stairs, 1992, p. 125). Moreover, the analysis of selves in contexts that are not European-American (e.g., the African), indicates that the body and certain physical representations of the body (e.g., photographs, shadows, handmade objects) are not viewed as being separate from the self – indeed, they incorporate and carry the self. In this way, the self is not experienced as being as abstract and intangible as it is in many European-American contexts.

A reading of the literature on variation in culture and the self reveals that only a limited set of techniques have been used to examine the self; most of the studies have investigated only the cognitive components of the

conceptualized self, and even here the methods that have been used require the abstracting and decontextualizing of the self, a practice that is best suited to a European-American context. To the extent that selves diverge from the European-American model, so perhaps should the methods of assessing selfways. For instance, even if respondents are able to endorse attributes, we should not immediately assume that people "naturally" experience themselves in attribute units. Even the task of describing oneself "freely" is not truly free in the sense that it is a far better match to one type of selfway than another. A formidable task for researchers will be a careful and thorough description of the meanings and practices of a given cultural context followed by the development of methods that are sensitive to differences in selving across sociocultural contexts.

This initial consideration of divergent modes of cultural participation raises several challenging issues. First, how does a confluence of multiple, sometimes competing selfways ground the subjectivity of a single person? Further, how do factors other than those explored here (e.g., education, age, sexual orientation, religion) function to constitute the self? Second, is individual agency, which is given a prominent place in most theorizing on subjectivity, a universal feature of the psychological or is it a culture-specific phenomenon associated with a certain mode of being? Finally, current theorizing about the self appears to be built on unexamined assumptions about the distinctions between the internal and the external, the individual and the social, and the person and the situation. The recognition that being a self requires cultural participation may lead us to question some of distinctions that have structured the analysis of the sociocultural nature of individual subjectivity. Future work that systematically analyzes selfways may reveal more precisely the ways in which the culture-specific meanings and practices pattern individual selves and, in turn, how individuals collectively construct their cultures.

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