

Cultural Anthropology in Missions:

Studying Another Culture for Effective Ministry in that Culture

Chapter One: Minzhe and Huizhong Learn the Importance of Studying Culture

Minzhe and Huzhong left the home of their network leader with mixed feelings. They were excited, but also afraid. To represent their network in another country was a great honour. But what are people like in that country, they wondered? The couple had never been outside their own home area. Would they be able to explain the Gospel clearly? Would the people understand? Would people accept what they had to say? Would the people's lives change? How would their own lives change? They wondered how to prepare for this important task they had been given. Minzhe and his wife, Huizhong, hurried home deep in thought.

When Minzhe's mother found out what the network leaders wanted them to do she remembered something. She had a friend from grade school. He was now a retired teacher. His special knowledge was about people in other places. After much talking back and forth, they made the decision to visit Professor Reifing.

A few days later they found themselves seated in Professor Reifing's office. It was a marvellous place. Many books surrounded them. There were books in different languages. There were books filled with pictures of different groups of people. Bows and arrows from all over the world covered the walls. Carvings of people and animals stood in the corners. Models of tiny houses and other objects peaked out from between stacks of books.

Finally, the usual greetings were finished. Then Professor Reifing commented, "So, I understand that you have been asked to represent your network in another country. You are to try to present the Good News from the Word of God. You want them to make it part of their daily lives and see churches established."

"Yes", replied Minzhe, "but we don't know where to begin thinking about how to do this."

"I think that you should begin a study of cultural anthropology," the professor said. "Cultural Anthropology is a most useful study. It will help you understand how to make it easier for other people to understand you. You will learn how to be more acceptable to people who are different from the people with whom you grew up," said Professor Reifing.

Huizhong looked at her husband with the question in her eyes, “What is Cultural Anthropology?” Professor Reifing saw the glance and began, “Cultural Anthropology has two ideas. What is anthropology? What is culture? Put the two ideas together and you have cultural anthropology.

First, what does Anthropology mean? Quite simply, Anthropology means the study of humans. Everything about humans is part of the study. Where do various groupings of people come from? How do people think? How do humans provide for their needs? What do they own? How do they act? What might the future look like for humans? These are all part of the study of Anthropology. Minzhe, could you tell me what Anthropology means, now?” asked the professor.

Minzhe and his wife nodded, and Minzhe answered. “Let me see if I understand what you said. Anthropology is learning all about humans. It is learning what men and women are like in various places of the world. The past, as well as the present, and the future are included. There doesn’t seem to be anything about humans that isn’t studied in Anthropology. I can see how this study will be very useful to us as we go to another place.” said Minzhe. Huizhong nodded in agreement. “We need to understand how peoples differ, so that we can get them interested in what God has to offer. Is that correct?” Minzhe asked.

“Yes, very good,” said Professor Reifing. “You do understand.”

“Usually the study of Anthropology is broken into four parts,” he continued. “One part studies the differences in how people look; their hair, skin, and body shapes. For instance, some people groups are tall and skinny; others are short and very plump. Secondly, there is the study of what humans build. How do they build their houses, temples, and work places? A third important study is about how different groups of people talk to each other. How do they use words? How do they put words together to make sentences, stories, commands, and so on? Fourthly, there is the part of anthropology that I think you should carefully study. It is called “cultural anthropology”.

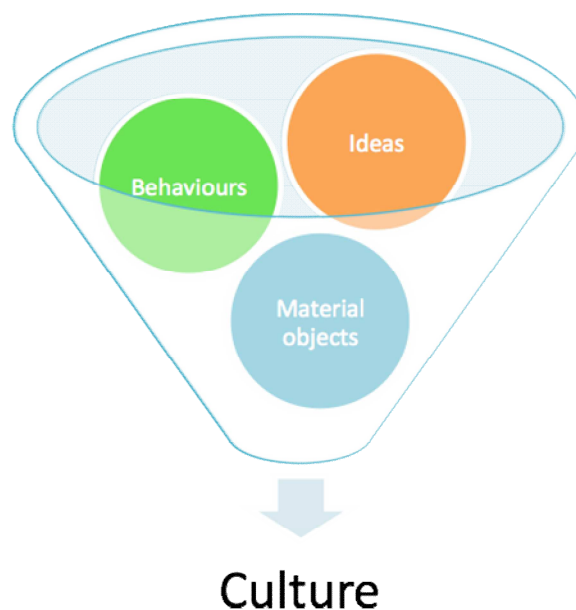
The couple looked at Professor Reifing expectantly. They now understood the meaning of Anthropology. However, what was cultural anthropology?

Professor Reifing appreciated their eagerness, so he continued. “Next, you must understand what ‘culture’ means. Culture includes three things. Those three things are everything people have, everything people think, and everything people do. Let me explain.

First, culture includes the kinds of objects with which people surround themselves. What things do they use in everyday life? What tools do they use in their work? What objects do they have in their homes? What things do they play with?

Secondly, culture includes how people think about things. What are the things they value most? What are the attitudes they have about things? How do they make decisions?

Finally, culture includes how people behave. How do they play? How do they work together? How do they worship? How do they eat? How do they educate their children? Humans have many other activities in which they



engage.

“Huizhong, can you sum up what I just told you?” asked the professor.

‘I will try,’ Huizhong said. “Culture includes the things that people have, everything that they think about, and everything they do. That is a lot to talk about.

“So putting together what anthropology means and what culture means, do you understand what cultural anthropology means?” asked Professor Reifing.

Minzhe, who had been listening intently, cleared his throat and said, “Let me try. Anthropology is the study of everything about humans. Culture includes everything humans do, think and have. Cultural anthropology must be the study of what groups of humans in various places have, how they think, and how they behave. I suppose that we study what things are the same and what things are different between groups who share common thinking, behaving, and the kind of things they use.

“Yes, that is correct,” agreed Professor Reifing. You added a very important idea. You used the word share. You said that there are groups of people who share ideas, activities, and things in common. Cultural anthropologists divide humans into groups that have common culture. That is, there are groups of people who share languages, activities, ideas, and things. Cultural Anthropologists study what is the same between people groups and what is different between people groups.

“Now, why is it important for you to study cultural anthropology?” asked the professor.

Huizhong looked thoughtful and then said, “We want people to accept what we are going to tell them. Therefore, we need to understand how they think. Then we can tell our stories in ways that are familiar to them. Familiar ways will make it easier for them to understand. Familiar ways will make it easier for them to accept what we tell them to accept.”

“Our information may appear to be of no value to them. We need to understand the differences what we are telling them will make in their everyday lives. If our information does not match anything they know, they will not accept the special things we want them to understand,” added Minzhe.

Professor Reifing was quiet for a moment. Then he asked an odd question. “Do you ever have an itchy back?” he asked with a smile.

Huizhong and Minzhe looked surprised and then nodded.

“How can you stop the itch? You have to find just the right spot to scratch before you are satisfied, don’t you?” observed the Professor. “If you scratch the wrong place, you will still have the itch. The itch may even feel worse because you missed it.

Huizhong looked bewildered. What did an itchy back have to do with studying cultural anthropology?

Professor Reifing saw her bewilderment and said, "Studying cultural anthropology is a way to help find out how other people see their world. When you see what they see, you can see what is missing in their lives. People are restless until they really feel satisfied. It is like having an itch. You do not rest until the itch is satisfied. Understanding culture helps you find out what people really hope for in their lives. When you know what they hope for, you can tell them what you know in ways that will be clear to them. Your help will satisfy their 'itch', their need.

Minzhe giggled a little and said, "We really need to know how to present our new ideas in a way the people of the country will understand. We do want them to accept and benefit from it. We want their itch satisfied."

"Excellent understanding," said the professor. "These people you are going to work with think differently than you do. They act differently than you do. They use things that are different from what you use. If your ideas do not seem to fit into their everyday lives, they will reject what you are saying. Learn to understand them and the differences between you and them. Then you can learn to present your information in ways they will understand and accept

Another important thing to remember is that they have learned these things since they were born. You have learned how to live in your community since you were born. You are so familiar with how you think and do things. Therefore, you probably have not thought about why you do things the way you do. You probably cannot tell why you think about things the way you do.

"I need to tell you one more thing before you leave today," Professor Reifing said seriously. "It has to do with an attitude you must have in order to learn. You must understand and never forget this. Most of other people's way of doing things is not wrong. Because people eat different food than you do, it is not wrong. Their climate is different so they have to grow different things to eat than you do. Bread instead of rice, or beans instead of corn, is not wrong. Their houses will be built very differently from how your home is built. They are not wrong because they do it differently. The games they play will be different. Even the way they play games may be very different from how you play. That is not wrong. It is just different. They will

sing differently than you do. It is not wrong. Even if their way of making decisions is different from the way you have grown up doing making decisions, it is not wrong.

“Do you understand why should you remember this?’ Professor Reifing asked.

“I suppose that if we think of everything as wrong we won’t learn to understand the people,” said Minzhe.

"Very good," said Professor Reifing. "People who choose to think things are wrong without really looking at them or listening to them never learn. Their understanding of the people is blocked.

There are problems with what people believe. There are great differences in what people believe about why they are alive. What people believe about what will happen to them after they die are very different from one group to another. Because of these two beliefs, the way people worship and what they worship is very different. It is very important that we understand what the differences are and why the differences exist.

The next time we get together, I want to talk more about your differences with other people. I want to talk about why we need to understand those differences. Could you please bring me a cabbage. I will use the cabbage to teach you about the differences.

Then I will tell you how the differences will make you feel. There are feelings all humans have when they are in new surroundings, seeing and hearing new things. I will help you understand how to overcome the feelings and be able to do your job.

Key ideas to discuss from this story.

In groups of three, tell each other the important ideas presented in this story.

Check up

Did you talk about these points?

1 What is Anthropology?

Anthropology – all about humans, past, present and future.

2 What is culture?

Culture - everything people have, everything people do, everything people think.

3 What is Cultural Anthropology?

Cultural Anthropology – the study of what is the same and what is different between groups of people.

4. What are two important ideas about people and their culture?

- a. Groups of people share common ways of doing things. They share common objects. They have common behaviours. That is how we divide humans into different groups.
- b. Groups of people learn their ideas and behaviour from the time they are born.

4 Why should you be studying Cultural Anthropology?

Understanding the differences and the similarities between you and other people helps you present your ideas in ways that are much more acceptable to them.

5. Are different things wrong because they are different?

No, different is not necessarily wrong.

7. What happens if we think everything other people do or think is wrong?

If we see everything as wrong, it stops us from understanding other people. We will not really learn how to understand them. We will build barriers between them and ourselves.

Chapter Two – Huizhong and Minzhe cut into cabbages and culture

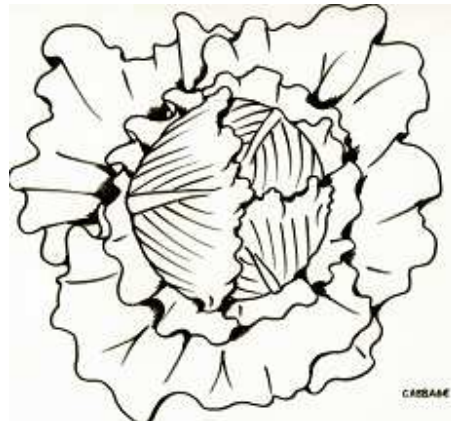
"What will we learn from cabbages that will help us when we get to the country to which our network wants us to go, I wonder?" Huizhong asked her husband. They were hurrying to their second session with Professor Reifing. They had ask Professor Reifing to help them prepare for their assignment in a new country.

Arriving at the studio, they greeted the professor in proper fashion. Then they put a cabbage on his desk and sat down expectantly



The professor thanked them for the cabbage and said, "Let's begin! Look at the cabbage carefully and tell me what you see."

Huizhong said, "I see outer leaves and I see the round hard head peeking out the top from the middle of the outer leaves."



"That is good." encouraged the professor. "Can you see what is inside the centre of the cabbage?"

"Oh, no." replied Minzhe.



"Let's look at what is in the centre then ."
said the professor. He called his wife to bring a big knife. "Cut this cabbage open." he directed her. "Cut it from the top to the bottom evenly in half." Mrs. Reifing did so and laid the two halves of the cabbage side –by-side on the desk.

"Now what do you see?" Professor Reifing asked as his wife left the room.

"Well, I can still see the outer leaves. I can still see the top of the head. But now I can also see the tight inner leaves and the heart of the cabbage," Huizhong answered.

"Good," said Professor Reifing. "Culture is just like this. You remember what culture is, Minzhe?" he asked.

"Culture is everything people have, everything people do, everything people think." Minzhe answered.

"That is correct. You were listening carefully. Can you see all the parts of culture?" the professor asked.

"No." answered Huizhong, "I cannot see what people think. I can see what objects they have around them. I can see what they do with those objects. But I cannot always tell why they do what they do in the way they do it."

"Excellent!" cried Professor Reifing. "Culture is like the cabbage. There are some things in culture you can see right away. That is like seeing the outer leaves and the top of the firm head. But you cannot see the tightly curled inner leaves or the heart of the cabbage till you cut it open. That compares to not seeing why people have the things they have or do the things they do no matter how hard you look with your eyes.

There are four layers to culture just like there are four layers in the cabbage.

The first layer of culture is like the outer cabbage leaves. You can see it right away. And you answered correctly, Huizhong. When you go to another county you will see the things that the people use in everyday life. You will see the pots that they use to cook with. You will see the clothes that they wear. You can see the pictures that they draw. The houses they build are visible. You can see the tools that they use when they work. You can see how they use the pots. You can see how they draw pictures and you can see how they build houses. You can see their activities.

"These are the outer parts of culture. This is the 'everything people have' part of culture then", said Minzhe.

"Yes!" the professor confirmed. "Under the outer leaves is the firm head. You can see it peeking through the top. This is like the second level of culture. This layer is the long held customs, practices or systems of a people group. For instance, there is a system of marriage in most people groups. There is a practice called law and order. Other important long-time features of a people group's culture include food gathering, family relationships, playing games, education, war, and buying and selling or trading to name a few. These are the activities that any group of people will engage in as they live their lives. It is while they do these practices that they use the things they have. Do you understand what I am saying, Huizhong?"

"I think so" she answered. "What people use and what they do are different depending on what activity they are engaged in. People wear different clothes, sing different songs, do different dances, and eat different food when they are getting married than they do when they are at a funeral. We use different things when you go to school than when we go to work. People act differently and do different things when they are involved with the police than when they are playing games. But what could the next layer of culture be?"

"The next layer is not visible to your eye, just like the inner leaves of the cabbage are not visible until we cut it open. The next layer of culture is what people value. It is what people think is important. This is an interesting part of culture." the professor mused. "Because we cannot see it, we need to think about it deeply. We need to ask the people questions about why they do things in the way they do them. 'Why is it important to be doing what you are doing?' we might ask? What do you value that makes you do this this way?"

Let me tell you a story about values. My story takes place in the South Pacific. A man wanted to get married. What layer of culture is that, Minzhe?"

"That is the second layer, the layer that is like the head of the cabbage sticking up in the middle through the outer leaves. It involves customs, in this case the customs of marriage." Minzhe answered.

"Yes. How one marries is often very bound by custom." nodded Professor Reifing. "Several important values come together when a man thinks of marriage. These are the values of the third layer of culture. In the South Pacific, men are 'men'. Being a man is very important in that culture Men value women who are strong. Then a man's field will prosper. Strong women provide them with sons to help them in their work. But men also value their own lives. They want to be sure they are taken care of when they can no longer take care of themselves. Sons provide for them in their old age. It would be nice if the woman was good looking also. Men value their reputations so they want wives who will help their reputations. When a man sees a woman who he feels would be a very good woman to help him gain what he values, he pays her father for her with cattle.

On one island there was man who chose a woman who was not beautiful. She was shy and very quiet. No one really knew how hard she could work because she was shy. She kept out of sight as much as she could. Most men paid only one cow for their wives. Maybe two cows would buy a very strong woman. Few men paid more than three cows and very rarely someone

paid four cows. This man surprised everyone by offering seven cows to the shy woman's father. Of course the father agreed very quickly even though he thought the man was a fool. Everyone in the village thought it very strange. The other men teased the man greatly for being so stupid as to pay seven cows for that shy, 'ugly' woman.

Finally the man loaded up a boat and took his belongings and his wife off to a far-away island where no one would bother him.

One day an anthropologist visited the man's home island. He heard the story about the man who paid seven cows for a 'less than one cow wife'. The visitor was very curious about the story. He finally found out where the man now lived. He took a boat to go and see him. When he arrived at the island, the man met him on the beach. He invited his visitor to his high peaked, thatched house. It was a large, clean house. There were quite a few children of various ages running and playing around the house. The older ones were doing small tasks around the farm. The anthropologist could see a well tended garden up the path. There were very healthy cows and goats in the stalls. It seemed a very prosperous and contented place.

After much small talk that followed very important customs, the host called for cool drinks to be brought for his guest. After more small talk, a beautiful lady arrived. She served a refreshing drink to the man and his visitor. The guest was surprised. He wondered who this woman was. She did not seem to be a servant. She did not act like a servant in front of his host. What had happened to the first wife who people back on the home island called ugly? This beautiful woman, who was not at all shy, must surely be a second wife. The guest could not ask the man directly about this. That would have been rude in the host's culture.

It came time for the man to ask the guest why he had come. And so, as was custom, the anthropologist began a long story about how he had come to his host's home island to investigate how marriage took place there. His host's story was told almost immediately. People still laughed when they told the story. Imagine a man foolish enough to pay seven cows for a 'less than one cow woman'. The anthropologist wanted to meet this man and hear his story. Finally he found out which island the man lived on. And now here he was meeting the man his tribe called foolish. The anthropologist added that he found his host to be a very good man, very kind, and a great host. He complimented him on the well built home, the flourishing garden and the healthy animals and children he saw.

The host smiled quietly. He knew his guest wanted to know what had happened to the seven cow woman. But he said nothing in answer to the unspoken question. He simply affirmed that the story was true. And that, yes, he was very happy and was prospering.

When it came time for the man to leave, he and his host walked to the waiting canoe. The proper good byes were said. As the guest was just getting into his canoe, the host laid his hand on his shoulder. He said, "You know, I did not want an ordinary one cow woman. I did not want a two cow woman. I did not even want a three cow woman. The most I had heard anyone paying for a woman was four cows. But, I did not want that either. I decided I wanted a seven cow woman. So I paid the price for one.

As the guest was being rowed away from the island he thought long about his hosts parting words. Then it struck him what the answers to his questions were.

This man valued something more than just a woman who was strong and could do good work for him. He valued something more than just a woman who could bear him many strong children. He wanted a woman who valued herself and who would value him. So he had watched carefully till he saw the shy woman. He thought about what hidden qualities she might have. Then he paid seven cows to show her that she was highly valued and should value herself. The anthropologist understood that the beautiful woman who had served him the delicious drinks had become a 'seven cow woman'.

A group of people belonging to a particular culture shares similar values. Individuals also have individual values within that culture."

Minzhe had been listening very carefully. The third level of culture, values, was clear. He wondered what the fourth layer of the cabbage was. The cabbage has a heart. Is there a heart to culture too? He saw the professor looking at him with a question in his eyes. Minzhe was learning to look as well as listen.

Realising the professor was waiting for him to speak he began somewhat hesitantly. "There must be a reason why people value certain things rather than other things. What is it that makes people think one idea is more important or more valuable than another?"

"Very good thinking." said the professor. "You will need to think like this all the time in another country as you watch and ask question so you can begin to understand the people. We call the heart of culture the heart beliefs of people. These heart beliefs come from how people think the world around them began. How do they explain the stars and the moon and nature

coming into existence? Values come from what their religion tells them about why they are alive. Values come from what people believe will happen to them when they die. These very important questions are asked by all people of all groups. Most often the questions are answered in their religious beliefs. Those beliefs are the core of their culture.

Some people believe that when a person dies, that person just disappears into nothing. Because of that belief there is very little value to the body. That value will lead to very little ceremony for a funeral. There will be very few objects used at the funeral. Other people imagine that one must go on a complicated journey to a better place after one dies. They value getting to that better place. So there will be much activity to get the dead person ready for the journey. The ceremonies will be complicated. Many things will be used in the funeral ceremonies.

Some people groups believe that a person who dies becomes a vengeful ghost. Things will be quite different because of this belief. People value peaceful, prosperous lives. They do not want a vengeful spirit bothering them or their family or their cattle. Their death ceremonies will involve trying to make the ghost happy. Many different objects and dances and songs will be used to achieve the dead person's happiness.

The cabbage has four layers: the outer leaves which you can see, the top of the firm head which you can see through the outer leaves, the inner leaves which you cannot see and the heart which you also cannot see till you cut the cabbage open. Culture is also made of four layers: first, the objects and behaviours you can see; second, the important practices such as marriage, legal offices, health facilities, or farming; third, the values that a people group share (or individuals hold); and fourth, the way people explain themselves and the world around them, where they came from and where they are going.

"Do you understand?" asked the professor.

The couple looked at the cabbage and thought about what Professor Reifing had just taught them. After a while both slowly nodded their heads.

"We really wondered how a cabbage could teach us about culture," they said. "It is really helpful to understand the layers. It would be easy to think that what we see is all there is to people's culture. But there are hidden things that we will have to work at uncovering in order to see and understand them."

"What do you think is the easiest layer to change in culture?" asked the professor.

"I suppose that the first layer is easiest to change because it is what we see easily. It is also farthest away from what is at the heart." Minzhe said thoughtfully.

"You are correct." Professor Reifing said. "People change the objects they use relatively easily. Tribal peoples used stone axes. Then they used steel axes. Now many use tractors to clear land they used to clear by hand with axes. Some people talked to each other using drums. Now they use mobile phones and computers. Do you suppose that the other layers have changed just because the first layer changed?"

"The other layers would not have to change." thought Huizhong out loud. "Axes or tractors are used for the same practice, the activity of farming. They farm because of the values they hold about sustaining life. These values would not change because the tools they use change. Nor would the way they see why they are in the world have to change."

"Wonderful!" exclaimed the professor. "Sometimes when people go to other countries to tell people something special, they see the people changing to use new objects or doing things in a different way. They think that the people have really changed deeply too. But they are mistaken. The people have only changed the outward things they use to achieve the inner things they still believe in."

What about change on the second level, Huizhong?" asked the professor. Does that happen often or easily?"

"That is harder." she answered. "It would seem to me that the practices making up the second level are very common to people everywhere. There is some kind of family group, I would suppose, everywhere. There would have to be some kind of law everywhere. People have to have food everywhere. People pass on what they know to the younger people so there would be education of some sort everywhere. I think it would be that these levels do not change as much as the first level. But I don't know about the other inner levels."

"I think you are correct." stated Professor Reifing. "These second level practices are topics we will think about in future times when we get together. We will study how everyone has families but how they think differently about whom really is family. We will talk about how education - passing knowledge on - is done differently in different groups of people. That is what the rest of the lessons we will have will be about mostly. But let's think about the third level. Can people group's values change?"

Minzhe shook his head, yes. "I think people's values do change," he said quite strongly, "but I am not sure I can illustrate that."

"Let me tell you a story. There was a tribe of people who valued the art of tricking people very highly." the professor answered. "They thought that men who could trick other tribes into giving them things by promising to trade with them were great men. When they got the things from others they would give nothing in return even if they had promised to do so. They especially thought that men who could trick others into thinking they were friends and then killing those people were the greatest heroes. This caused all sorts of trouble between groups of people. This tribe has changed completely now. They are very honest and trustworthy. They value being true friends now. They value having people believe what they say is true. How do you suppose that change happened?"

"It would have to do with the deepest layer. There must have been a change in that deep heart layer because people values come from what they believe about who they are and what the world is." commented Minzhe.

"Good!" exclaimed the professor. "That is what happened. Travellers came to this tribe. They lived with them for some time. These newcomers got to know the layers of the people's culture well. They saw how they built houses high up to keep them dry when it rained very heavily. They saw how they valued their children and how they taught them. They learned about the idea of trickery and how important it was to this tribe. They had to learn the stories of where the people thought they came from. They had to learn about what they thought would happen to them after they died. When they understood this they knew why trickery was so important to these people. They introduced a new story of how the world was made. They introduced a new story of why men lived. When the people agreed to this new story, accepting it into the heart of their culture, their values changed. They stopped their activities of deception. They threw away objects which were needed no longer in carrying out trickery.

"So you are telling us that if we want the people in the country to which we are going to really understand what we have to tell them, we need to open up their culture and see what is at the heart of it. Is that correct?" Huizhong asked.

"Yes, you understand." said Professor Reifing. "Next time we talk, we will talk about how you will be affected personally by the differences between your culture and the culture of the people you will be working among."

Key ideas to discuss from this story.

In groups of three, tell each other the four levels of culture

Check up

Did you talk about these points?

1. The first layer of culture is the objects you see people using and activities they are doing.
2. The second layer of culture is the customs, practices, or systems that people groups follow such as marriage, law, food gathering, education, family relationships, and business practices.
3. The third layer of culture is the values people groups hold which lead them to the practices they do or the systems they follow.
4. 4. The fourth layer of culture is the way people groups explain how the world began and where they come from and where they are going.

Key ideas to discuss from this story.

In groups of three, talk about which level is easiest to change and which level is hardest to change. Why are the levels easy or hard to change?

Check up

Did you talk about these points?

Number one is easiest to change. Number four is hardest to change. Numbers three and four are hidden and are not easy to see. Number one can change easily especially if the changes make it easier to achieve the values of number three. The values are closely connected to the reasons people see for their existence. It is threatening to people to give up the reason for the existence of the world and their own existence and future.

Chapter Three: Minzhe and his wife learn how culture differences can affect them.

"Do you remember the four layers of the cabbage and what they mean?" asked Huizhong as she and her husband, Minzhe, walked to Teacher Rifeng's studio.

"Why yes," said Minzhe. "We just practiced saying that. Number one is the things people have and the things people do. Number two is systems, practices, or customs--like marriage, law or education. Number three is the values. Number four is the heart beliefs--beliefs about how the world came into being. It includes who people think they are, where people think they came from, and where they think they will go when they die."

"Teacher Rifeng said that the culture of the people we are going to live with will affect us. I wonder how? I do remember that he said that we should not think all things in the culture are wrong. If we do, we will not learn. But how will their culture affect us, I wonder," mused Minzhe.

Soon they arrived at the studio. After the usual greetings, they were seated waiting for the teacher to begin.

"You do realize that living in a culture different from the one in which you were born will affect you, don't you?" Teacher Rifeng began.

"Yes, we are beginning to realize that it will affect us. We had not thought about that before. We thought we were just going to affect others. But we are beginning to think we will be affected too," Minzhe said, "though we are not quite sure how."

"People who want to work in another culture need to know some things about themselves first," said the teacher, settling down in his chair for a long talk. "Some people make cultural changes much more easily than other people do. A few people should not try to work in other cultures. Let me describe the kind of person who can work in other cultures most easily.

People who are interested in their own culture surrounding them will usually take interest in a new culture. People who are interested in the people of their own culture will be interested in people in a different culture. People who like trying new things cross into new cultures easily.

Shy people can cross into other cultures because often shy people are good at watching other people and understanding what they are doing and what they are like."

Huizhong sighed and blushed a bit. She was a shy person and she had wondered if she would be able to live outside her own home area.

Teacher Rifeng smiled gently and continued. "People, who clearly understand who they are, cross cultures more easily than people who do not have strong understandings of themselves. People who really trust themselves, do well crossing into new cultures. It is important to be sure of yourself and what you believe. People who do not really feel secure about themselves will not feel secure with others.

It is important to be very clear about why you are going to live with others. That helps you feel secure. It is also important to know that the people who send you believe you should go. If your leaders think you should go, that gives you a more secure feeling also," Teacher Rifeng said.

"People who are happy people are usually also happy in new situations. Happy people are usually people who are comfortable with who they are. Happy people draw people to themselves. None of us like grumpy people. People who complain about things all the time are not usually well liked.

It really helps to have a sense of humour when you try living in another culture. You must be able to laugh at yourself. Can you see the funny side of situations? Can you see why you look funny to other people? When others laugh at you, can you laugh with them? If you can, you will cross cultural barriers much more easily."

This time Minzhe blushed slightly and looked away. He did not like to feel embarrassed but he was gradually learning to laugh at himself. It was especially hard for him if children laughed at him.

Again Teacher Rifeng noticed Minzhe's blush and said, "Children are often the ones who will laugh openly at you. They see the differences quickly. Children do not know how to hide their emotions well yet. They will ask questions openly and either show fear or laugh. I think the best way to handle it is to laugh with them and talk about what it is that they see differently.

Sometimes inviting the children to take a closer look helps. Probably one of the hardest things is when adults want to touch you, your hair, your face, or parts of your body. One must learn to accept their differences and let others find out who you are.

How changing from one culture to another affects people, depends a lot on their attitudes toward other people groups. If you go thinking you are superior to the people you will live amongst, life will be very difficult. Nothing will please you. The people around you will wonder why you are there. If you go thinking that all they have and do is inferior to what you know, your life with them will be unproductive. They will reject you because you have rejected them and their ways.

There is a strange thing I want to tell you about myself now. At some point, most people who live in cultures different from their own have to face the fact that they do not really like people who are different. I remember when I studied amongst a group of people who were very short. I thought I really liked these people. I had chosen to be among them because I had been attracted to them. I wanted to be with them. I had something important to tell them. Learning about them would be very rewarding I thought.

One day I heard myself saying something I realized I had said often to myself or to friends. I was saying things like, 'That little man down at the store said __ __...', or 'that little man did this...', or 'those little men think...'. I began to wonder why I used the word 'little' every time I talked about these people. Suddenly I realized that I wasn't just talking about them being short. I began to understand that in my heart I felt they were not as good as I was. I felt I was really 'bigger' than they were. I felt that my way of doing things was better. I felt my way of saying things was more accurate. I was secretly irritated with some of their ideas and ways of doing things. I thought they were slow and lazy. So I thought they were smaller than me, not in size, but in importance. This really surprised me. It made me very sad that I used the word 'little' all the time. I really needed to change my attitude. I had to stop using the word 'little'. Their ideas were practical. Their ideas fit who they were and what they were doing. A closer look at why they did what they did, and said what they said, helped me see that maybe I was the 'little' one.

Fear is another problem that affects both you and the people with whom you want to be. If you are afraid of people, those people will often try to bully you. Fear of living in a different

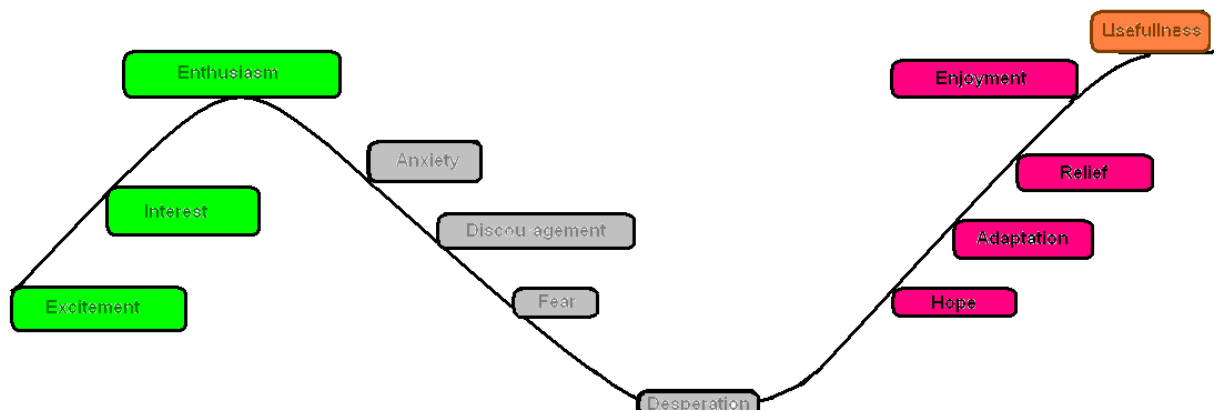
culture often comes because of not knowing what to expect. It comes from not knowing about the people you are going to live amongst. It really helps stop fear if you know some things about other people. When you find out that they laugh and cry--maybe for different reasons--but they do laugh and cry, it helps. My mother visited me when I lived with the short people. After a few weeks my mother said to me that grandmothers are grandmothers wherever you find them. They are all involved with their grandchildren's lives for one reason or another. Nurses in all cultures share some common characteristics. Farmers are alike in their dependence on the land and the weather. Farmers don't get in a hurry. So learn about the people you are going to be with. Understanding helps lessen fear."

"The bows and arrows on your wall make me afraid," said Huizhong. "But your little houses and carvings of people make me curious about the people," she added.

"If you knew why the people have the bows and arrows and how they use them you might be less afraid. You just illustrated why we need to study about where we are going if at all possible," said Teacher Rifeng. "I am glad you say you are interested when you see the carvings of people and things in my studio.

Now, let's talk about how most people react when they begin to live in a new culture. I am going to talk about a series of feelings most people have when they go to some place different from their own culture. This series of feelings is very common when people move to a different culture. It is like taking a journey through many emotions. We call it 'culture shock'.

The Ups and Downs of the Effects of a New Culture



At first, it is usual to experience feelings of excitement and apprehension when arriving in a new place. Questions fill your mind. It seems your senses are much sharper. You see and hear many things. Your heart does little flutters and dances. All the excitement may make you tired and you want to sleep a lot. Or you may react in the opposite way. You may stay wide awake because your mind is very busy, processing all the new experiences. You get tired after awhile from staying awake.

Excitement should turn into interest as you experience all the new things. There are new smells to smell. Where do they come from? New sounds tickle or assault your ears. What makes those squeals, shrieks or murmurs? Your taste buds quiver at new flavours. Curiosity about things helps you become truly interested. As you try things and find that they are not all bad, you may grow in enthusiasm for where you are. Enthusiasm for new things grows as you try them. Not all things will be good but many experiences will be good. This excitement, interest, and enthusiasm may last a day or it may last several weeks or even months.

At some point, you probably will find a different feeling coming upon you. You will want the old flavour of things. Old habits will want to take over again. 'Why can't I do things the way I used to do them?' will be your cry. Anxiety will set in. Did I really understand what that person just said? Will I find that thing I need? I am tired of all the new. Will I be able to do my task here? How can I do it when everything is so different? Was I really supposed to be here in the first place? A feeling of anxiety grows. You may try to deny that anything is really wrong. But the feeling of anxiety grows.

Then fear may begin to grow. 'I don't think I will ever understand these people', you may say. Will I be able to do everyday things of life easily ever again? Quiet panic sets in so that you do not want to try new things. As fear grows into panic, many people feel a sort of desperation set in. They are tempted to stay home. They stop going outside. They want to spend time only with friends they find from their home country rather than spending time with the people with whom you came to work.

This is a dangerous period of experience in a new culture. If you do not think clearly about why you are there, you will go home. If you do not overcome the differences around you, you will be unable to do the work you came to do. Some people do go home at this stage.

Many other people will remember why they are in that place. They make an effort to get used to all the differences. Gradually things become easier to do. Some things will become pleasurable. Hope will grow in place of despair. Hope that you can fulfill what you came to do begins to grow. That hope brings a sense of relief as you begin to enjoy some of the differences. You may even begin to find that some of the ways people do things around you is better than the way you do things at home.

You will at last find yourself beginning to relax. You will begin to feel comfortable in the new surroundings. You will learn to understand many things around you. There will always be irritations. There are irritations even in your own culture. But you will find ways to cope with the irritations, just as you cope with them at home.

As you begin to relax and enjoy life again, you will begin to find yourself useful in the new culture. You will find people who are interested in you and willing to take a risk to get to know you. They may do this at risk to themselves. There are curious people in every culture.

The process of getting used to a new culture takes a different length of time for each person. It also takes a longer or shorter time in each culture. Each culture is different. There are some people who cannot adjust to new cultures though. I hope you are not that kind of person," declared Teacher Rifeng, as he smiled at Minzhe and his wife.

"I hope we are able to adjust too. I suppose that one way to help us get through this series of feelings is to always be willing to ask questions," said Huizhong.

"That is correct," agreed Teacher Rifeng. "Remember, I said that people who feel superior will never be able to work in other cultures? Well, one sign that you do not feel superior is to take the position of a learner. It is hard for adults to be like little children. But that is how most people feel when they are in a new culture. You have to relearn everything. Little children usually ask lots of questions. That is how they learn. Little children do not have adult pride. Adult pride stops us from growing in another culture. It stops us from admitting we don't know everything. It makes us try to do everything on our own. Don't ask too many questions though. None of us like 'pesky' people.

Most people usually interpret genuine interest in them as acceptance by another. Showing a real interest in who they are, in what they do, and in why they do it shows you do not feel superior. To learn, one must ask questions. One must learn to ask questions appropriately. You must learn who the best person to ask is. In some cultures, women may not talk to men. Sometimes you must ask the elders of the group first. Often little children provide unexpected answers.

Probably the best way to show your interest in others is to learn their language. More than anything else your language marks you as different. Even in our own countries, we notice people who speak our language a bit differently than we do. We know who comes from the North and who lives in the far South, because they use our own language just a bit differently.

You cannot ask good questions if you do not know the language. You will not understand the answers if you have not learned the language. It is hard to learn another language for most of us. There are some people who do learn languages very easily, but most of us struggle with it. You must prepare yourself to spend time learning as soon as you get to the new place you will be living. I hope you can take some lessons about how to learn another language before your network sends you. Pay very close attention. It is most important.

But there is one thing that can overcome language barriers in most cultures. That reminds me of another story that I have to tell you. In a country in East Africa, there was a man who came to work there. I very soon heard about him. He had a terrible time learning the language. He made everyone laugh when he tried to speak. Finally his mission decided to send him home. When the people found out about this, they said, 'No don't send him home!' The mission was

surprised. ‘You laugh every time he tries to talk. Why do you want him to stay?’ the mission leaders asked.

The people answered that the man loved them.

‘How do you know he loves you?’ the surprised officials asked.

‘Well, he knows all our birthdays and brings us some little things. He knows when the children have special programs at school and he comes and cheers them on. He knows when we are sad and he comes and sits quietly with us. He helps us in the field when he can. He smiles at us a lot. His heart speaks when his mouth cannot. Do not send him away. Send your other man away if you must send someone away.’

Again the company people were very surprised because the other man spoke the language almost perfectly. ‘Why should we send him home?’ they asked.

‘Though he speaks our language almost as if he were born here,’ the people answered, ‘he does not love us. He is here just to do his job.’ The mission kept the man who loved the people.

Do not be more interested in what you came to tell the people, than you are interested in the people, themselves.”

“Would you say that again?” Huizhong asked. “It sounded very important!”

“Do not be more interested in what you came to tell the people, than you are in the people, themselves,” repeated Teacher Rifeng.

“In most cultures you have to earn the right to be accepted. If you are accepted, your message will be accepted more easily. I have a story about myself entering another culture. One summer evening there was a festival in the town in which I was working. People were wearing a special sort of robe that they put on in the evenings when they were done the daily work. They were walking in the streets with a special kind of wooden shoe worn only on the street in the evening. The shoes made a musical sound as people clip-clopped down the street. I thought I should join them to show my interest. I had bought a robe and wooden shoes, so I put them on and went out. No one greeted me. No one walked with me or talked with me. I realized that I had

done something very wrong. Later, a person who had become a friend quietly let me know that I had not yet earned the right to wear that robe or the shoes. I was still a foreigner.

A year later, there was a special gathering to which I was invited. I had been working alongside the people and trying hard to learn their language and customs, trying to fit in. I had worked at letting them know I genuinely enjoyed much about their way of doing things. That was not hard to do because I did like their culture. It was very different from my culture but there were things about it that I felt really worked well. That evening, after business was done, it was time to change into the evening robes. Before they did that, the people gathered, calling me to join them. Then came a big surprise. They presented me with a robe and wooden shoes they had made especially for me. Tears came to my eyes. They let me know that now it was okay for me to wear the robe. I had proved that I enjoyed being with them. Some of the other people who were working amongst these people never had that same experience. When I asked the people why they did not give the others robes, they told me that the others did not take the time to really appreciate or understand them like I had.

I trust your experience will be like mine,” said Teacher Rifeng. “Next time we will talk about ‘time’. How people think about time. Time is one of the biggest and most difficult obstacles people have to overcome in crossing cultures.”

Key ideas to discuss from this story

In groups of three, talk about the kinds of people who cross cultures easily.

Check up

Did you talk about:

- ❖ Being interested about things and people around you in your own culture?
- ❖ Being a happy person?
- ❖ Being a person who clearly knows themselves?
- ❖ Being a person who clearly understand what he or she is to do and why he or she is to do it?

Key ideas to discuss from this story

In groups of three, tell each other some things that you might be afraid of in a new culture.

Then, talk about how you can learn not to be afraid of the new culture.

Check up

Did you talk about studying the people you are going to before you get there?

Key ideas to discuss from this story

In groups of three, talk about the importance of learning to be a learner.

Check up

Did you talk about how asking questions sincerely shows that you do not feel superior but are willing to learn?

Key ideas to discuss from this story

In groups of three, talk about the importance of not putting the importance of the message above the importance of the people

Chapter Four: Time Flies

"Hurry! We don't want to be late getting to Professor Reifing's today," Minzhe urged his wife, as they walked quickly toward the professor's house.

"Yes, especially when he is talking about time today. It would be odd to be late," agreed Huizhong, as she ran to keep up with her husband.

A few moments later they entered the professor's house. Proper greetings were exchanged and they found themselves sitting in the familiar room once more.

"Did you know that people think about time differently in different places." asked the professor?"

"Doesn't the earth take the same time to go around the sun no matter where you are on the earth?" asked Minzhe.

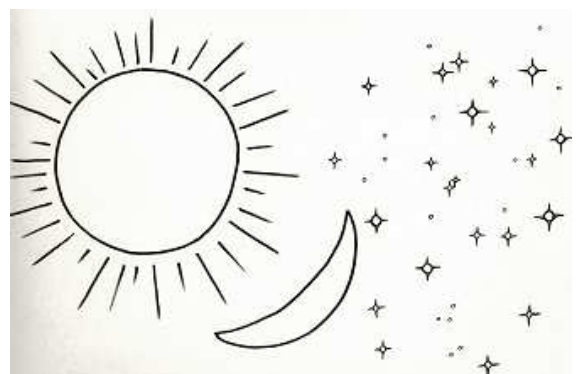
"Yes it does," answered Professor Reifing, "but not everyone understands time the same way."

"How can you understand time differently?" asked Minzhe, a little uncomfortably. This could be a problem, he thought.

"Let's begin with a way of thinking about time that has become very common," said the professor. "Most business in the world is done now according to one way of keeping time. That way comes from a Christian view of time."

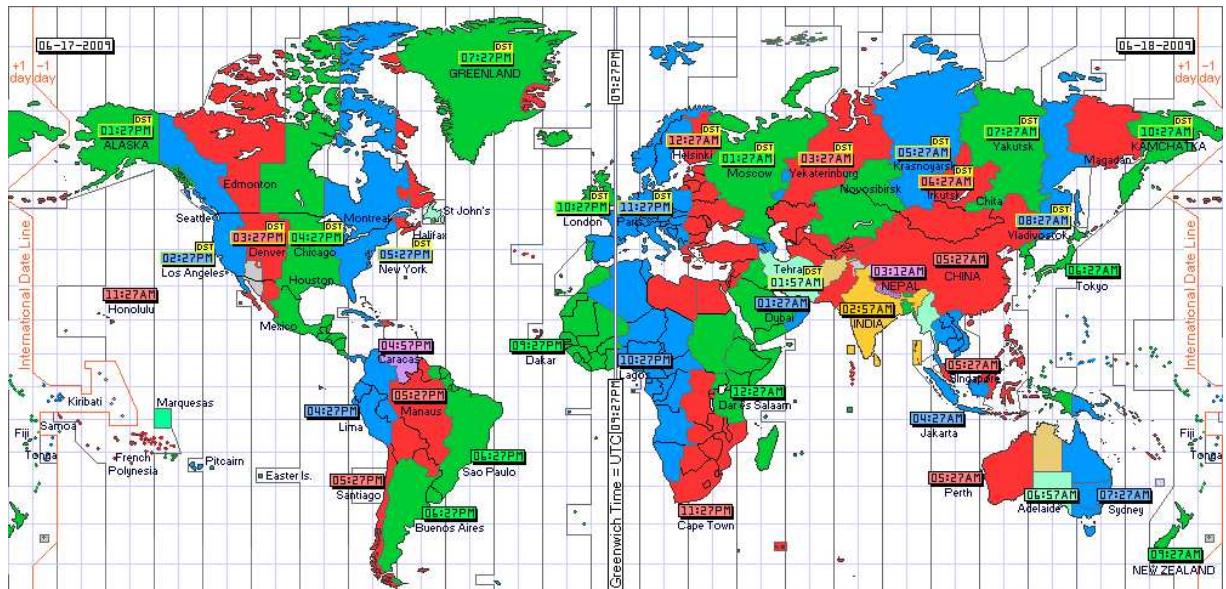
Huizhong looked surprised. "What view of time is that?" she asked. "Why do Christians see time in a special way?"

"Christians believe that God made time. They believe that there was a beginning to time. There will be an end to time. They see time as something God created. The sun, the moon and stars, and the seasons were made by God to mark the passing of time. They also speak about a place where there is no time.



This view sees time 'marching on'. There is a saying, 'Time flies'. Others say, "The hours crept by." Whether one feels time is going by too quickly or that it is going by too slowly, time is

seen as moving forward. This view sees a past, a present and a future quite clearly. Some other groups of people do not see time in the past or time in the future so clearly. They think mostly about the present.



The world has been divided into time zones. Business all over the world has adopted the view of time as moving forward. Computers connect us and reach across the time zones. Telephones 'take us' to other zones of the world to talk to people. We hope that people think about our time zone and do not call us at midnight—disrupting our sleep, when it is noon where they are. Travel is scheduled. You are 'on time' for the train or plane, or you are late and don't go anywhere.

Time is seen as being 'lost' if it is not used well. Some say, 'Time is money'. The meaning of that saying is different from the proverb you may know, which says, 'With money you can buy a house, but not a home; with money you can buy a clock, but not time.' Another saying about time you may be familiar with is, 'An inch of time is an inch of gold but you can't buy that inch of time with an inch of gold.' I think these are Chinese sayings.

People's view of time is related to the deepest layer of their culture. Which layer is that, Minzhe?" asked the professor.

"It is the layer out of which ideas about how the world began come from," answered Minzhe.

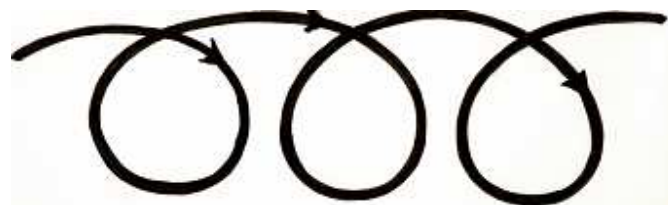
"That is correct," said Professor Reifing. "So, Christians understand that God created the world and time. Others have different ideas about time, based on how they think the world was made.

Many tribal people think of time as cyclical. That is, they think things happen and then they happen again. Things repeat themselves. There is not really a past or a future, just repetition. Some people think that a great-grandchild is the great-grandfather come back to life. They see people doing the same things over and over again. What is, was. And what is will be again. Ancient cultures such as the Incan, Mayan, Hopi, and other Native American Tribes, plus the Babylonian, Ancient Greek, Hindu, Buddhist, Jainist, and others have a concept of a wheel of time. These systems regard time as cyclical. That means time consists of repeating ages that happen to every being of the Universe between birth and extinction.



Kalachakra, 'wheel, or circle, of time,' is the symbol of perfect creation, of the cycles of existence. Time and space are interwoven, and eight spokes mark the directions, each ruled by a Deity and having a unique quality.

The Vedas, the Hindu sacred writings, describe the universe going through repeated cycles of creation, destruction and rebirth. Each cycle lasts 4,320,000 years.



4,320,000 4,320,000 4,320,000

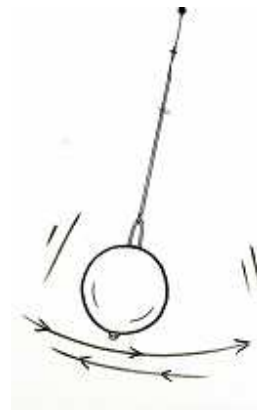
Time is an illusion in Buddhist thought. Time does not really exist. The formal Japanese language does not express time very clearly. The thinking in Japan is that time is not very real. Of course the whole business world in Japan is based on time as real, the Christian idea. Trains run punctually. Schedules abound. But there also exists in Japanese minds a strange distrust of

time. This is evident in the way social life happens in Japan. If I meet a friend while I am on the way to shop at the store, I will spend time with my friend. I will forget that there was a time to be at the store and I might not get there that day. What happens in the present is most important. I met my friend in the present and so it is most important to spend time with her.

The Hopi Indian language contains no words, grammatical forms, construction or expressions that refer directly to what most people call “time”, or to past, present, or future. In [Hindi](#) and [Punjabi](#) (two of the official languages of [India](#)), there is only one word *kal* for both *yesterday* and *tomorrow*, the meaning determined by the context.

In early Chinese texts, there is no story that describes the creation of the world out of nothingness. There is nothing to mark the beginning of time. In Chinese chronologies, time is not counted from a single date, such as the birth of Christ. It is counted from repeated historical beginnings, such as the foundation of a dynasty, or a royal family. On the personal level, individual lives, certainly bounded by birth and death, are regarded as links--linking ancestral lineage, including both the living and the dead.

There are other people who think of time as moving backward and forward like something swinging on a string. That is a hard idea of time for me to understand. There is advance and then time goes backward and then it advances again. There is no real progress, just a backward and forward movement of time.



In Australia the native people believe in dream time. They believe in two forms of time; two streams of activity happen at the same time. One stream is their everyday activity, the other stream is a spiritual cycle called the "dreamtime". It is considered more real than reality itself. Whatever happens in the dreamtime establishes the values, symbols, and laws of Aboriginal society. It is believed that some people with unusual spiritual powers have contact with dreamtime.

Jewish thinking about time is the basis of the Christian thought about time. But there is an important difference. The Jews see ordinary time progressing. They believe in the creation of time, the beginning of time. They believe in the end of time. But they see ordinary time

punctuated by sacred time. Every seventh day is a sacred time, the Sabbath. Sacred festivals punctuate time, lifting ordinary time into a different kind of time. Every seventh year was sacred in the time before Christ. Every forty-ninth and fiftieth year was also different. Modern Jews still hold the idea of the Sabbath being different, to a greater or lesser degree.

"That is amazing," said Minzhe. "I did not know that people see time differently.

"How would those differences affect me, I wonder?" mused Huizhong.

"Good question," said Professor Reifing.

There are two things that I want you to think about.

One is that there are different calendars used in the world. There are forty different calendars used in the world.

APRIL			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	2009	

The calendar most commonly used around the world for business, government, travel, and communication is the Gregorian calendar. It was set up by a Catholic Pope, Pope Gregory. It has the familiar 12 months with 30 or 31 days; February being 28 or 29. There are seven days in a week. Gregory's calendar is based on the earth's movement around the sun.

Before the Gregorian calendar, people in Europe used the Julian calendar. It was put together by Julius Caesar of Rome. Many Orthodox Christians in Russia, Greece and other parts of the world follow this calendar in their religious life. Orthodox Christians celebrate Christmas and Easter at different times than most Catholic and Protestant Christians do. The main feature of both of these calendars is that time is divided between before Christ, and after Christ. So there is 300 BC--or 300 years before Christ, and 300 AD--or 300 years after Christ.

The Islamic calendar calls the year 2009, 1430 AH. This is because Muslims base time as before and after the year the Prophet Mohammed had to flee from the city of Mecca to the city of Medina. AH means in the year of the Hijra, that being the year Mohammed fled. The months in this calendar are based on the movements of the moon only. The celebrations in Islam are always on different dates, if one follows the Gregorian calendar.

The Hebrew calendar year in early 2009 was 5769 AM. The months in this calendar are based on both the movements of the moon and the sun. AM means 'the year of the world', that is, it has been 5769 years since the world was created.

The Gregorian calendar has been used in Japan since *1 January, 1873 for business, and for relating to the rest of the world. But all official things in Japan have been dated Heisei* ("Achieving Peace") since January 7, 1989. That is the year the Emperor Akihito began his reign. Therefore, 2009 is Heisei 21. The idea for Japanese years follows how Chinese years used to be based--on the emperor's reigns.

Again, the main calendar in use for areas like business, government, transportation, and communication is the Gregorian calendar. The other calendars are mainly used for religious purposes and so originate out of the fourth layer of culture.

"So many people live in two times in the first layer of culture. One time is the time of the world of business. The other time is the world of beliefs and values. The timing of the celebrations and activities we see in the first layer of culture come from beliefs buried in the fourth layer of culture," said Minzhe.

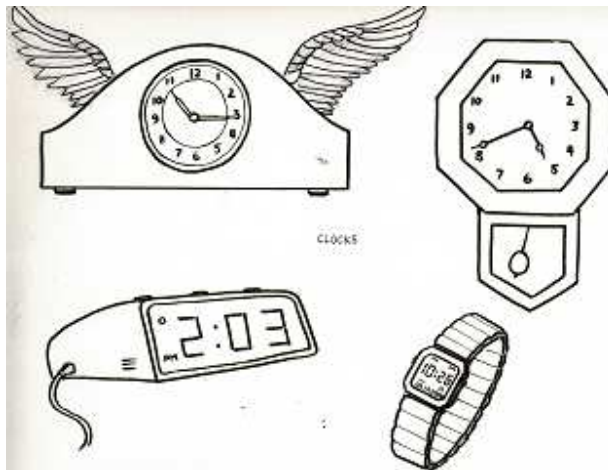
"Excellent," said Professor Reifing. "You have not only been listening carefully, you have been thinking as well. You will do well in another culture."

"I still want to know how the use of time in another culture will affect me personally," said Huizhong.

"Well, first of all, the timing of celebrations has a great effect on when you are free to do business. Muslim, Jewish, Hindu, and Christian celebrations influence the world of business. Business, and even government, is shut down in order for celebration to take place. There will be times when it would not be good to talk about company business. People are distracted or do not

want to hear. Their focus is on their celebration. Sometimes their celebrations open up opportunities to talk about the things you have come to talk about. Sometimes they will be curious about what and why you are celebrating. You need to think about what is going on around you and learn to use it to your advantage.

Another aspect of time is the social use of time.



When is being late actually late? How late can you be, before you are considered rude? How early can you arrive, and not be rude? Often the way time is treated has to do with values buried in the third layer of culture, the value layer. These values, of course, come out of the fourth layer, the layer which explains how things began.

Many people from the West feel that when a meeting is said to begin at a certain time, you must be there and in your place before it begins. The doors to concerts in the West are often shut at the beginning of the concert and you may not enter until there is a break in the program. Trains leave on time. Planes leave on time so you must know which event is business and which event is social.

The use of time in family or community events varies greatly. Even in the West, at an important event, the most important people will arrive last, after everyone else. In some cultures you never come till a half hour after the event is to begin. Sometimes it is okay to be two hours late. It is very frustrating to learn to live in a different view of social time.

The third layer, which is values, influences the use of time. These values determine how the systems in the second layer happen. The place you notice this is at the first layer, where you see people acting according to how they value of time.

I know people who have gone to other countries to do what their network asked them to do and could not, because they could not adjust to the way people used their time. They could not

understand the values that led people to use time the way they did. They suffered distress because of the changes in the flow of time. We discussed some of how being in a new culture affects you before. The use of time has a great effect on you.

But it is time for you to go now. Next lesson we will talk about circles," said the professor, standing up. Huizhong forgot stood up as well but surprised wondering why they would talk about circles.

Key ideas to discuss from this story:

In groups of three, tell each other the important ideas presented in this story.

Check up

Did you talk about these points?

1. What is the most commonly used view of time in the world?

The Christian view of time is the most commonly used view of time in the world.

2. What are the main ideas of the Christian view of time?

Time – is created

--has a beginning and an end

- appears to move forward always, has a past, a present and a future

3. For what two different purposes can calendars be used?

- for business (government, travel)

-for religious celebrations and social events

4. How could differences in the use of time affect you personally?

-we need to know what people are doing so we know when to talk to them

-we may want to do business but everything is closed for celebration

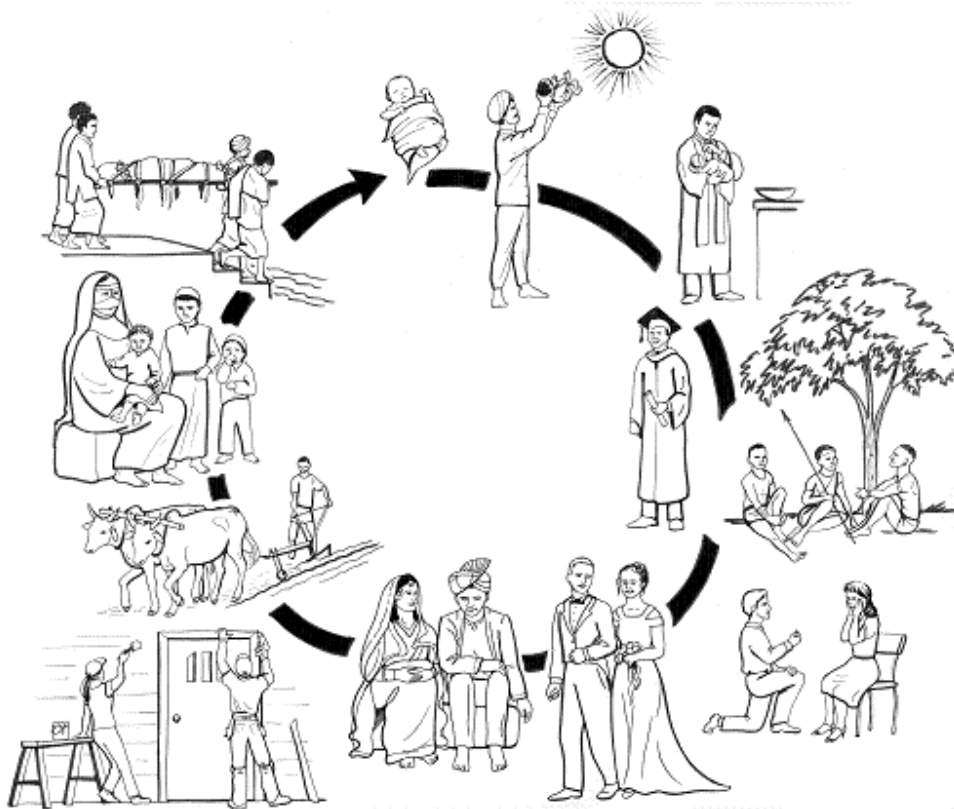
-we may think being late has one meaning and others think it has another meaning. We can get angry if people don't do things when we think they should do them.

5. When do you feel time is 'flying'? When do you feel like time has stopped, or is moving slowly?

Chapter Five: Life Is Going in Circles

"It is very interesting and helpful talking with Teacher Rifeng. I wonder what the teacher has to say today. We have talked about cabbages and time flying. Now we will talk about circles," Minzhe said to his wife. "Are you ready? Let's go!"

Teacher Rifeng was looking at a big illustration on his desk when they entered his studio. Minzhe and Huizhong walked over to look, too. "So this is the Circle you are going to talk about?" Huizhong said in surprise as she bent over to look closer.



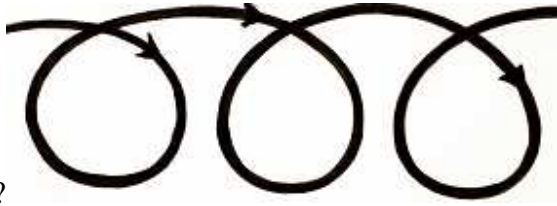
"Yes", replied the teacher, "we will talk about the Circle of Life today."

"I see a baby there, a wedding there, and someone who has died up here," said Huizhong, pointing to the illustrations. "There are some other scenes that I do not really understand. The Circle of Life must mean what happens to a person from his birth to his death."

"Very good," said Teacher Rifeng. "You are learning well. Yes the Circle of Life includes all the important events in one person's life."

"Why is it called a Circle of Life?" asked Minzhe.

"Remember that we talked about how some people see time as cycling around and around

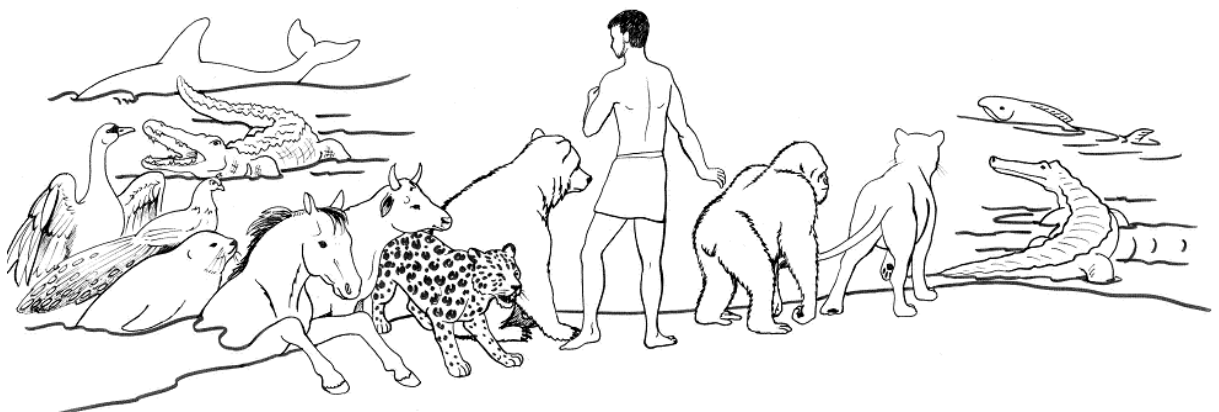


again?

Well, the idea of the Circle of Life comes from that view of time. There are those in the world who think of time as repeating. Therefore, life and death are just repetitions of the same things over and over in their thinking," answered the teacher.

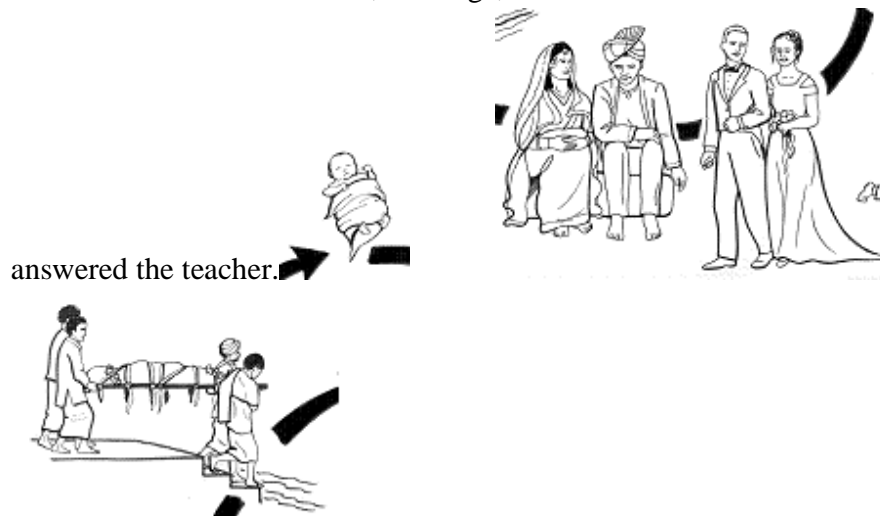


"Now, many people around the world have begun to use the idea of life being a cycle. Some people see everything as part of the circle. Men and animals are just parts of the cycle. Some see plants included too. When we die we become part of the ground. Plants grow from the ground. Animals eat the plants; we eat the animals or the plants. Others believe that according to how you live you may come back as an animal or a fish and have to work up to human existence again."



"Are the same things included in the 'Circle' for every people group?" asked Huizhong.

"Basic events like birth, marriage, and death are celebrated in most people groups,"



"Some cultures make different events more important than other cultures do. There are lesser events that become very important in some cultures. Some cultures do not celebrate a few of the lesser events at all. People groups may have celebrations for the same things, but at different ages for the person. Male and female also have different celebrations."

"Does the Circle of Life connect to the 'cabbage' layers of culture we learned about?" Huizhong asked, thoughtfully.

"Yes! That is a good connection," answered the teacher, encouragingly. "These events connect to the levels of culture. The first layer is the behaviours and objects used to celebrate the different occasions. The ceremonies connected to celebrating these events come out of the systems of the second level. Marriages ceremonies occur because there are rules and regulations about being married. People celebrate these events in their lives because of what they value about themselves and others. That is the third layer. These values are rooted deeply in what people believe about how they came into being and how they relate to the world around them. This is the innermost layer."

"I suppose the beginning of the Circle is birth?" questioned Minzhe.

"Yes, although in some cultures celebration begins nine months before the birth when the child is first expected," replied Teacher Rifeng. "If it is a first born child, the celebrations may be even more special. In other cultures the expected child is never mentioned, because to mention it may bring it to the attention of demons. The demons will seek to harm the mother and the child in some way if people talk about or celebrate the child. Precautions will be taken to keep the coming birth a secret."

The first common celebration in the Circle of Life is usually the birth of the child. Each group of people have their own way of celebrating this. Some American Indian tribes, and in



some other cultures, the child is lifted to the sun at birth.

There are different celebrations if it is a girl, than if it is a boy. If it is a first born boy, the celebrations may take on a greater importance than if it was a girl. In some cultures girl babies are not wanted and are left to die. Some people groups will not celebrate at the birth of a child, because they fear the child may die soon. They wait to see if the child will be healthy, sometimes two to three years. Some groups are very afraid if the child is misshapen and do not celebrate, but kill the child. In some groups twins are feared and therefore left to die on their own or thrown into rivers or left for animals to eat.

The big celebration in Jewish culture, eight days after the birth of a boy, is Brit Milah, the covenant of circumcision. Circumcision has a special meaning for Jews. It is a sign that they are God's special people. Muslims also celebrate circumcision. Often, Muslim boys pass through circumcision (khitan) when they have recited the entire Qur'an, once through. In Malaysia and other regions where Muslims practice circumcision, boys undergo the operation at from ten to twelve years of age. It becomes a real puberty rite. It separates the boy from childhood and introduces him to the new status of young adulthood. The most common age is seven, but some Muslims do circumcision at seven days. In other countries, some Western countries, circumcision is practiced for health reasons with no celebration at all. Some people are against circumcision because they say it disfigures the male. This was a Greek idea. Now, many people--who believe there is no god, and only man rules--are turning away from circumcision.

Some cultures have a great celebration when the child is finally named. This happens at different ages. Giving a name immediately after birth is seen as dangerous in some people groups because then the demons will know the child and hurt him. Other groups watch the child very carefully to see which ancestor (or great-grandfather) the child is like. Then they give the child that person's name. They think the ancestor has come back as this child. Many Christian groups

have a special ceremony called 'Christening' when the child is given his name in the presence of



God. The child is dedicated to God or to the church.

In other places the giving of the name is a family matter. Names are chosen before the baby is born and there is no celebration.

I will tell you a story about giving a child a name when you live in another culture. A young couple trained hard to prepare to live among a group of natives on the West Coast of Canada. They studied all they could about the culture, the language, the layers of the people's culture, and how the people thought. But they did not learn one important thing. One very important thing! When their first baby boy was born, they decided to name him after the chief of the tribe. They thought they would be honouring the chief. To their surprise, the tribe became very angry and told them to leave within twenty-four hours. They had to leave, broken hearted. Later they found out that names were private property in this group. They had stolen the chief's name, so the tribe thought. They should have asked permission to use the name which they may have gotten, or may not have gotten. The name and the person are very closely related in some cultures.

Only a few people will know someone's real name in some tribes. One man gathered names and tried to make charts of family groups for several years. When he moved to the neighbouring group, they laughed at him and told him that the names he gathered were all made up names. No one wanted to tell him their real name. It is important to know what is involved in the events of the Circle of Life followed in a particular culture.

Many people groups celebrate when a child becomes a young adult. This is often done in the late teenage years. Sometimes the young boys undergo scarring of their faces. They must be brave and act like men now. They leave playing with girls and being with their mothers. Often groups of young men will go away by themselves to be together for some time, hunting, and



looking after themselves.

When they are accepted back into the tribe again, they are eligible for marriage. In Western countries, coming of age is celebrated in various ways. Young ladies who are ready to be married may have what is called a "Coming out Ball" They are introduced to Society at a glittering dance party where they wear beautiful dresses and are accompanied by specially chosen, handsome, young escorts.

Another custom in the West that takes the place of a 'becoming adult' party is a Graduation



or Commencement Ceremony, ending formal education.

Some schools in the West celebrate the finish of kindergarten with a party. Students then continue on and graduate from elementary school and then from junior high school. The finish of the common twelve years of required public education is the biggest graduation celebration. There are ceremonies where diplomas are given to the graduates. This is usually followed by a dance, or private party at a student's home. Christians often celebrate together in the church. Students are considered young adults at this age. When college is finished there is another ceremony, though the end of compulsory twelve years education is usually the bigger party.

Many people groups celebrate 'Coming of Age'. This can be at thirteen years of age, as in Jewish families, or at twenty or twenty-one, as in the West. In some South Pacific countries, one does not become a man until his father and older uncles have died. Someone may at last become a man at age fifty, or even older. Sometimes becoming adult is related to age but not often. Age twenty-one was the age of becoming a man in Canada for many years. Then a young person could begin to drink liquor and smoke. These things were thought of as adult pastimes. Other cultures have similar things only adults can do. In some people groups people do not even know how old they are, because no one remembers the day of one's birth."

"I suppose that marriage is the next big part of the Circle of Life," said Minzhe.

"Yes, after the celebrations of becoming an adult, or the finishing of required education the next step in taking on of adult responsibilities is usually marriage. In some cultures the young man asks the lady of his affection, directly, if she will marry him. He usually gives her an engagement ring at this time.



When young couples announce that they will be married there are parties. In other countries there are formal talks between parents, and contracts are signed. In some people groups, marriage partners are chosen by parents for their children when they are very, very young. There is usually a celebration at this time, too. In other groups there is a price to be paid for the bride. There are long discussions between the family groups as to how much should be paid for the bride. Many times this 'bride price' belongs to the bride, in case her husband dies or she is divorced."

Huizhong looked at her husband and asked, "How much would you have paid for me?"

Her husband blushed and looked at the floor.

Teacher Rifeng laughed gently. He continued, "Marriage ceremonies can be simple events, like stepping over a broom together, in front of friends. Or they can be celebrations that take a



week or ten days.

Usually, some religious persons are involved. In many countries there are rules to be followed that are decided by the government. Marriages also have to be registered with the government in many countries. Some places have no religious involvement at all; it is only government regulations that are followed. Some cultures demand proof that the couple have successfully had sex together before the marriage is considered completed.

In most cultures there are big feasts that follow the formal wedding ceremonies. Families and friends gather and there is singing, story telling and dancing. In some Western countries, pictures of the bride and groom's childhood up to when they met and were engaged are shown. Then, in some cultures, there is a 'honeymoon'. This is when the newly married couple spend time by themselves in some special place."

"The Circles touch each other when a child is born, don't they?" mused Minzhe.

"What do you mean?" asked Teacher Rifeng.

"Well, each person's Circle begins at birth or at conception, but that is also an event in the parents' Circles," explained Minzhe.

"Very good!" exclaimed the teacher. "Usually the first born child receives the most attention and celebration, especially if the baby is a boy. The world is very hard on girls. Sometimes girl babies are left to die because a boy is wanted first. Sometimes a girl is wanted

first because she can help raise the rest of the family. Then, second girl babies may be left to die or be aborted if a boy is not next. We will talk about these issues when we have our talk about gender," said the teacher. One odd custom in England and North America was that the new father gave all his friends a cigar. It was a sign of friendship and happiness to smoke together."

"What would be the next cause for celebration in the Circle?" asked Huizhong, as she bent to look at the chart again.

"People celebrate wedding anniversaries and birth anniversaries in some countries. In the West, twenty-five years, fifty years, and sixty years of marriage are important. The twenty-fifth year is called the Silver Wedding anniversary, the fiftieth, the Golden Wedding anniversary, and the sixtieth, the Diamond Wedding anniversary. In the West each birthday or wedding anniversary is usually celebrated privately in some simple way. The important ones will have a big party with family and friends gathering. In Canada, the Queen will send a special certificate for those who have reached sixty or seventy years of marriage

There are also important birth anniversary years to celebrate. In Japan, families go to shrines on November 15th in order to celebrate a girl's third or seventh birthday, or a boy's fifth birthday. Thanks is given at the shrine for the child's health and strength. Prayer is made for a long life to come. This celebration began due to the fact that a long time ago many children died before their 3rd, 5th or 7th birthdays. After going to the shrine, the family has a feast at home.

Between marriage and death there is the establishment of a home and a family. The parents are usually involved in working to get food and other necessary things for their children and for



life in general.

Then comes old age. Many grandparents spend time looking after the grandchildren. They



are in charge of teaching the family history to the children.

They also teach life lessons and help the children learn to do simple tasks around the home.

In very industrial cultures, grandparents are put in special homes where they are looked after by people who are paid to take care of them. Some cultures leave old people behind when they move to find food. The old ones soon starve to death. In the North where there is ice and snow and long winter nights, the old go out by themselves in the cold night so that the young will not have to look after them. They die there alone, freezing to death.

Old age may be the most difficult part of the 'Circle of Life'. It is often a time of feeling very useless. Strength fails. Thinking abilities fail. Even in very industrial nations--where there are many doctors and much medicine--when the elderly become sick, they are not given special care to help them get better. They are made comfortable and allowed to die.

I have many friends whose networks have sent them to help the elderly in different countries. The elderly are thankful and many of them listen to the ideas that my friends wish to share. I have a lady friend who has gone to a country where the elderly are left on the streets to die. She has built homes for them and helped them have good food. These people are now healthy and are helping look after children whose parents have died because of AIDS."

"The final celebration is at death, I suppose," said Minzhe.



"Yes," agreed Teacher Rifeng. "And this is usually the grimmest of all celebrations. How people celebrate death depends on how they understand where they came from and where they are going after they die. Death celebrations rise out of the fourth layer of culture.

Some Christians celebrate with a mixed feeling of joy and sorrow. They are sad because they will miss the loved one, but they are not totally grief-stricken because they believe that the loved one will be in heaven. They will see each other again. Sometimes the loved one did not believe in Jesus as the only way to heaven and so there is much grief because the family believes that the person will be in hell. Catholic Christians teach that the person must spend time in a halfway place until they have paid for their sins. They can be helped when family and friends say special prayers and pay money to get them to heaven more quickly.

Many other religions have ideas about helping the person after death. Preparations to help the person achieve a good life after death are many and varied. Anniversaries of the death of family members may be celebrated on special years after the death. For some people groups, the

44th year is very important. Some groups celebrate at five, ten, and forty years. Some people groups leave the body to decay for a period of time. After decay, they clean the bones--accompanied with great celebration--and store them in special places. In Mexico, on the first and second of November every year, many people go to the graveyards and have a feast at relatives' graves. The Japanese invite the spirits of the dead into their houses at 'O-bon Festival' in August. After a few days they send the spirits away on little boats with lanterns in them on the rivers and streams.

The dead person's Circle may be thought to have ended as far as life here on earth goes, but the death ceremonies are not the end of the Circle for the living. Many kinds of responsibilities to the dead often continue. People groups without a clear idea of what is after life are often very grief stricken. Some believe that the relative will come back as a vengeful spirit to haunt them. After the death, special ceremonies must be undertaken to appease the spirits of dead ancestors. Others believe the ancestors come back to watch over them and so they make thank offerings to the dead person to encourage more help."

"How could a people group's idea of the 'Circle of Life' affect what our network wants us to do?" asked Minzhe.

Teacher Rifeng laughed gently and said, "That is a good question. The Circle of Life affects all the levels of culture. The most important level is the fourth level. If people change what they believe at this level, all the meanings of all the celebrations will change. That is because all the values have been affected. It is important that missionaries think through what effect the new ideas will have on a people group. The mission should be prepared to help the people think through new meanings and new ways of celebrating the events of the 'Circle of Life'."

"Do you have an example?" asked Minzhe.

Teacher Rifeng thought for a few moments and then began, "Yes, I do. In Japan, many people follow the Buddhist belief system. But, when Japanese change their core beliefs, from Buddhist to Christian, for example, they change their beliefs about the dead person. These changes are expressed in how people handle the funeral ceremony. Instead of praying to the person's spirit who has become a 'god', they will pray to the 'God of Heaven'. Instead of offering incense to the spirit of the dead person, bowing to the body and praying to the spirit of the person, many Christians in Japan place a flower in the coffin and sit beside it. They then pray to God in Heaven thanking God for having had time with the loved one. They will ask for God's comfort for themselves, rather than asking for the dead person to care for them.

In Buddhism there are a number of memorial services following the death. For example, rituals are performed daily for the first seven days, then, weekly within the first forty-nine days, then on the 100th day, depending on the local custom. After that, there are memorial feasts, such as the [O-bon](#) festival, in honour of the dead.

However, Japanese Christians believe that if the person was a Christian, that person's spirit is now with Christ in heaven, not on earth watching over them. So they do not do all the memorial services, nor do they talk to the dead nor set out food for them as they once did. Instead, Christians gather in the graveyard on Easter Sunday to celebrate the fact that they will see their loved ones again when they themselves die and go to heaven. They are also celebrating the fact that their loved ones who have died--and they themselves--will be resurrected. They believe they will live again, just as Jesus did. The outer layers--the celebrations—change, when the inner layers of a culture change."

"The way in which different people groups celebrate the 'Circle of Life', even what they believe about the 'Circle of Life' is very important," observed Minzhe. "Getting used to these beliefs and celebrations will take work too. We will need to be sensitive to where people are in the 'Circle of Life', and to what they are celebrating, when we talk to them about the things we have to tell them."

Teacher Rifeng nodded in agreement. "If you understand what is going on in people's lives, you can present your message to them in ways that will fit with what is happening. That will help them to understand and accept your messages much more easily."

It is interesting to see how one great teacher used the events in people's lives to bring his message to them. The great teacher was Jesus Christ. There are stories of how he did his first miracle at a wedding. He was involved with several funerals, even funerals for close friends, like Lazarus. He used that incident to do some very important teaching. Some schools teach that you should look carefully at the life of Christ and see how he was able to affect people's lives during major events in their 'Circles of Life'.

"It is time to go," said Huizhong. "Thank you so much for your telling us these things. What will we talk about next time?"

"I think we will talk about how families are the same and how they are different in various places," said the teacher. "Bring me a chart of your family for next week. Name all the people in your family and tell me how they are related to you. What words do you use when you talk about them?"

Key ideas to discuss from this story.

In groups of three, draw a 'Circle of Life' for your own culture. What are the main events and how are they celebrated?

Where are you in the 'Circle of Life'?

Key ideas to discuss from this story.

In groups of three talk about why it is important to know what the events of the ‘Circle of Life’ are in the culture in which you may work.

Check up

Did you talk about these points?

1. People need to understand the important points in others’ lives so that when they talk to them they can relate their message to what is happening in their life.
2. Since the way events are celebrated in a person’s life are tied to the fourth layer of culture, there must be a change in the fourth layer thinking before there will be a change in the reasons why, and the way in which, these events are celebrated.

Chapter Six: Are You My Cousin or my Brother? What Families are like?

"Did you finish the chart of your family?" Huizhong asked her husband as they prepared to leave in order to go to Teacher Rifeng's studio for another study time.

"I think so. I am not really sure how to write it out. It is quite complicated," admitted Minzhe, rolling up the scroll. "I wonder how other groups of people write out their families' connections."

"I am sure we will find out today!" laughed Huizhong.

When they entered Teacher Rifeng's studio, there were many charts hanging all around them. As they got ready to study, they peeked at the charts.

"There are indeed many ways of naming the members of families in the world," thought Huizhong.

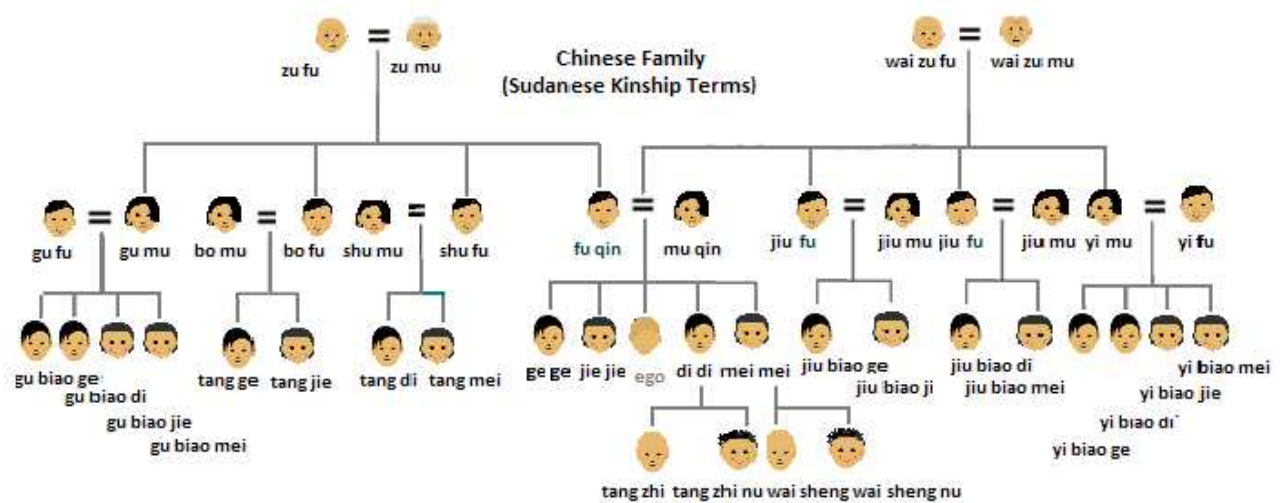
Teacher Rifeng had been studying one of the charts. He turned to the couple and said, "Let's begin with the kind of family with which you are most familiar. We call it the Sudanese Kinship chart. The Chinese use this system of titles for relatives. It is the most complicated. That is, it has the most number of terms to call members of the family. Every member of the family is referred to by a different term."

"Doesn't everyone do that?" exclaimed Minzhe in surprise. "I thought it was difficult when I was trying to remember what we call everyone in my family. Is the Chinese family system really like the Sudanese kinship chart?"

"Yes," answered the Teacher. Let's take a look. On these charts, we always put ourselves in the middle. Anthropologists use the term 'ego' to refer to our own self. On our chart you are the person with no face. The chart shows what you would call other members of your family."

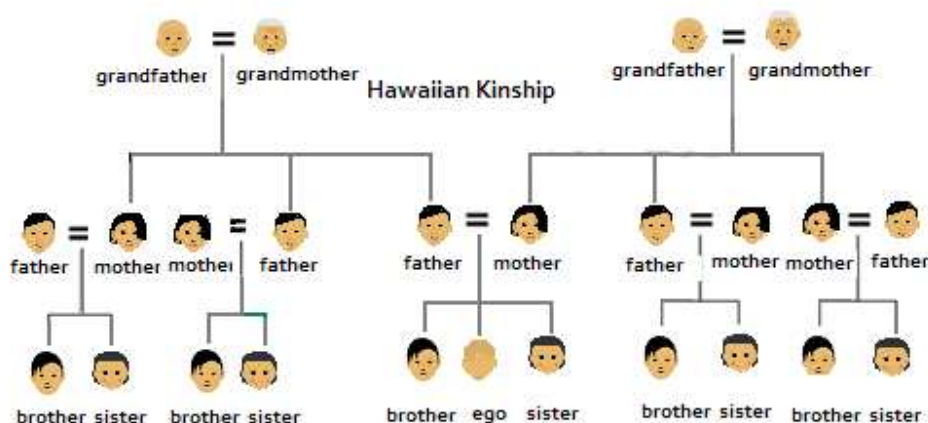
"There is a different term for everyone on this chart, isn't there?" asked Minzhe.

"Yes, that is what is special about the Sudanese chart. This is the most complicated system. It uses the most terms, one for each member of the family. This is our first chart," said the Teacher.



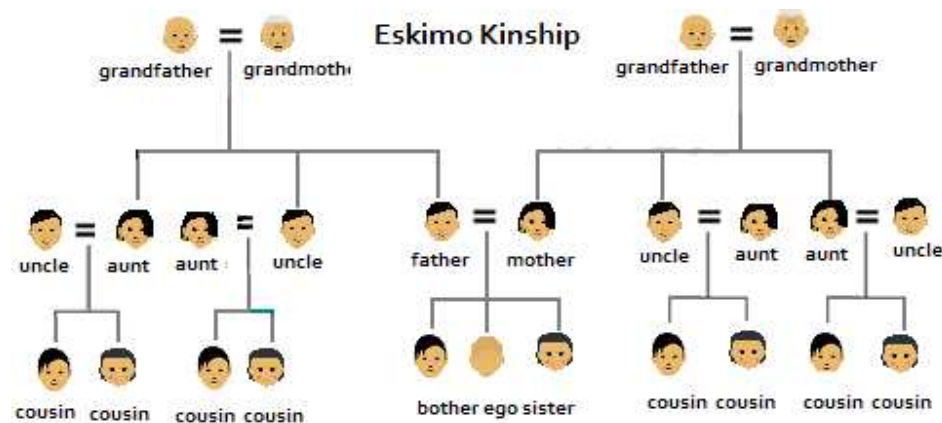
"There are five other ways people use to describe how they relate in families. These systems all use far fewer terms than the system used in China. In these charts, several different people are referred to by the same terms. The same term can be used for people of different age groups also. I suppose the people who use the Sudanese/Chinese system wonder how people in the other systems know who they are talking about. It is interesting who calls whom 'mother' and 'father' or 'brother' and 'sister'. It sounds very confusing when you are used to using different terms for each person.

The next chart we will look at is the [Hawaiian](#) Kinship. It uses the fewest terms for relatives.



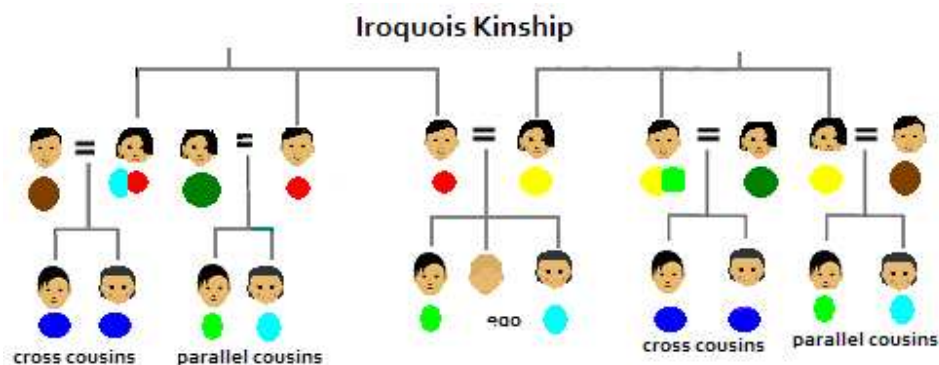
The people who are called 'brother' and 'sister' in this system may often move from family to family. They live with one group which they call brother and sister for a time and then they may move to the next family group containing brothers and sisters. About one third of the world's families use this system. These people groups do not think of the family as just mother, father and their children. They see family as very large groups of related people.

The next pattern is the one used in most Western societies in modern-day Europe and in North America. It is a kinship pattern used by about ten percent of the world's societies. It is called the **Eskimo** Kinship Pattern.



One always has to explain which aunt or uncle one is talking about because all father's brothers and all mother's brothers are uncles. All mother's sisters and father's sisters are aunts. You must explain which grandparent you are talking about. Is it your mother's father or your father's father? There is no word to tell you specifically which is which. This system puts emphasis on the father, mother, brothers and sisters by giving each one a title different from the rest of the relatives, that is cousins, aunts and uncles.

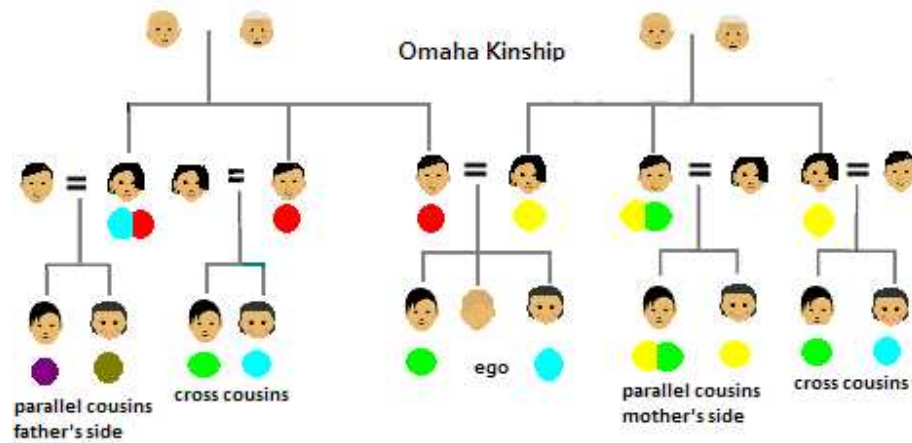
The fourth pattern is called **Iroquois** Kinship. People with the same coloured dots have the same titles.



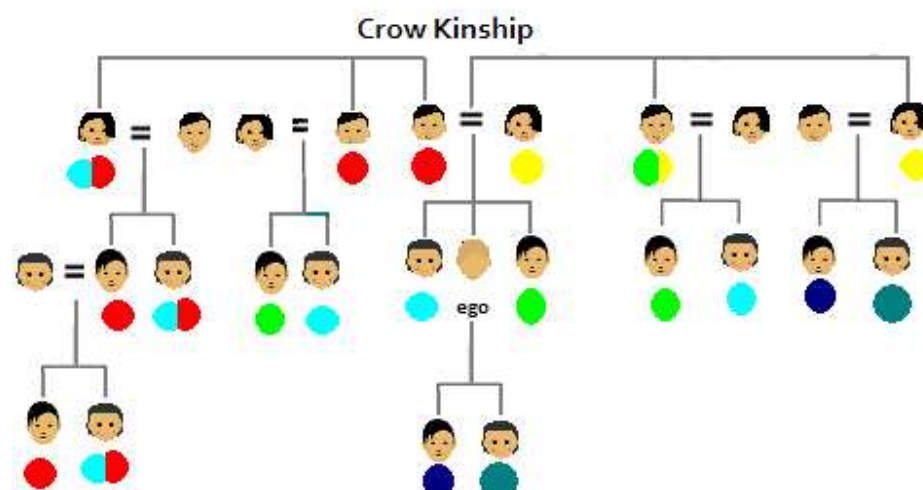
This family system has some interesting rules about whom a person may marry. It has to do with the terms 'cross cousins' and 'parallel cousins'. But we will talk about these cousins in the next session.

Then there is the **Omaha** Kinship Pattern. This is the fifth pattern. Father's brothers are called by the same term as father. Father's brothers have the same authority over Ego as father does. Father's family is more important than mother's family in this system. Parallel cousins on

the father's side have the same titles as Ego's children. Parallel cousins on the mother's side have the same titles as mother's brothers and sisters.



The last of the five systems we will look at is the **Crow** System. Mother's family is most important in this system.



"Why are these charts important?" asked Minzhe.

"These charts are important because they define who may marry whom. Who will take care of whom is also defined according to these family systems. Who owns property is defined by these charts. Who inherits the property is also defined by these systems. Even who may speak to whom and how they may speak to each other is defined by these charts. In some families different words are used when talking to grandparents, than when talking to parents. Brothers speak to each other one way and sisters will speak to each other another way in some family groups."

"That is very complicated!" exclaimed Huizhong. "My brain is tired trying to think about all of this."

Teacher Rifeng laughed softly and said, "It is not so important to remember all the details of all the systems. What is important is that you understand the system of the people with whom you are going to live. You need to understand clearly who people are talking about when they talk about family members.

It is important to understand clearly who is being talked about. People often make decisions based on what the most important person in their family system thinks. It is good to know whom you are talking to and how they fit into their family. You need to know who can make decisions for whom.

I know a man who went to an island to share the Gospel. He could never get anyone to really listen to him. Then, after being with them for many months and working hard to understand them, one day he realized that the oldest woman in the family ruled the whole family. He began to talk to those older women who ruled the families. When they accepted what he was telling them, many members of the family accepted the ideas also. I have seen a family group of one hundred and fifty members who accepted the man's ideas because the old woman at the head of the family accepted the ideas.

I will tell you another story. There was a man who studied at a school far from his island home. My brother studied at the same school. While this man was studying, my brother became his very close friend. My brother helped him do his studying. When the man married, my brother was part of the wedding ceremony. Many years later, I visited at this man's home. He told me a fascinating story about who he was.

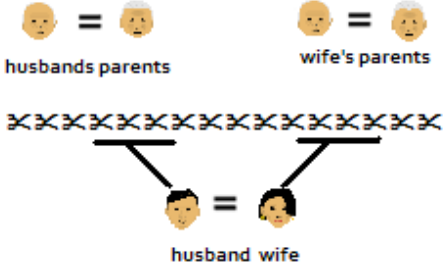
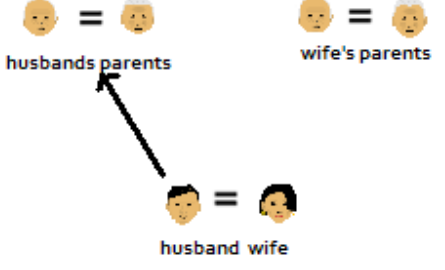
In his culture, property rights came from the older women in the family to the younger women. The men were the chiefs. But it was the women who chose who would be chiefs. This man was chosen by his great grandmother to be chief. His grandfather and his father would not speak to him for many years because they had been passed over by the great grandmother. They were angry. Great-grandmother did not think that either his father or his grandfather had the proper character to be chief, so she chose him. Because my brother was this chief's friend, I was treated with great respect by the members of that culture. I had to act in a way that was different than I usually acted. I had to sit very straight and look as if I was not too interested in what was happening around me. Other people, many older than I, came and bowed to me because I was the chief's friend.

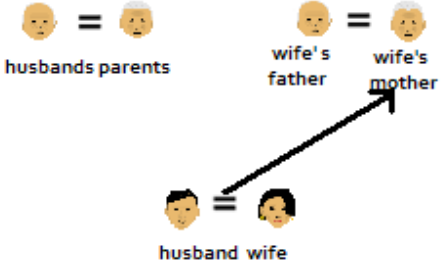
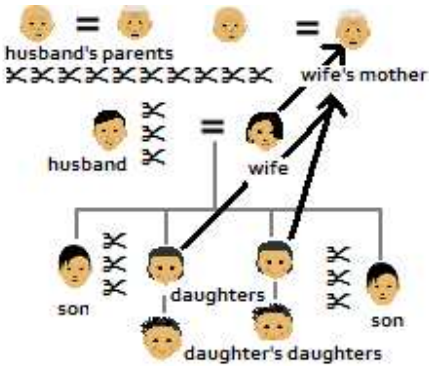
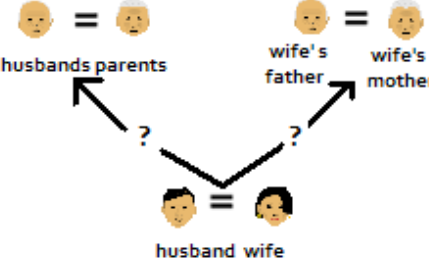
The chief had been telling people a message that he had heard while he was in school. His father and his grandfather did not want to hear it at first. But before his father died, his father accepted that the great grandmother had done the right thing. His son was a great chief he said. His son had an important message he said. The old man believed his son's message before he died. About three thousand people in the group had come to understand the message because of

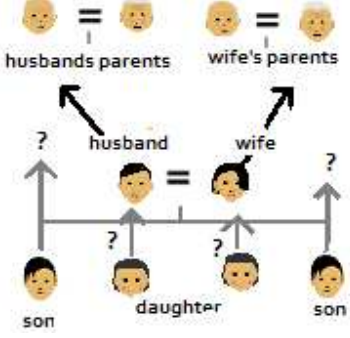
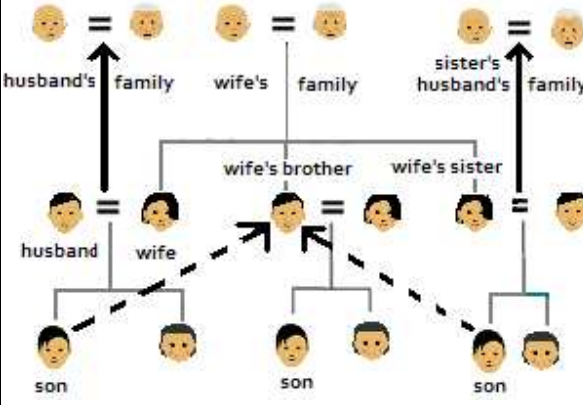
the chief. The great grandmother had made a wise choice. She did not know what would happen when she chose the man to be chief but she had made a wise choice.

"I understand the importance of these charts now," said Minzhe. "We really should know how people see themselves, related to each other. Then we can speak to people who will carry our message to others. Are there other things about marriage we should understand?"

"Yes, there are," Teacher Rifeng said. "Did you know that there are seven ways of deciding who will live where when a couple marry? Let's look at those charts."

	<p>Forming a New Home Away from Both Parents</p> <p>Each spouse leaves his or her family of origin. Together they form a new household. This is the most common pattern of living in modern industrial societies</p>
<p>Living with Father's Family</p> <p>Upon marriage, a man remains in his father's household. His wife leaves her family to move in with him. As children are born, they become part of this unit. The result is a family in which three or more generations of related men live together. A simpler form of this pattern is that a wife must move to her husband's residence. The simpler pattern does not involve all the generations</p>	
	<p>Living with Mother's Family</p> <p>Upon marriage, a woman remains in her mother's household. Her husband leaves his family to move in with her. As children are born, they are added to this unit. The</p>

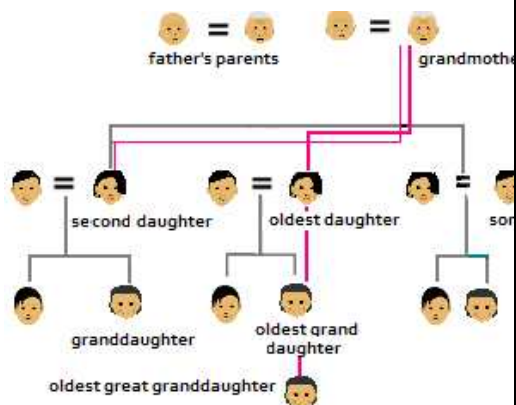
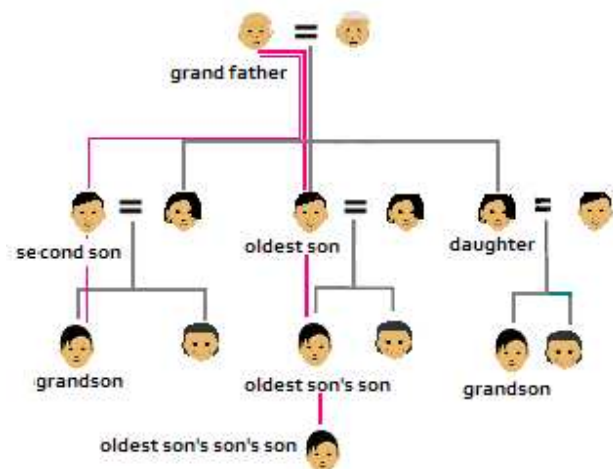
 <p>husband's parents</p> <p>wife's father</p> <p>wife's mother</p> <p>husband wife</p>	<p>result is an extended family in which three or more generations of related women live together. A simpler pattern is that a husband must move to his wife's residence. This simpler pattern does not involve all the children having to stay there too.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Living with Mother</p> <p>This family consists of a woman and her children and sometimes her daughter's children, living together without husbands or other adult men. Boys will live with their mothers and grandmothers till they can move out on their own. This pattern usually results from economic conditions in which a man is unable to support a family. Many black families in the United States are like this. The fathers leave the family or are in jail. In Africa, many men move to cities to work and leave the woman in the village living together with their children and grandmothers.</p>	 <p>husband's parents</p> <p>wife's mother</p> <p>husband</p> <p>wife</p> <p>son</p> <p>daughters</p> <p>daughter's daughters</p> <p>son</p>
 <p>husband's parents</p> <p>wife's father</p> <p>wife's mother</p> <p>husband wife</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">An Either or Family</p> <p>In this pattern a married couple decides whether they want to live with either the husband's or wife's father or mother. They then move in with the set of parents they have chosen to live with.</p>

<p>Staying where you were born families</p> <p>This is an odd family because the wife remains with her own family and the husband with his own family. The children will live with either family.</p>	
<p>A moving family</p> <p>In this type of family unit, the family moves once. The family begins with a married woman living in her husband's household. Their children are raised here. But when the children reach maturity, the men must relocate to their mother's brother's household. The family then consists of one or more elder men, their sister's sons, and the wives and immature children of all the married men.</p>	

There are also different patterns of who will inherit property and authority in a family. This is decided in three different ways.

<p>Father's descent system</p> <p>The oldest sons inherit much of the property and possessions of their fathers. They also inherit the authority of their father. Other son's will inherit much smaller portions and no authority in the family. Sixty percent (60%) of descent systems are</p>	
--	--

father descent systems.

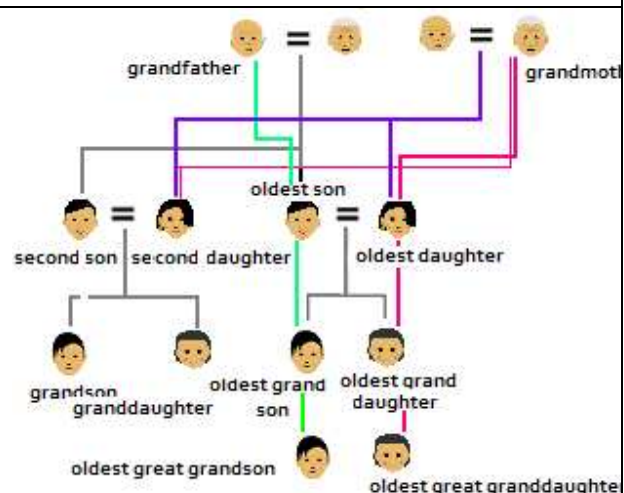


Mother's descent system

In this pattern, the oldest daughter inherits all the authority in the family and many of the possessions and properties. Thirty percent of descent systems are mother descent systems.

Father and Mother systems

This is a complicated system in which some things are passed down to the oldest daughter and some things are passed down to the oldest son. People of European ancestry are more familiar with Father/Mother system. Only ten percent (10%) of descent groups use both mother and father descent systems.



In many countries now, children are being raised by their grandparents. Sometimes both parents are away working somewhere else. But this is more often because of disease. Both parents have died. In Africa there are many families where children are looking after themselves because all the adults have died. The older folks have died of old age and the parents have died of AIDS.

Most large cities of the world have many street children living in them. These are children who have lost their parents or who have run away from home. Some twelve year old children (or younger) have babies. These babies grow up on the street as their mothers or fathers did. Some cities now have five generations of people who live in the sewers and other places, out of sight, in the city. These street children have developed their own way of talking. They are not educated. Many of them know nothing of what others in the city call 'civilization'. They live by stealing and offering sex for payment to others in the city. In some cities the police are organized to kill these children, as they treated as pests. I have friends whose companies have sent them to these cities to find these street children and help them find better lives.

In the West, there are a growing number of children who live with two men or with two women. In these countries, people are seeking to change the definition of a family from a father, mother and children to any kind of a grouping of adults and children.

There is another important family tradition common in South America. It is a system called the 'God-parent' System. When a child is born, his or her parents choose a god-father and a god-mother for the child. These are people who are not related to the family. They usually come from a more wealthy section of the community than the family. The god-parents take responsibility for providing many things for the child. If the parents die, the god-parents take the child into their families. When the child is in need of help--for example, the child needs money to go to school--the god-parents will help. This really began in the Catholic Church where the idea was that the god-parents would pray for the child and provide spiritual counsel. But now it includes help with money and other social activities.

"How will this God-parenting idea affect us when we try to do what our network has asked us to do?" asked Minzhe.

"Missionaries learned something in South America. When they talked to a person, if the person accepted what they had to say, the person usually talked to his godparents about it. Acceptance lines ran through godparents, where change occurred. This linked various levels of society and went past obstacles in birth families."

"This is so interesting," said Huizhong, as she looked at the charts once more. "I surely will not remember all of this, though."

"No you will not remember all the details," smiled Teacher Rifeng. "And you do not need to remember it all. Just remember that there are various ways of telling who is who in a family. And remember that you should know who is most important and who can influence the rest of the family. It is good to know who the person is in the family and who makes the decisions. Who is it that has all the authority in the family? If you want new ideas to spread in the family, you must convince this person. It may be a grandmother or a grandfather. Sometimes it is the mother's oldest brother or the father's oldest brother who must be convinced. Keep this in mind when you go to the people group you are to work among. Learn what their family group is like and it will really help you.

Next time we talk, I think we will talk about who may marry who in various people groups."

"I think that will be interesting," said Huizhong. "I have never thought that were other combinations of getting married than what I know."

Something to do:

First, draw a chart of your family. Put yourself in the middle and then under each person write the term that you use when you talk about that person.

Now choose another one of the charts that was presented and write what you would call each of the members of your family if you were part of that group.

Second, talk about what it would be like to live in a family that had to live in a different way than your family does. What if your children called a great number of people brother and sister or mother and father?

Finally, talk about why it is important to know what terms people use to talk about each other in the family.

Chapter Seven: Whom May I Marry?

"Do you remember our wedding?" Huizhong asked her husband as they walked to their next session with Teacher Rifeng.

"Yes, I do. My parents were very busy. I am glad we did not have to follow all the traditions. You know the three letters and the six etiquettes," said Minzhe.

"Bamboo door is to bamboo door and wooden door is to wooden door." murmured Huizhong.

"What did you say?" asked Minzhe.

"Oh, let's hurry so we that can hear what Teacher has to say about marriages today," said Huizhong, ignoring her husband's question. "I wonder if there will be more charts."

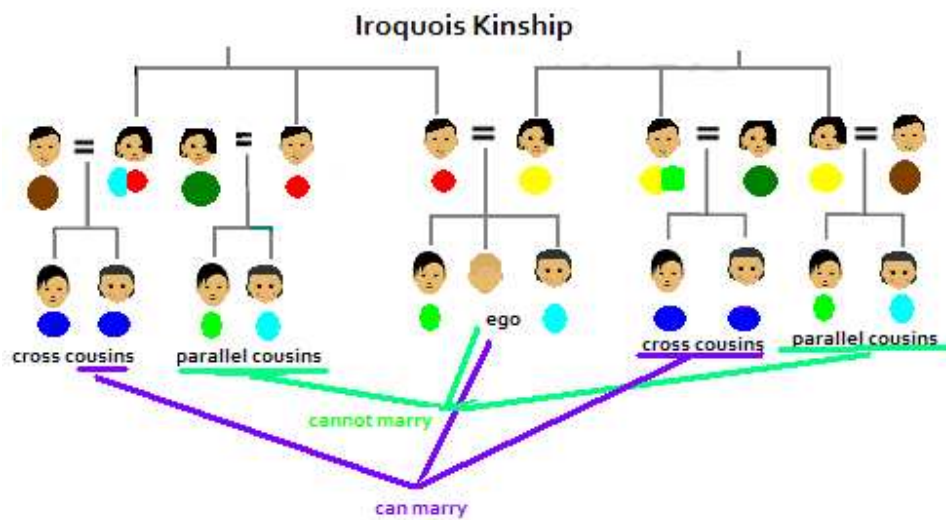
When they entered the Teacher's studio, sure enough, there were many more charts. As Huizhong looked at them, she saw that they were about who married whom. "The first chart shows just one husband and one wife," she observed.



"Yes, that is correct," said the Teacher Rifeng. "But it is not always as simple as that. Depending on the people group, there are strict rules as to which man may marry which woman.

First, there is a rule against brothers and sisters marrying each other, found almost everywhere in the world. This rule was broken by the Egyptian kings, Hawaiian kings, and a few other very important people. The Egyptians believed their kings were gods. No one but their sisters could touch them. So they married their sisters. Marrying brothers and sisters is looked at as wrong in many cultures. This has been a rule throughout history. Remember that we studied that in some patterns of relatives' names many people are called brother and sister. The rule of not marrying brother and sister applies in these patterns also.

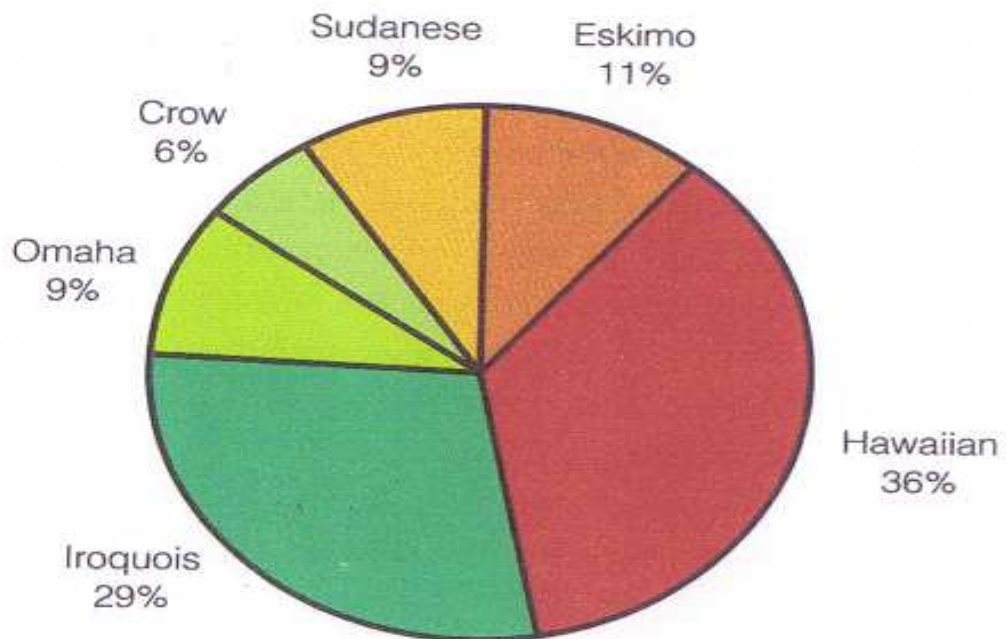
Secondly, many cultures forbid cousins marrying. Some of the family arrangements we studied last week make marriage very complicated. One example is the Iroquois System. There is a rule that mother's brothers' children cannot marry father's sisters' children. Father's brothers' children may marry mother's brothers' children.



Do you remember the kinds of family groups we talked about last time?" Teacher Rifeng asked.

"Oh, no!" exclaimed Huizhong. "I do not remember them. I just remember that there are different ways that families use to identify each other."

"That is what I said," Rifeng answered. "Here is a chart that shows how many of the world's families belong in each



group.

The Iroquois, the Omaha system, and the Crow system all have cross cousins and parallel cousins. In these systems the rules apply that cross cousins may marry and parallel cousins may not. From the chart you will see that about a third of the world's families may marry cross cousins.

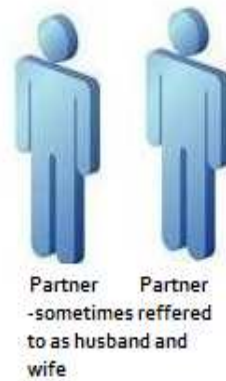
Some cultures require that a person marry another person from the same level of society or the same close by ethnic group or family. Other cultures require that a partner be found outside the village from a close-by family group. Partners will be of the same people group but they will have lived far away.

There are many ways of choosing marriage partners. In India, children may be married when they are very, very young. Sometimes marriage partners are chosen before birth. In other cultures, like the Japanese or Jewish cultures, there is an elaborate system of search for a suitable marriage partner. There are people in these cultures whose job it is to find suitable marriage partners for families. In Japan, long histories of the family will be given to this person. Pictures of the young person to be married will be included. There will be a detailed description of the person's likes, dislikes, skills, temperament and abilities. The match-maker will study this. Father's, mother's and grandparents' histories will be studied also. They will try to match partners from the long lists of young people about whom they know.

I was friends with a lady who did this as her full time job. She worked for the company I worked for. When she found what she thought was a good match, she would call a very formal meeting. The parents of the young people, the young people and a representative--who would speak for each family--were present. The young couple would not talk to each other at this first meeting. There would be other meetings later. The young people could decide if they were interested in the matchmaker's choice for them. If they said 'no', the matchmaker would begin again. Usually they could say 'no' only three, maybe four, times. Then they would have to take the match chosen by the matchmaker. This lady was in charge of all the arrangements. The gifts that would be given to the family of the bride, what the bride's parents gave to the groom's parents; all of this was decided through the matchmaker. She had a great responsibility. She was even responsible if for some reason the marriage ended in divorce. She might have to pay the families for her 'mistake'.

Many young people in Japan are making their own decisions these days without a matchmaker. Other people groups have less complicated matchmaking.

In a few countries around the world, laws are being made so that two men may marry or two women may marry. These marriages are also just between two people.



"What do you mean? Laws are being changed?" asked Minzhe, rather surprised

"In many countries of the world there are laws written by the government about who may marry whom. In some countries, the people of the country are trying to force the government to change governmental laws about who may marry. In many Western nations there is pressure on the governments to change existing marriage laws.

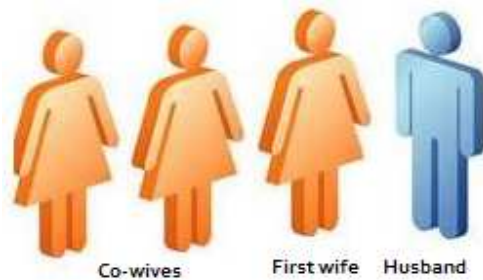
Tribal people groups often do not have written laws. They may not know laws of the countries they live in because some tribes do not understand or accept the boundaries made by governments. These tribes follow their own tribal customs when it comes to marriage.

In some countries laws are not written by the government, but by the religious authorities. This often happens in Muslim countries. Sometimes religious ceremonies include the signing of the government papers. This happens in many Western countries.

When property is passed through the women of the family, there are sometimes cases where a woman will marry another woman and call her the husband. This is done so that

property will stay with one of the women. Both women will have children with other men but only the daughters will inherit. Some African tribes do this.

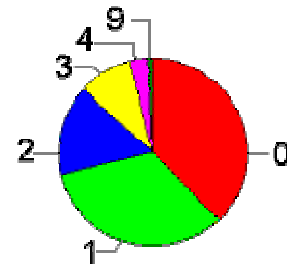
"I see some charts here of other kinds of marriage," said Huizhong. "What are they?"



"Well, there is marriage where one man has more than one wife or one wife has more than one husband," answered the Teacher. These kinds of marriages are common in Africa and parts of Asia. In these arrangements the first wife usually holds a great deal of authority. She sometimes encourages her husband to marry another woman so she does not carry the burden of looking after the household by herself. Each new wife is under the authority of the preceding wife. This can lead to much fighting and frustration.

Sometimes these multiple partner marriages are encouraged by the religious ideas of the society. Muslim men may have four wives. Some groups of believers in the Mormon religion have many wives and many children.

"I think I knew about one man having more than one wife but I do not know about one wife having more than one husband," said Minzhe.



"This chart shows how many wives men have in the Dani tribe. Almost one third of the men are not married. A little more than one quarter have one wife. Some have nine wives.

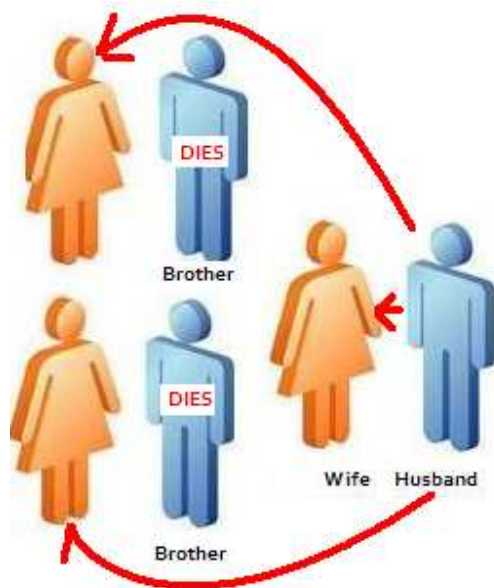
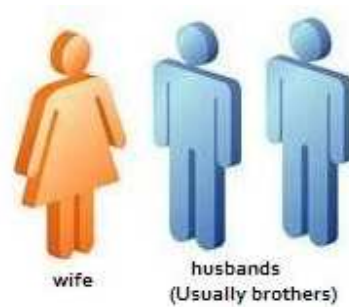
Many times multiple marriage partners are a way of showing who is important. A man who has many wives and a large number of children also has wealth because he has many people working for him in his family. Common people could not afford these arrangements so it was often the men of higher class who had many wives.

This kind of marriage does not happen in countries where it is very expensive to raise a child."

"This happens in Tibet, some parts of China and in Nepal. Some people think this was done in land owning families in order to keep the land in one family," said Teacher Rifeng.

"Partners in this type of relationship often change and people living in the same house

may not necessarily be related to each other by blood. Combinations of brothers and sisters and children are constantly in change.



Another kind of marriage was practiced in Bible times. If a brother died, a man would marry his brother's wife so that his brother would have children to follow him. This had to do with property rights also. The children of the brother's wife would inherit their father's lands. The man who married his brother's wife would not inherit the land.

Another custom in many countries is for a man to have an official wife and then have other women whom he looks after but who are not considered his family. These other women may have children but these children will not inherit as they are not part of the official family. This is often a very unhappy situation for the child.

"What about men buying a wife?" asked Minzhe. "You told us the story about the man who bought a wife for seven cows. Are wives bought in many cultures?"

When a couple marries, there is usually an exchange of money, property, or goods that takes place. There are several ways of doing this. One of these exchanges is when the groom or his family gives money, goods, or property to the parents of the bride. Sometimes it is explained that the groom's family is paying the bride's family because they will lose her help in her family. The price makes up for the loss of her usefulness to her family. Another form of payment is brought by the bride to the groom to help them establish their new home. Still another form gives the bride property of her own from her husband so that she can take care for herself if he dies.

In some cultures the bride and groom write a contract which they sign at their wedding. The contract spells out who is responsible for what in the family. It also says how things will be divided in case of divorce. In the Jewish culture a contract is signed which says how much the groom will give the bride in case of divorce or how much his estate will pay her in case of his death.

In Islamic marriage laws, it is mandatory for the groom to provide for the bride in case of divorce. He either pays her at the marriage ceremony or declares how much he will pay in case of divorce."

"Do all divorces happen in the same way?" asked Huizhong.

"Couples break apart everywhere, but they do it in different ways. In some countries, one must go to court to obtain a divorce. Sometimes there are long battles in the law courts. Properties and money are fought over before judges. This is in countries where the government conducts marriage ceremonies. Such ceremonies are often very simple procedures of signing papers before an official who has the right to proclaim who is married. Since the government allows the marriage, the government also decides the divorce. Properties, children, taxes, and other things are involved in a couple's lives. The government has an interest in these things.

In other cultures marriage is purely a religious or economic thing. And therefore divorce is, also. In some places a man simply needs to say several times, 'I divorce you, I divorce you', and the couple are separated. This is very hard on women. They do not have the rights that men have. When they are divorced they lose everything. It also may be impossible to remarry.

There are cultures where couples marry and are together for a longer or shorter time, then divorce, and marry someone else. In America some famous movie stars have been divorced nine

or ten times. Some call this 'serial polygamy'. I have even met a couple who were married, then divorced, and then remarried. I met this couple on their second 'honeymoon'.

"A honeymoon!" exclaimed Minzhe, "what is a honeymoon?"

"Couples go away and spend time alone after the wedding ceremony. This could be in a resort somewhere nearby or a much farther place. Sometimes it is just a week-end away and sometime it is a month or longer. This depends on how wealthy the couple is. The place they are going is usually kept a secret so that other people will not bother them.

In some cultures, wedding celebrations last for a number of days, a week, or even ten days. Sometimes the bride and groom attend the whole celebration. Sometimes they are in a special place where they are alone, while friends have a party. They come back at the end of the party to have a final banquet with friends. In some cultures or in some wealthy or noble levels of society, proof must be given that the bride and groom have actually had sexual relations."

"Talking about marriage customs is very interesting to me," Huizhong said. "But what would marriage customs have to do with us? Would they make a difference to how people hear what we have to tell them?"

"Like much else, the customs about getting married have their roots in the fourth layer of culture," answered Rifeng. "What people believe about who they are and how they came to be on earth influence their thoughts about marriage. These ideas influence what they value in marriage. People who divorce very easily do not usually have a view that they were made by God and that they are responsible to Him. The ceremony of marriage is part of the second layer of culture. The objects, songs, dances, and other things you see, hear and taste are part of that first layer of culture. So if your inner layer of culture is different from the people you are talking to, you will not understand marriage in the same way. If you believe that men and women were made by God and are equal, it would be very hard to accept how women are treated in a culture that believes cows are better than women.

In some cultures, a married woman may not talk to a strange man, or even a neighbour man. Muslim women are kept out of sight. Muslim cities are built so that you cannot see into homes. Women can be very private there. A married man would not listen to a woman at all in some cultures. So in some places you, Huizhong, would only be able to speak to women. You, Minzhe, would only be able to speak to men. First wives will rule the other wives in some places so it would be very hard to have contact with the lower wives. In other places the husband's mother would rule the wife, so it would be very hard to talk to her. There are places where women and men gather at times and it would be good to find these places so you could make contact with them. But you must be very careful to know the rules about who can talk to whose wife or husband.

"Will we talk about these things too?" asked Minzhe.

"Yes. The next time we talk it will be about how men and women relate to each other in different cultures." said Teacher Rifeng.

Key ideas to discuss from this story.

In groups of three, list as many of the customs about who can marry whom as you can remember.

Check up

Did you talk about these points?

1. Brothers and sisters cannot marry in most cultures. Are there exceptions?
2. Most cultures do not allow cousins to marry. But there is an exception in at least three family groupings. Did you remember that cross cousins can marry but parallel cousins cannot? Mother's brothers' children cannot marry Father's sisters' children. Mother's sisters' children can marry Father's brothers' children.
3. Some must marry from within the village or from close by. Others must find a spouse from much farther away but in the same large family group.
4. Four types of marriage groupings were mentioned:
 - a. one man and one woman;
 - b. one man and several women;
 - c. one woman and several men (usually brothers);
 - d. one man and his brothers' wives, if the brothers have died.
5. Both governments and religious organizations make rules about who may marry whom.
6. Marriage is a matter of:
 - a. property rights,
 - b. economic security,
 - c. who may talk to whom,
 - d. who may marry whom.

Chapter Eight – How cultures see men and women differently

“Tell me how you think men and women are different,” Huizhong asked Minzhe as they shut the door of their house. They were leaving for another visit with Teacher Rifeng.

“I think I know how we are different,” Minzhe answered strongly. “I cannot believe that other people would think any differently. It is clear to me how men are different from women.”

“Yes, but I wonder what the Teacher has to say about this topic. We may get some surprises,” Huizhong said as she followed her husband into the Teacher’s house.



She did not know how much they were about to be surprised.

Teacher Rifeng met them at the door. He stopped Minzhe from entering and said. “Minzhe, let your wife come in first!”

“What?! Wives do not walk in front of their husbands,” Minzhe burst out in surprise, forgetting that it was his Teacher who had asked him to step back.

“You are correct, in our culture. But in some cultures men let their wives precede them into all rooms. When they come to a door, the man opens it and steps back to let his wife go in first. In fact, any man steps back to let any woman enter first, while he holds the door for her.



Husbands and wives walk side by side in many places. They even hold hands in public as they walk,” Teacher Rifeng said, smiling at Minzhe.



Minzhe was looking very startled and almost angry. But he stood back and let his wife enter the house first. Huizhong blushed, admitting that she felt a bit strange going ahead of him.

Huizhong asked, “How does the behaviour of opening doors for women--the visible part of culture--depend on the values of the culture, the third layer of culture? Also, I remember that values come from the fourth or inner layer. The fourth layer is the layer where ideas about where we came from are found. What does opening doors for women have to do with the fourth layer of culture?”

“Very good! As we talk I think you will find the answers to your questions,” said Teacher Rifeng. “When you work in another culture, it is important to know how the people of that culture think about the differences between men and women. You need to know the values and beliefs about this issue. Some very bad mistakes could be made if you act toward the opposite sex as you do at home.

Today I want you to think about three things: First, the way people of different cultures see men and women. I do not mean just how men and women appear physically to their eyes. What do people in other cultures think about male and female emotions and abilities?

Second, what are the differences in how maleness and femaleness are valued in different cultures?

Third, how men and women are expected to act in different cultures.

Huizhong, will you repeat the three ideas for me please?” asked Teacher Rifeng.

“Today we will think about how males and females are viewed, how they are evaluated, and how they are expected to act in different cultures,” Huizhong answered.

“Excellent,” said the Teacher. “As you said, Huizhong, different values are given to men than to women. Men are expected to act differently than women; women are expected to act differently than men. Women and men are treated very differently in many ways. There are different expectations, roles, and different rules and laws for men and for women. Clothing, speech patterns, movement, occupations, and even pastimes are different, according to how men and women are viewed.

Of course there are physical differences between men and women. The fact that women bear children and men do not is a major difference. Women are physically structured to bear children and look after babies until they can look after themselves. Men’s physical structure is different.

In hunting societies, with few exceptions, men are the hunters. Men are usually physically stronger than women. It is thought they can run faster and throw spears with more strength. Because of their shape, men can carry the animals they have killed more easily. Some feel that

men are stronger than women because boys are fed much better than girls in these cultures. Men eat before women. What is left is given to the women, and then to the girls, to eat. Girls often do not receive the best nutrition. It is saved for the men and boys. So, according to some, girls do not grow strong.

Everyone understands that men and women are different, physically. However, all throughout history--in almost every culture--there have been men who behaved like women and women who behaved like men. Cultures have either accepted this and celebrated it or rejected these people and made life very hard for them. Sometimes these people are seen as having special magical powers because they are acting both male and female roles. One culture that has accepted this is the Hindu culture. In Hindu stories, many gods have both male and female aspects. Sometimes they appear in male forms and sometimes in female forms. So the followers of these gods take on both characteristics. There are large groups of men who act as if they were both male and female. This also takes place in Buddhist cultures. In some countries now, men and women are having operations to change their physical bodies so men can look like women and women can look like men. These procedures have more to do with how the individuals feel about themselves, than about how society accepts them.

When you look at something, several things influence what you see. You see men and women physically and you see the differences. But the stories of how men and women came to be influence how you interpret what you see with your physical eyes. You hold ideas in your mind which lead to evaluations about what you are seeing physically. Your values influence how you behave toward men or women.

Reading what a Jewish man has written shows us how what is believed on the fourth level affects behaviour. He writes that a man must ask the woman to be his wife, and not the woman asking the man to be her husband. That is because it is man who lost one of his ribs, in the creation of woman. So the man seeks to regain his loss. This Jewish man is thinking of the story in the first book of the Torah, Genesis, of how man and woman began. Jews, Christians and Muslims all believe that God took one of Adam's—the first man—ribs, when he was asleep. From that rib, God made the first woman, Eve. So the behaviour of a man seeking a wife, not the other way round, comes from the fourth layer of Jewish culture.

Another thing the Jewish man writes is that women cover their hair because Eve brought sin into the world. Women try to hide their shame by wearing a covering on their head, especially when praying. Women walk in front of men in a funeral procession because it was woman who brought death into the world. Adam was the 'heave offering of the world', and Eve made him dirty. A 'heave offering' was a special part of the offering that was separated from other parts of the offerings. It was then lifted up toward heaven as a symbol that it was to be used in a special way. Jews believe the first man was to be someone with a very special relationship to God. But when Eve committed sin, she made man unfit to relate to God in a special way. Now, all women are commanded to separate a part of any dough they make as something special.

Because woman extinguished the light of man's soul, she is the one who must light the Sabbath candles. The Sabbath candles are two candles that are lit as the sun goes down to mark the beginning of the Jewish special day of worship each Saturday.

Aristotle--an ancient Greek philosopher--thought, women were 'deformed' men. In feudal Japan, women were barred from climbing Mount Fuji because they would pollute it. 'Unhappily married women' were expected to commit suicide. A Buddhist quote describes woman as the 'messenger of hell.'

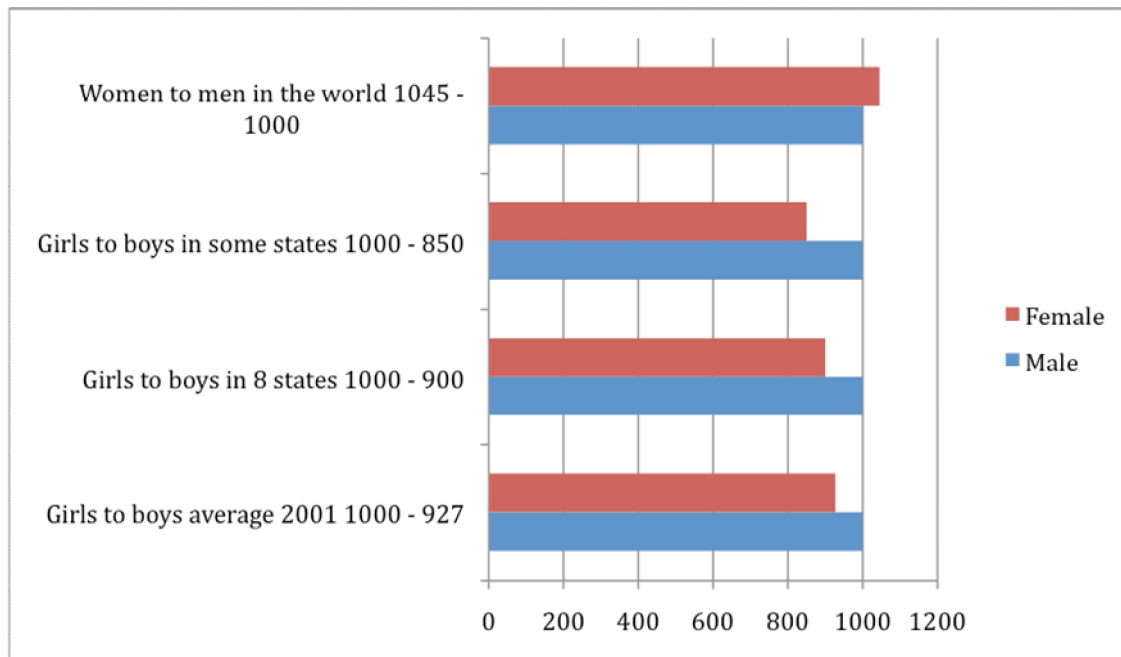
Many Asians believe in yin and yang. Yin is female, black, receptive, yielding, negative, and nurturing. Yin is associated with night, valleys, rivers, streams, water, metal, and earth. Yang is male, white, active, dominating, positive, and initiating/creating. Yang is associated with day, mountains, hills, fire, wood, and air.

Yin is usually characterized as slow, soft, insubstantial, diffuse, cold, wet, and tranquil. Yin is generally associated with the [feminine](#), birth and generation, and with the night. Yang, by contrast, is characterized as hard, fast, solid, dry, focused, hot, and aggressive. It is associated with masculinity and daytime.

Although Yin and Yang are different, they are supposed to be equals or rather parts of each other. Yet, in much popular thought, because Yin is darker and Yang is lighter, Yin is thought of as less positive than the Yang. Women are Yin, so are thought to be lesser.

The way males and females are viewed, evaluated, and expected to behave in a culture has very important practical results. For example, in India there were 927 girls to 1000 boys in the year 2001. In eight Indian states, there were 900 girls to 1000 boys in the 0-6 age group. In some districts of these states, there are only about 850 girls to 1000 boys. The world average is 1045 women to 1000 men. As you can see, India is far behind the world average.

Girls to Boys in India



Indian couples prefer baby boys to baby girls. There are many reasons for this. One of these reasons definitely comes from the fourth layer of the culture. In the Hindu religion, a son must light his father's funeral pyre in order for him to reach Nirvana. Having only girls in the family means the fathers are condemned to a lower caste in the next life. The idea that only boys can help their fathers this way is said to have come from the gods. Therefore people accept and follow it.

In one sacred Indian book, the role of women is said to be simply running the household, serving the husband, and bearing his sons. Therefore there is societal pressure for women to have male children. As a result, women are often considered failures after giving birth to a girl and tend to feel guilty. Women are considered to have less value when they do not give their husbands a son. They are at risk of being beaten and rejected by their husbands. Giving birth to a girl, first, can lead to rejection by in-laws and by the community as a whole. 'If you don't kill your girl baby, you are rejected by the community and/or by your in-laws,' said one teacher I knew.

Men are given great importance in Indian culture. They are very clearly the heads of the family. In many regions of rural India there is a strict social rule that says a daughter cannot inherit land. If she does so, the land is lost by her father's lineage. That is a great blow to the males of the family. Having only girl children is a disaster.

There are many differences in the way men and women are treated. These differences are clearly seen in the institutions of the second layer of culture. The values of the culture direct how

education, law, marriage, property owning, business, and many other systems run. How men and women are valued shapes how education, marriage laws, and business affect them.

Being male or female has legal significance in many countries. Most government and business documents require one to state whether one is male or female. Even in Christian countries women were not allowed to vote or sit in government until very recently. Again this may come from a controversial teaching in the Bible which says that a woman could not have authority over a man. God created man first. He is the authority. So it was felt women had no place in government where laws would be made governing men. This idea is changing.

Many laws provide differently for men than for women. Pension systems may have different retirement ages for men or women. Wages are often different for men and women. The kind of jobs men and women are allowed to do are often clearly different.

Another very important area when we talk about men and women is difficult to talk about. But it is a very important part of life. What is accepted as proper sexual relationships between men and women varies greatly in different cultures. In some cultures young people are encouraged to try sexual relationships with many partners as a way of preparing for marriage. In other cultures, relationships before marriage are strictly prohibited. This often applies much more to women than to men. An example of this is 'honour killing'.

A woman or a girl is killed for her actual or perceived immoral behaviour. 'Honour' killings are both decided and performed by the parents or relatives (usually the male relatives only). Such killings have been reported in Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Brazil, Britain, Ecuador, Egypt, France, India, Iran, Iraq, Israel, Italy, Jordan, Morocco, Pakistan, the Palestinian Territories, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, Canada, and Uganda. If stoning is the penalty, it is the state that carries out the penalty. If a man and woman are caught together they may be stoned together in some countries. But more often men are allowed to have encounters with women and nothing is done. Men are not subjected to 'honour killings'. There is a saying in one culture that men are diamonds and women are cotton cloths. If a man falls in the mud he can be cleaned off like a diamond. If a woman falls in the mud, she will remain stained forever.

In some countries men think having sex with little virgins will cure HIV/Aids. This most often leads to the death of very young girls or even girl babies.

Around the world, men pay a great deal of money to be the first to have relations with little girls. I know of a country where large companies take their male employees to another country for a 'sex vacation'. This sexual abuse of girl children can be fatal. Poor families often sell daughters to be used in this way. The family is poor. Girls are not valued highly. They take up food and cannot work as hard as boys. So girls can be sold as sex slaves.

During war time, rape is used as a weapon of war. It is a way of humiliating the enemy. This has happened in countries in Eastern Europe recently between Muslims and so-called Christians. Rape was a major method of humiliation used in the genocide in Rwanda, Africa. There the Hutu people butchered the Tutsi people group. There were some strange values that led to this. First, the Tutsi had been the royalty and aristocracy under colonial rule. Hutu remembered this. The Tutsi thought of themselves as 'above' the Hutu according to Hutu thought. Second, Tutsi women carried about them something of a sexual mystery. Tutsi women were considered to be more beautiful than Hutu women. There was even said to be something about the sexual abilities of Tutsi women. It not only set them apart from Hutu women, but made them inaccessible to the ordinary Hutu male. Tutsi women were said to think of themselves as too good for Hutu men. So, not only was Hutu ethnicity degraded, but Hutu masculinity was insulted as well. Evil men played on these feelings. Hutu young men then did horrible things to Tutsi women during the war.

Men may fight the battles, but women—because they are key to the survival of an ethnic group—are always targets in a campaign of genocide. Destroy the women and you destroy the race or ethnicity.

Recently supporters of a notorious African dictator helped keep their leader's party from electoral defeat by embarking on a 'systematic and widespread' campaign of sexual violence against women affiliated with the leading opposition party. There are harrowing accounts from women who were kept as sex slaves for days or weeks at a time, subjected to beatings that left them permanently disfigured. They were forced to watch as their family members were being tortured or even killed. Ten of the women interviewed have become pregnant as a result of the attacks, and many have become infected with HIV.

Another issue facing women in many countries is female genital mutilation and early marriage. Female genital mutilation causes many problems in childbirth, if the girl does not bleed to death as a result of the mutilation. Many girls also get horrible infections which cause trouble in child birth. The consequences of exceedingly young childbearing also often result in medical complications, leading to the early deaths of girl brides. These issues are being challenged in many parts of the world. These challenges cause much anger and debate.

There are many cultures where men believe that contact with women makes them impure. This is especially thought to be so when a woman is menstruating. Women will be put in special tents or huts that are burned after they are used. Anything the woman may have touched must be ceremonially cleansed. A man who touches a woman must also undergo purification ceremonies.

Another difference in the way men and women are treated shows up in health care. There is a great difference between countries where men and women are both given rights, and countries where they are not. These differences are also divided between wealthy countries and poorer countries. In the poorer countries, women are 80 to 600 times more likely to die in child birth than in the wealthier countries.

HIV/AIDS is a very difficult issue. Women are susceptible to AIDS in many countries where the men work in the cities leaving the women and children behind in the villages. The men have sex with prostitutes in the cities. They contract HIV/AIDS. When they go home for visits they infect their wives. Nearly half the population of adults have died in some African countries because of HIV/AIDS.

Let's not talk about those difficult things anymore. There is another interesting point about the differences between how men and woman are viewed. That is the use of language. Sometimes there are almost two languages, one for men and one for women. Women are taught to use their voices differently than men in many cultures. They must speak more softly and use words that are not as strong as men use. Women will describe events and people in much different terms than men will. Women would not be allowed to say certain things in men's presence.

In many societies there are places where only men can gather and places where only women can gather. In Greece, women who are widowed are allowed into some places where men gather because it is believed they have lost evil influences with the death of their husband. Muslim cities and homes are built so that women can be hidden from sight from the street.

Women are uneducated in many parts of the world. Two thirds of people in the world who cannot read are females. Studies done in many places tell us if a mother cannot read, her children - both male and female - probably will not read either. A great issue for women who cannot read is that they cannot find good jobs.

Women are kept out of good paying jobs in many places by prejudice. Sixty five percent of people living in poverty are women, and that number increases every year. These women cannot get loans of money to start business that could provide for them and their families. In 1980, the United Nations summed up the burden of this inequality: women, who comprise half the world's population, do two thirds of the world's work, earn one tenth of the world's income and own one one-hundredth of the world's property.

Some women cannot work because it takes all day just to do the necessities for living. My friend just told me this story from Africa.

At 6:00 a.m. today, as on every other morning in Darfur, Zakiya Gibril Adam and 200 other women start walking. They leave as the sun creeps above the tattered plastic sheets and thatched roofs of their refugee camp, which stretches as far as the eye can see.

All the firewood around the Kalma refugee camp, 15km east of Nyal--the capital of South Darfur--has been gathered long ago. Now the women have to walk for five hours to find more.

As the women walk, their eyes scan the horizon, searching for signs of the Janjaweed - militiamen on horseback, armed and supported by the Sudanese government. These are the men who drove the inhabitants of Kalma from their villages. They raped and killed anything that moved. The militiamen now live in villages seized from the refugees at Kalma.

Many of the women who walk with Zakiya have been raped while collecting firewood. They return bloodied, bruised and ashamed, often to be shunned by their husbands. Most men don't dare leave the camp. Some dare to go to nearby markets, but many have been killed. Yet the women keep rising at 6am, and keep walking for 10 hours a day to find the firewood that their families need to survive.



I started our visit today by pointing out behaviour. You are correct, Huizhong. That is the first layer of culture, the behaviours we can see. Allowing a woman to enter the room first is behaviour. This behaviour comes from how women are valued in that culture. The value comes from the explanation of how men and woman came to be. That is the fourth layer of culture. So, why do you think men would let women go ahead of them or walk beside them?"

"I am sure I do not know!" said Minzhe emphatically. "But it probably has something to do with values. Those values probably come from the fourth layer, from the stories about how men and women came to be."

"You are correct," Teacher Rifeng said. "Christians believe Jesus was God but was also man and born of a woman. Jesus Christ treated His mother with great respect. He also treated all women with great respect. He honoured women in many ways that the Jewish culture around Him did not. He let a woman wash His feet with her hair. Women were not allowed to touch a man not related to them. A woman was the first person to see him after his resurrection. He

asked the woman to deliver the message of His resurrection to His disciples. The testimony of a woman was not valued in that culture. But Jesus delivered that most important testimony of resurrection to a woman. He let Mary sit at His feet when He was teaching. The Pharisees thought woman could not learn anything so women were not taught in Jesus' culture.

The Apostle Paul wrote that the barrier between men and woman was broken down when Jesus died. According to the book of Acts, the Holy Spirit fell on both men and women. Both men and women testified to God's glory at that time. These religious ideas influence how Christian men treat women. Many Westerners who are not committed Christians do not know that their behaviour is influenced by the deeper layers of their culture. They do not know that the deepest layers of their culture are still influenced by what is written in the Bible. In cultures where the fourth layer is influenced by Christian thinking, men usually let woman go ahead of them as a sign of respect. That respect comes from teaching in the Bible.

It is interesting that some women want to change the customs that grew out of the stories found in the fourth layers of their cultures. They say they want to be treated the same way as men. They feel that it is not a respectful thing when men open the door for them. They want to open doors for themselves, like men do. There are many other things these women want to change too. Most of the leaders of this movement in Western countries reject the Christian God and look to goddesses as their pattern for living. They feel that all life came from a goddess. Some feel that a father god who would kill his son, Jesus, cannot be a god who should be worshipped. There are many changes happening in the world in relation to how men and women are viewed. The changes are happening in Muslim, Hindu and Buddhist cultures also. Women are rebelling against the old religious stories buried in the fourth layers of their cultures.

"This is all very new and disturbing to me," said Huizhong. "How should we act in the country where our network is sending us, I wonder?"

"That is a great question, Huizhong," answered Teacher Rifeng. "The best thing you can do is to prepare yourself by finding out what the ideas are about men and women in the country to which you are going. You must learn to be wise in how you relate to men and to women. The message that you bring to the country you are going to must be presented carefully but clearly. This barrier between men and women is one of the deepest and strongest of all cultural barriers. I

have just read that Muslim Jihadists are most angry about the Western view of women. These men do not want to see change in the traditional religious interpretations of relationship between men and woman. No true progress can happen in changing a culture until men and women understand who they are and how they are to relate. Educational opportunities, business opportunities, health opportunities, family happiness all depend on how the issue of the difference between men and women are settled.

“I really had not thought about how many ways men and women are treated differently, Minzhe said thoughtfully. “ I am glad you told us all this. Thank you,”

“Next time you come we will talk about how people make a living,” said Teacher Rifeng. “Don’t forget to let Huizhong go out the door before you do.

Key ideas to discuss from this story

In groups of three, tell each other the three things to think about when you discuss the differences between men and women.

Check up

Did you talk about these three things?

1. The way people of different cultures see men and women. We do not mean just how men and women appear physically to their eyes. How are male and female emotions and abilities viewed in different cultures?
2. What the differences are in how maleness and femaleness are valued in different cultures.
3. How men and women are expected to act in different cultures.

Key ideas to discuss from this story

In groups of three, talk about the ways in which men and women are treated differently. Have you seen some of these things happen?

Check up

Did you talk about these points?

1. Education and job creation, effects on children
2. Health issues
3. Sexual issues
4. Attitudes toward women, coming from the deeper layers of culture

Chapter Nine: How do People Around the World Make a Living?

“Was it interesting for you to learn how people in various cultures treat men and women differently?” asked Huizhong, as she and her husband walked to Teacher Rifeng’s house.

“It was,” Minzhe agreed. “But it is hard to practice different ways of doing things when we are still at home. People watching us would not understand what we are doing. You won’t try to hold my hand while we are walking, will you?”

“No, I won’t try,” Huizhong giggled. “It is going to be interesting to learn how those differences affect men and women in the way they make a living for their families. I wonder how many ways of making a living there are in the world. I think this lesson will be interesting.”

Soon they were in their chairs at the teacher’s home. Teacher Rifeng began by asking Minzhe and his wife if they could list some ways that people make a living.

“There are farmers and there are people who work in factories,” Huizhong began.

“Some people raise animals. I have heard of yak herders,” said Minzhe.

“Excellent, you have named three of the five main ways of earning a living found in the world,” said Teacher Rifeng.

“Some people groups make a living by collecting food. They search for plants they can eat, or they hunt for animals, or go fishing. That is the first way of making a living. We call these people groups ‘hunter/gatherers’.

Then there are cultures that grow plants for food using very simple tools. They have only small plots of land because they do the digging, planting, weeding, and harvesting using only their own strength. They use only very simple tools like digging sticks.



Other people groups look after animals. They may herd sheep, goats, cows, pigs or even camels. These people make use of all of the animal, not just the meat. Milk is for drinking or making cheese and butter. Sometimes even for bathing in. Skins and hair or wool are for clothes and shelters. Bones are for needles and other instruments. Guts can be used to make strings on musical instruments. Manure is used for fires.



Then there are people groups who use animals or machines to dig up the land, to plant the seed, and to harvest the crops. Animals could be horses, donkeys or oxen. Others use big tractors and reapers. Western farmers have huge tractors and pull very large cultivators and seeders behind the tractors. The cabins on the tractors are air-conditioned and have TV's and computers in them. Some farmers in the West now use signals from satellites in order to plow straight lines in their fields or to harvest in straight rows. The fields are kilometres

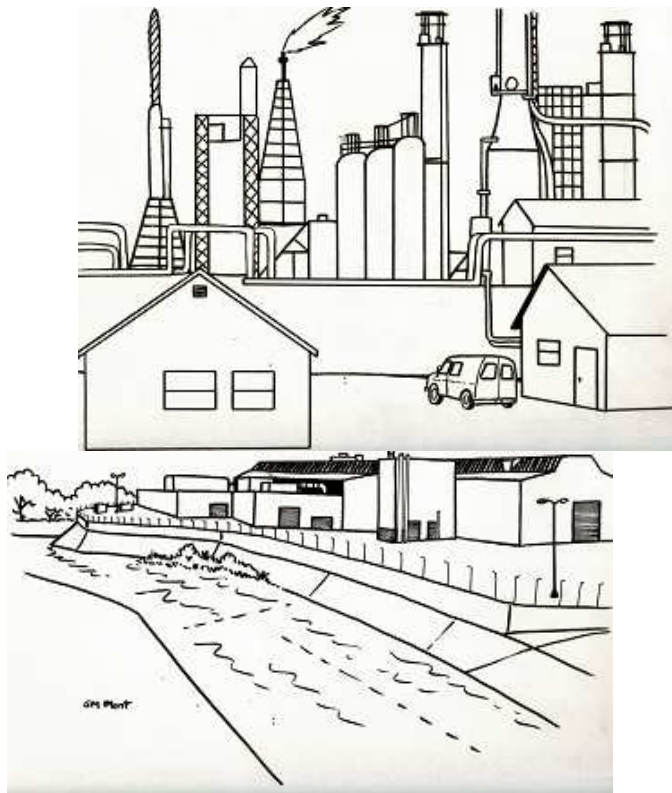


long.

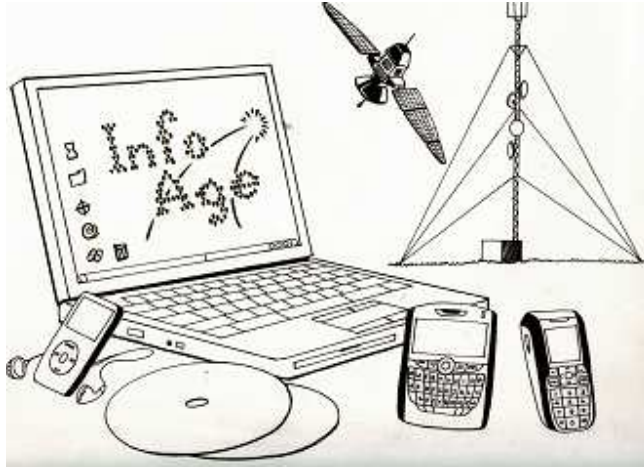


The last of the five ways of making a living is the use of complex machines to make things in factories. People agree to give so much time each day to work in these factories in return for money. The owners of the factories sell the things made there to pay the workers. Factory workers do not have time to hunt for food or to grow it, so they buy their food. The food they buy comes from the farmers who use big machines on large pieces of land. That food has been

prepared in big machines in big factories. Fruit and vegetables are canned or frozen in huge factories. Bread is made in huge bakeries. Milk is gathered in large trucks from dairies that have many cows. It is taken to large facilities where it is bottled or put in boxes. Other workers make the machinery that the farmers use to grow the food.



There is a new way of making a living that is sweeping the world. It is a sixth way that is beginning to be understood as a way people make a living. Many people in the world are now busy providing others with the information they need to make their livings. How do you know what is the best wheat to grow where you are? How do you take care of animals? What kinds of sicknesses do animals get and what will make them well? How do you build a factory to make cars? Where can we find the iron ore we need for our factory? What is the price of oil today? Who has money to help build the factory? People all around the world are looking for information. So with computers, CD's, I'pods, and who knows what else, people are passing information on to others."



“It is amazing that there are so many ways to make a living,” commented Huizhong. “I suppose that in each way of making a living there are variations of that system.”

“Yes, there are,” said Teacher Rifeng. “Let’s go over the systems again and talk about a few more details in each system. How many people can live together in each system? Who owns what?”

We should talk about food gatherers and hunters first.

There are very few people in the groups that collect food. It would be very hard to collect enough food for a large number of people. There are only a certain number of animals living in one place to be hunted. There are only a certain number of trees with the kind of fruit or nuts people use. Gatherers usually move around a lot. They must follow the animals they hunt. Fish move in lakes and rivers at different times, in different places. Fruit and vegetables ripen in different places at different times.

A ‘gathering/hunting’ group is made up of very close family members. Sometimes a few families that are related work together if there is a lot of food that can be gathered. People change groups often. Instead of fighting over problems, people will make their own group or join another group. No one owns things. Almost everything is shared. A hunter may have his own bow and arrows or spear for fish but that will be about all he owns. Women may own a few baskets in which to gather fruit or nuts. There is little or no trading done with other groups.

Everyone is involved in gathering. Hunting and fishing is usually done by the men. Dividing the meat is done by an elder and everyone gets a part. The man who made the kill may get the best part. Women then prepare the meat. While the men are hunting, women and children are usually gathering plants. Even in hunting groups, much of the food comes from plants which the women gather.

These people depend on the weather. If there is no rain, they will have no food. Hunters depend on the health of the animals they hunt. Again, if there is no rain the animals have nothing to eat and die. Then there is nothing to hunt.

This way of making a living is now usually found in the least useful areas of the world like the deserts or the cold areas of the north.

“How would we talk with groups that are always hunting or searching for food? They would be always moving around?” asked Minzhe.

“That is a real challenge,” said the Teacher. “Many of these groups are the last groups in the world to be reached by outsiders who wish to present new ideas.

The second group we talked about are the simple farmers who just use their own body strength to farm. There are many kinds of crops that are grown. Corn, wheat, various types of grain, sweet potatoes and other kinds of potatoes, squash and many kinds of vegetables are grown in these fields. You are familiar with rice production. Much of this used to be done by hand and still is. In some places machines can be used. That is difficult on mountain sides though, so mountain rice is often still planted and harvested by hand. Small machines can be used to thresh the grain.



Groups who grow their own food can be quite large. One man can grow enough food for a number of people. These groups do not move around as much as gatherers do. They must stay by their crops during the time it takes them to grow, and during the harvest. These people are inventive. They must find ways to bring water to their fields. They also depend on the rain even if they bring water from rivers or lakes. Some people in the jungles must move their gardens every few years. The jungle soil is not rich and after a few crops the plants do not grow as well as before. These people then move to another place in the jungle. They cut the trees and burn them. The ashes help the plants grow. They must move their villages when they move their fields.

Even these people groups are beginning to use machines to cut the trees rather than just the simple axes they used to use.



Because not everyone in the groups has to work in the fields, some of the people are free to do other things. Some make pots to store the grain from the fields. Others make simple tools or carts to help bring the harvest home. People may own things of their own. Because there are more people living together, there is need for law. Someone becomes the leader of the village. Men, women and children all have things to do. Sometimes it is the men who plant, sometimes it is the women. Each culture has its own way of dividing the jobs between men and women. In some cultures men and women do work side-by-side in the fields.

“Because these people do not move so much, I suppose it is easier to meet with them and talk to them,” said Huizhong.

“That is true, replied Teacher Rifeng. “Usually a person who wants to work with these kinds of groups must bring something with them that would benefit the groups as a whole. If the right kind of skill is brought, then people will listen to what you want to say more easily. Maybe you need to show them how to save seeds from the strongest plants so their crops grow stronger. Or maybe you could show them how to feed the plants so that they grow better. Some crops get diseased, so the people need help to overcome the problem.

The next group of people are also hard to reach because they also move quite a bit. They may not move as much as hunters and gatherers, but they do move. These are the people who keep large flocks of animals. The animals must be moved so that they always have enough food and water. Regular, long moves are often made in spring and in fall. The grass grows better in higher places in the summer. It is cooler higher up too. It is warmer in lower valleys in the winter. So these people move between summer pastures and winter pastures or shelters.

It is hard to live on meat alone. Very few groups do this. Most groups will combine keeping animals with growing crops. Sometimes this means that the men and boys follow the animals and the woman plant and harvest crops. There are other groups that develop very complicated trading systems with those who grow crops. The animals are very important. They are not just food, but they provide fuel, clothes, and material for tents. These things can be traded with the people who grow things. Sometimes the animals are even used as trading items. Farmers need strong oxen, donkeys, or horses to pull the equipment used in their fields. They trade the grain they have for the animals to use in work, or for meat.”

“One way to get to talk to these people would be to learn about their animals and help them get stronger and bigger animals,” said Minzhe.

“Yes that would be a good thing. Help with curing disease is needed. Also finding animals that do not need to eat so much food to grow would help,” said Teacher Rifeng. “Sometimes people can help by telling these groups where it has rained and the grass is good. We will talk about people who supply information later.”

“Do these groups who follow the animals for a living grow large?” asked Huizhong.

“Not usually. Too many people would mean too many animals for the land to support. Fights break out over who can use the water holes or the best places on the rivers. These people do not own very many things either, since they move often and have to carry all they own with them. They will carry their tents and cooking pots and that is about all, sometimes.

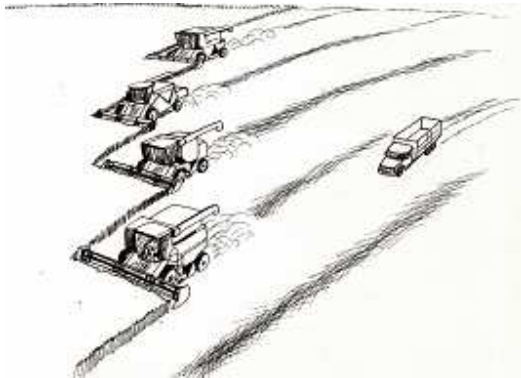
The next group is sometimes called the ‘intensive farmers’. These people groups include the ones who use animals to plough their fields and the ones who use machines to do the work. How much food a farmer can grow depends on what kind of animal he uses or how big his machinery is. You cannot imagine how big some of the farms in the United States and Canada are. The tractor and plough they use would often cover several small rice paddies

These people groups tend to own the land they work on. In some places they work the land for land owners. They do not move because they must stay by the land they own or by the land owner’s land. These groups of people have many more possessions than others do. They do not have to move, so they can own many things.

There are now ‘intensive’ ways of raising animals. Pigs, chickens, turkeys, fish and other animals are raised in huge barns or ponds, and fed there. Feed for the animals comes from the ‘intensive’ farmers. Eggs from the chickens, milk and meat flow to the cities.”

Trade with others takes place most often in this group. Markets grow up in the villages where the people live. They may trade meat and other food products for tools and equipment, household goods and other things. They also have to have money to buy the machinery which they use.

‘Intensive’ farmers can have more free time than hunters and gatherers. They also have more time than simple farmers because they can do the tasks of seeding and harvesting more quickly than those who do it just by their own strength. These farmers help each other out at various times during the year, especially during harvest time or seeding time. They will share machines but each will own their own land and the crops they grow.



Farmers tend to be the most difficult people to bring new ideas to. I am not sure why this is. It may be because they do not move much. They do not have to come into contact with other people very much. They grow to like their own ideas and ways of doing things.

Because of the ‘intensive’ farmers, cities are able to grow. The intensive farmers with their machinery can produce much food. This food is then used by the city people. The people in the cities are the next group of people we talked about. They are the ones who make things to trade or sell. Then they buy their food already prepared for them. There is no end of different things that these people make in factories for the other groups to use.

There is another form of making a living that is found because of the last two systems. It depends on ‘intensive’ farmers and on labourers in the factories to make their living. These people provide services to others who pay for those services. Doctors and nurses, lawyers, teachers, entertainers, and many others provide help for people who are busy doing the other jobs providing food and shelter. Government people, religious leaders and entertainers all sell their services to others in order to buy food and other things they need.

The people who live in cities, and work at making things, usually have more time to themselves. They work a set number of hours and then go home. They are paid for the number of hours that they work. All the previous groups have to look after their own fields or animals all of

the time. They are directly responsible for what they grow, or hunt or find. They work, usually, from sunrise to sunset.

In the cities there is a great variety of work. For example, someone must prepare the vegetables to make the soup that is put in cans. Someone else must make the cans to put the soup into. Someone else must take the cans to the stores where they are sold. Other people must sell the cans of soup to those who want them. Because much money is used, some people must become bankers. Many people living very close together need police to help them behave. There are many specialists in the city.”

“What are the information people like?” asked Huizhong.

“They are very interesting. They depend on the people who grow the food, who prepare it, who make the machines to transport it and so on. Because they use computers which they can take with them now, they live almost wherever they want. They spend time gathering information and finding ways to get it to the people who need it. Farmers want to know how to grow better grain or vegetables or fruit. The information gatherers pass this kind of information on to them. The people who make machines want to know where to sell them, who needs them, how best to make them. Bankers want to know where the most money is coming from. What are the best crops to sell? And so on. The information gathers have become very important. If they do not give the information someone else needs, when they need it, that person will be stopped in doing what they want to do.

Many people are studying this course using DVD’s that have been made by the information gatherers. Someone wrote about cultural anthropology. Someone put the stories on the DVD’s.”

“How do people groups decide what they need to do to make a living?”asked Huizhong.

“People are very adaptable. They live in all kinds of places from deserts, to the snow and cold of the northern countries. They live in jungles or on the plains. People find what they need in all these places. Mountains and valleys can both be made to provide peoples needs. Rivers and lakes can be used to help people make a living. All kinds of plants and animals are used by people. That is one thing you must never forget. People groups know how to use what is around

them. That is why people groups eat different things, wear different clothes and build different houses. They are using what is available to them around them.

All people groups are intelligent. They may make very simple things and they may make very complex things. They know much that others may never think about. They understand weather patterns. They understand the habits of animals. They know what plants are good for medicine. All the ways of making a living take a lot of thought.

Let me tell you a story about the Inuit who live in the far north. They hunt seals and that takes much patience. Sometimes wolves steal seals before the hunter gets to his trap. It takes too much time to hunt the wolves and kill them. The Inuit have learned to take a tiny piece of very sharp bone and curl it up in a certain way. They wrap it in fat. The hungry wolf eats it and the bone uncurls and kills the wolf. It is very simple, but very effective, and saves much time.

Remember two important things that influence how people get their food. The first is: How people get food depends on what the place they live in is like. Is it a desert? Or, is there lots of rain? Is the weather cold or hot? Is it a plain or is it mountainous? The second influence is the kind of tools and machines the people have to use.

How many people can live together in one place depends on what food is available and what they have to do to get it. Many of the systems of the second layer of culture--the second layer of the cabbage--are established according to how many people can live together. The more people who live together the more complex the systems become. The easier it is to get food, the fewer people will be directly involved in producing food. The systems in the second layer will be more complex."

"I think I have heard enough for today," said Huizhong. "My brain is tired. It is all very interesting but there is so much to think about."

"Yes," agreed Teacher Rifeng. "Let's stop here for today."

"What will we talk about next time?" asked Minzhe.

"We will talk about economics," replied Teacher Rifeng.

Key ideas to discuss from this story.

In groups of three, talk about what you do to get food and other things you need.

Key ideas to discuss from this story.

Now, can you recall the five main ways of making a living, plus the sixth, new way?

Check up

Did you talk about these points?

1. Hunters and gatherers
2. Simple farming
3. Herders
4. 'Intensive' farming
5. Manufacturing
6. Information sharing

Key ideas to discuss from this story.

What way of making a living depends on both intensive farming and manufacturing?

Check up

Did you talk about people who provide services for others? Doctors, lawyers, teachers, business people, entertainers and religious people all depend on others to provide their food for them. They provide tools and other things for those who work more directly with the getting of food.

Chapter Ten: How do people handle their resources?

“I wonder what it would be like to live with people who make their living herding sheep? How do they divide the grazing land?” wondered Minzhe, as he and his wife walked to Teacher Rifeng’s house.

“I think it would be easier to live with herders, than with people who moved about everyday searching for their food. How do they know who is permitted to search on what land?” asked Huizhong.

“I wonder about the economics of herding. I think economics is interesting,” said Minzhe, as they reached the teacher’s house.

Huizhong wondered out loud if talking about economics might be less interesting than the things they had talked about so far. She did not like thinking about economics.

After settling into their chairs, Huizhong begged, “Teacher Rifeng, please give me a good explanation of what economics is before we talk about it too much. I don’t understand what it is very well. Maybe that is why I don’t want to talk about it.”

“A definition is a good place to begin,” agreed the teacher. “A good definition always helps us understand what we are talking about. Most simply, economics is about how resources and goods are used. There are three things to talk about when we talk about ‘economics’ in Cultural Anthropology. Number one is learning how people divide the things they need to make a living between themselves. A very basic example is who gets food. But, I am also thinking about things like land being divided. Or who gets wool to spin clothes. Who is allowed to use certain machines?

Secondly, we talk about how people change basic resources into things they can use. For example, how is the food prepared? Who can prepare it? What do people use land for, when they get it? How do people change wool into clothes? How is iron ore turned into tools and machines? These are the kind of questions we ask in the second part of economics.

Finally, we talk about how people get the things they make to others who want to use the goods. For example, how do people get food to the people who need the food? How do the

clothes get to the people who need to wear them? Does that help you understand, Huizhong?" asked Teacher Rifeng.

"I think so," she answered. "Let me repeat what I think I heard. Economics is how resources are used. Economics has three parts. First is how resources are divided between people. Second is how people change the resources into things they need. And finally, how people distribute the things they grow or make."

"Excellent," said the teacher. "Let's talk about what economics looks like for the people in the different ways of making a living. Gatherers and hunters have to decide what group has the right to hunt, where. This leads to fighting between groups sometimes. The finding of food usually involves each individual in the group somehow. There are no private places where no one else is allowed. They all go where there is food and gather it. Hunters usually hunt together for larger animals. They may hunt individually for smaller animals. Pastoralists have to decide which group can put their cattle where. Again this is done by group or clan. War can break out here too. Simple gardeners all work together, although each family may have its own garden space. Complex agriculturalists divide up the land they work. Everyone owns their own piece of land. Each one of these groups must decide who can use available water, when and how.

In cultures where almost everything is made in factories, many individuals own some land and have homes on that land. Others will own only the part of the building in which they live. Sometimes they own half the building or one quarter of the building. In large cities, many people live in large buildings—apartment blocs--where there are many homes. Westerners believe very strongly in the right to own their own property. In other countries very few people own property.

On a national scale, nations work hard to protect their land. Canada is working very hard to protect the passageway through the islands in the north seas. Other countries like Russia, Sweden, Denmark, Norway and United States want to claim some of the islands. There are many resources there that have not yet been developed. Everyone wants them. But more importantly, the route through the North Passage would make shipping much less expensive between places like China and the European Union. Canada thinks those islands are her own. So she is trying to protect them. Canada might even want to charge ships a fee for travelling through this part of her territory.



All the islands in the map are Canadian except for Greenland.

“What kind of economics would food gathers have?” asked Huizhong.

“Land is not owned by individuals or even by groups amongst gathers and hunters. It would take too much time and energy to defend a piece of land. All the gatherer’s time is needed to gather food. If there is plenty of food near a river or lake, some bands may become protective of those places where they can get the most food with the least effort. Hunters must follow the animals and the animals do not respect human boundaries.”

“I think herders would be much like the gathers and hunters when they think about owning land,” said Minzhe.

“You are correct”, said Teacher Rifeng. “But herders must be able to get to water for the animals along with the pasture. If there is little grass and water, herders must move often. Again if there is lots of water and grass the group tends to claim parts of the land as their own. The group claims the land, not individuals. Sometimes agreements are made with farmers, so that when the harvest is finished, herders put their flocks on what is left after the grain is cut. People do not even own individual animals. Someone may milk a cow on certain days and others will milk it on other days. It is decided by the group.

Simple farmers tend to think of the land they are using as belonging to the group. The men will work together to clear the land. Then they will defend this land because they have worked to

clear it. Someone divides up the land so that each family group have their own garden space to work. But they do not own the land. When the group moves, everyone moves to the new land the group has chosen.



Intensive farmers own the land they work. They own the animals they raise. The products of the land are sold by the individual farmers to buy more land or to buy better machinery with which to work the land. Each farmer will buy fertilizer to make his land more productive. Or he will pay for water to be brought to the land to grow better crops.

The second part of economics is interesting too. Many people cannot use the things they grow or produce the way it is naturally. For example, animals have to be butchered. Grain has to be ground to make flour. Metal ore must be mined and then worked to make it useable to make tools. Stones must be shaped to make a house. Wool must be carded and spun and then woven into clothes. So the second part of economics is about how people make the things they need out of the basic material they have.

Hunters and gatherers usually have the simplest approach in using what they gather or kill. They simply use what they have hunted or gathered for themselves. They are very careful to use everything about the animal they kill. Pieces of bone become needles. Sinew becomes thread. Some things may be traded for goods they do not have, but they do not do this often. They seem to be satisfied with the basic food, water and shelter. Remember, they move often, so they cannot carry many things with them.

Very few things can be used just as they are in their natural state. Wood must be made into boards. Animals must be butchered and the meat cut into pieces that can be cooked. People make things when they have the resources close to them. When there are forests near, people will make things out of wood. If there are iron deposits close by, people will use the iron to make things. People cannot make things unless they have the tools to make things. If you live near a forest, but do not have tools to cut and shape the wood, you will not use the wood. There must be energy to make the things too. If people do not have the strength to make things they will not make things. Some people live near fast flowing streams. They have learned to use the water power to grind their grain. There are many ways of turning the natural resources into goods that can be used.

Sometimes stories in the fourth layer of culture will not allow the people to use the resources close to them. There are groups of people who live by rivers but have stories that tell them they cannot eat fish. Or the stories may tell them that they can only eat a certain kind of fish. If the kind of fish they are allowed to eat becomes scarce, sometimes that people group begins to die. This has happened in the jungles of South America. A certain people group had stories that allowed them to eat only honey and a certain kind of bird. When the jungle around this group of people was destroyed, they could no longer find honey and the special birds. The tribe began to die. The fact that in Hindu belief one cannot eat meat causes great problems for India. Many cows wander around and eat food that could be used in other ways. The cattle themselves cannot be eaten so they do not help provide food for many hungry people.

People who live in manufacturing societies are usually all specialists. That means that each person does only one special job. For example no one makes a car by themselves. Many, many people make parts of the car in places scattered all over the country. The parts are gathered into one factory. There, many people work, putting in only one part of the car as it goes by them on a big conveyor belt. These people have to have ways of obtaining what they need to live because they cannot live on the parts of the cars that they make. We will talk about what they do when we talk about the third part of economics.

There are two ideas about how to organize a group of people to work together making things. One way is to hire people who are related to each other or are from the same tribal group or part of the country. The other way is to hire people from all over, trying to be careful not to

hire people who are related. In this case, hiring is based on education, previous experience, or the results of examinations. The first way of hiring is found in the simpler levels of economy. The second way is found in complex companies in the big cities.

In some countries in Africa and Asia, many country people have come to the cities looking for jobs. Often, just the men come to the cities. Western companies working in these countries had hired people according to what the company needed. They would not hire people from the same group. Then it was discovered that hiring people from the same area or tribal group helped the company. Hiring this way brought good results. People leaving the company to look for another job fell by 50%. Customer complaints grew fewer. The number of customers who expressed satisfaction doubled. Damage to company property fell by 27%. Complaints about people doing a poor job fell by 63%. It was discovered that people working together with people from their home areas helped them feel less lonely. People grew to like the factory they worked in more, because they were working together with people from their own areas. They began to think of the factory as home and began to have pride in it and in the work they were doing.

In large Western companies, it is felt that people of the same family or from the same area of the country should not work together in companies. The wages should be spread around between all groups of people so that people should be hired from all the groups. Westerners believe everyone should have equal chance to work, not just one special group of people.

When we think about how things are made there are two other ideas which must be discussed. In each economic level, there are divisions of what men can do, and what women can do. We have talked about this in some of the other lessons. The second thing to talk about is age. How are children and young people employed? How are the elderly employed? There are divisions according to age in all the levels of economy. Most of these have to do with experience and with physical strength. Children are not strong like full grown men. Children therefore usually work at simple, repetitive jobs. The International Labour Organization said that in 2002 there were 246 million children, between five years old and 17 years old, working full time. This means that they were not getting any form of education in a school.

Each society deals with age in its own way. In the West, young people are kept in school and university for at least sixteen years. This keeps many young people out of the work force.

Educating them becomes big business in its own way. Many Western countries make people stop working when they reach sixty-five years of age. I have a friend who was a college professor. His college made him stop teaching when he turned sixty-five. In many places this practice is being stopped. It is recognized that if an older person has the strength and his mind is still working well, his experience is very valuable to the business in which he worked.

But many older people have lost their strength. What happens to them? In some tribal groups, the aged are left behind to die when the tribe moves. The old can no longer hunt or work in the gardens. If there is a shortage of food, they are left out as they cannot work to provide food, but still use food needed by others who can work. Among the Inuit of the North, old people used to leave the village on their own, going out into the snow and cold by themselves to die. This made more room to feed and care for the young. These decisions are part of economics. Who should get the resources?

The third part of economics is how people get the things they produce or make to other people. There are basically three ways of doing this. The first is that people exchange things that are close to the same value. Second is where some person in authority is given all the produce and that person distributes it to others. The third kind of distribution is market distribution where people buy and sell things, using some form of money.

There are two ways of exchanging things. The first way happens most often in the food gathering or hunting societies. People give, without thinking that others must give them something back immediately. If a hunter kills an animal he will take what his family needs. Then he will give it to others in the group. These people usually do not have a way of keeping meat so they must give it away if it is to be used while it is good. That hunter may not find an animal on the next day. But another hunter might. The other hunter would then divide his kill between the members of the group. Small farmers will do this with seed and other produce also. If they have more than they need, they will give it to those who are in need. Someday they may be in need.

There are three rules about this kind of exchange. First, you may not buy what is given with money. Second is, never refuse a gift and never fail to return a gift at sometime. If you cannot use the gift immediately, give it to someone who can. Then thirdly, remember that you may not demand a gift. You also may not refuse a request.

Even people in the West give each other gifts on birthdays and at Christmas and on other special occasions. They do not demand immediate return of a gift but they would feel badly if they did not receive a gift in return at sometime. Gift-giving is also a kind of general sharing of things.

Secondly, there are groups of people who expect that when something is given, there will be a return of goods of the same value within a specific time. One cannot return things too quickly because that would mean you do not trust the other person. You cannot be late because the other person really trusts you. They may need what you are to give in exchange for their goods. This kind of economics happens between groups who need something from another group. So goods are traded usually at very complicated ceremonies. It also happens between individuals in these societies.

A 'third' kind of trading is that groups do try to trade by cheating each other all the time. Amongst the group, the craftiest trader is the most admired. The one who can cheat the most is thought of as the smartest. This kind of exchange leads to very poor relationships between the groups. This usually leads to warfare. I have a friend who told me that every time they go to the market to buy things, the market people cheat them. It is a warfare of wits. My friend said they become very tired of this constant cheating.

The second form of exchange occurs in groups where there are permanent chiefs. The people transport their goods to the chief and his council on special days. The chief then divides the goods among the people in the tribe. Again, there are usually tribal ceremonies that go along with the gathering and the distribution of the goods. Family and friends of the chief benefit the most in this kind of economy. The chief must be careful because he needs the help of all the people in defending the tribal land. If he makes people angry, they might get rid of him as chief and choose someone else. If the chief has his own army, the army must also be fed. People cannot complain too much or the army will hurt them.

The third main form of exchange is 'market exchange'. Market economy means that people buy and sell goods. In order to do this, there must be a form of money that has an agreed-upon value. Money has some advantages. When you trade things, the person who wants what you have to trade may not have exactly what you want in exchange. You can always accept money and

buy exactly what you want later. Money can be divided. There can be small bills and larger bills and coins of various values. The worth of some object can more accurately be established with money. Money can be carried with you easily. It is hard to take a flock of goats with you to trade whenever you want something else. Lastly, the people who get the money can save it if they want to, and use it much later. Goods traded, like food, may need to be used immediately; you may not be saved for later. This kind of economy happens in simple agriculture, complex agriculture, and sometimes in herding societies. It is usually found in the highest level of manufacturing and information producing countries.

Sometime markets do not use money but people argue with each other over what they have to trade. Is this rug worth three goats or four? Is this plough worth two cows or three? A key part of market economy is that each thing for sale is given an exact price. It is the market that establishes what the value is. For example, if there are lots of pigs at market, maybe the market will demand only four bushels of corn in exchange. If there are few pigs, the market might demand ten bushels of corn for a pig. Values change in a market system.

There is a new kind of economy since the 1980's. It is called 'globalization'. Globalization means that one country will own things in another country. Or one country will build a manufacturing company in another country. People in that country work in these companies making things to be sold in the company's home country. Some countries will help another country build things like dams to make electricity. Then the country that helped build the dam will demand to share part of the money that is made from that dam. In Europe, big companies used to have manufacturing plants in several countries. Since many European countries have joined in the European Economic Union, big companies now have put all the smaller plants together into one big company in the home country. Other companies specialize in making parts which are shipped to other countries where the parts are assembled. My father owned a tractor that had parts that had been made in twenty different countries.

There are some problems with globalization. Big companies have things made in countries where high wages do not have to be paid. Then they sell the goods in the home countries for big prices. The companies become very wealthy. People in the home country cannot find jobs because all the work is being done in other countries. People who make the goods remain poor as the companies keep the money for themselves."

“I did not know that economics was so interesting. I am glad we talked about it. But what would economics have to do with us living and working in another country?” asked Huizhong.

“There are some important things to think about, said Teacher Rifeng. “You will not be a part of the group you will be entering. How you obtain what you need to live may upset the regular flow of the community. If you try to buy things in an exchange culture, the people you give the money to may be put in danger. Others will want the money and steal it, perhaps even killing the person you have paid. You may have things that others want. In some cultures, if someone says they like what you have, you are obligated to give it to them. If you cannot give that object to them then, you have to buy the same thing and give it to them. My friend had a special hat that a baseball star had signed. His friend said he liked the hat. My friend did not want to give the hat away because it was signed by a special person. His friend did not care about the signature, just the hat. So my friend bought another hat just like it to give to his friend.

Also, if you bring everything with you, you will be different than the people you are working with and they may resent you for that. Careful study should be made of how things are produced, made, bought and sold in the place to which you are going. Can you use what is available in the place you will be living? Do you have to have everything just like when you were at home? You want your message to be heard. You do not want to bring in other things that will interfere with the people hearing your message.

I think this is enough for today. Next week let’s talk about how rich and poor and in-between people get along.”

Key ideas to discuss from this story

In groups of three, tell each other what economics is and what the three main ideas to think about are when we talk about economics.

Check up

Did you talk about these points?

1. How people divide the things they need to make a living between themselves? I am thinking about things like land division. Or who gets wool to spin clothes. Who is allowed to use certain machines? The most important point of economics is about who gets food.
2. How people change those basic resources into things they can use? What do people use the land for when they get it? How do people change the wool into clothes once they get the wool? How are the machines used? How is the food prepared and who can prepare it?
3. How the things people make are taken to where others can use them? That would be how they get the clothes to other people who need clothes. How do people get the food they need to their homes?

Key ideas to discuss from this story

Discuss the three ways people make sure the products get to where they are finally used.

Check up

There are basically three ways of doing this. The first is that people exchange things that are close to the same value. Second is where some person in authority is given all the produce and that person distributes it to others. The third kind of distribution is market distribution where people buy and sell things.

Key ideas to discuss from this story

Discuss the two ways of hiring people to handle goods.

Check up

Did you discuss:

- a. hiring by examination, previous job experience and educational background?
- b. hiring because people come from the same area or are related to each other?

Key ideas to discuss from this story

What is the newest form of economics in the world? Have you been affected by it, or have you seen the effects of it?

Check up

Did you talk about globalization? What happened because of the Olympics in your country?

Key ideas to discuss from this story

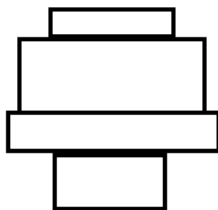
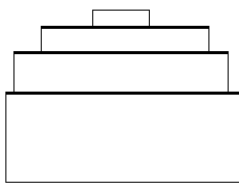
How do you obtain what you need to live? What kinds of economics are in your area of the world?

Chapter 11 – What rank in society am I?

“We have talked about the different ways of making a living. That included gatherers, hunters, simple and complex farmers, manufacturing, and information occupations. I wonder if people live at different levels within each way of making a living,” said Huizhong to her husband, Minzhe, as they walked to another session with Teacher Rifeng.

“I think that is what we are to talk about today. Teacher Rifeng said we would talk about how rich and poor and in-between get along together,” answered Minzhe. “We will talk about different levels of society in people groups and countries too, I hope.”

When they were seated with the teacher, he put some interesting looking charts in front of them. They looked like different sized boxes piled on top of each other.



“Do you remember what I said we would be talking about today?” asked the teacher.

“Yes, you said we would talk about how different groups of people get along together,” said Minzhe. “Do the different sized boxes stacked on each other represent different groups in one culture?”

“Yes,” replied Teacher Rifeng.

“Are the boxes different sizes because there are different numbers of people in each of the levels?” asked Huizhong.

“Good for you!” said the Teacher. “In each people group there are different levels of people. These levels are defined by several things. It can be how wealthy or poor a group is, how much influence a group has, and what kind of work they do, or who conquered whom. There are other things too, like the level of education a group of people has. What families have been in the country the longest? We can also make this kind of chart to show how we personally fit into a culture. How you fit is important to know when you are working in a place other than your home area. We will see how influence, importance, and new ideas flow in and between these groups.

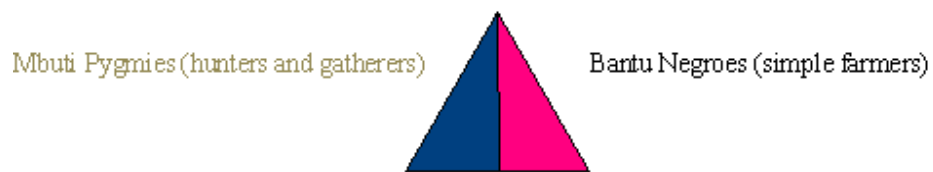
These ideas are sometimes talked about in a course called Sociology. But it also fits into anthropology where we compare one set of boxes from one people group with other sets of boxes from other people groups.

Do you remember that we began this course by talking about ethnic groups? We talked about people who shared language, religion, same living place, customs, and beliefs. Today we will also talk about different groups of people within each ethnic group. It means that even though everyone shares the things I just mentioned, not everyone is treated the same way within a people group.”

“What happens when two or more ethnic groups live in the same space, or does that happen?” asked Huizhong.

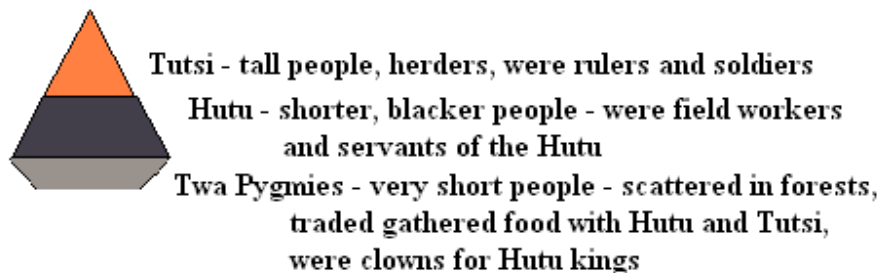
“That is a good question,” replied the teacher. “It does happen. If both groups are trying to use the same resources, there will often be conflict. When there is conflict, usually after awhile, one group becomes stronger than the other. Then the differences between the groups begin to disappear. The stronger group swallows up the weaker group into its culture. But if the groups find ways of depending on each other and helping each other, there can be peace. Each group will keep its own specialness.

An example of peaceful living together is the Mbuti Pygmies and the Bantu Negroes in Zaire, Africa. The Pygmies live in the forest and hunt animals, gather wild honey and fruits. They get their metal spears from their neighbours, the Bantu. The Pygmies trade meat, honey, and fruits for these things. The Bantu also provide the Pygmies with vegetables from their gardens.



This chart simply shows us that the people groups live side by side. We will talk about the meaning of the shape later.

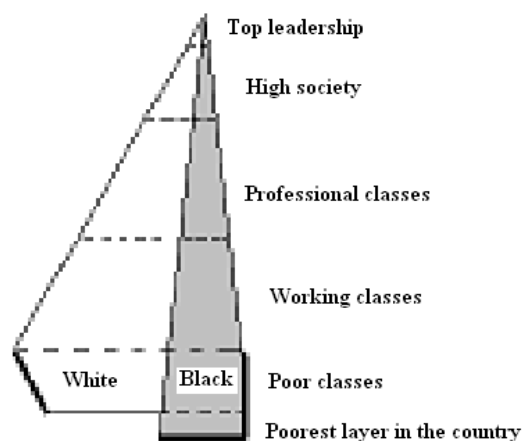
In the chapter on Gender we talked a bit about the war in Rwanda where one group killed the other group living in the country. Before the war, the groups used to get along together, depending on each other. Here is a chart that shows that relationship.



The Twa section is on the bottom of the chart. It tells us that the Twa were considered the lowest of the three groups. The shape is smaller. There are fewer Twa than in the other groups. Some lived in villages like the Hutu so the top of their shape touches the Hutu shape. The shape also shows that some Twa were on a level with the poorest of the Hutu as it touches the bottom of the Hutu shape. The very bottom of the chart means that there were very poor people among the Twa.

The Hutu worked for the Tutsi who were well educated. As we mentioned before, Tutsi women were considered more desirable than Hutu women. The Tutsi formed the government and owned much of the business of the country. They were the wealthiest. Only a few Tutsi at the top were very wealthy. So the top comes to a point to show that there are only a few people in this position.

When the German and Belgian governments took over the land where Rwanda is now, they changed the relationship of the people groups to each other. That eventually led to the horrible war. Many Tutsi were murdered. I am not sure what this chart would look like now



In some countries there are groups that live side by side but are kept separate. They may work together but they do not intermarry. They have their own places of worship and recreation spots. They live in different parts of the city. But both groups are in the same country, under the same

laws, and speak the same language. Some in each of the groups are on the same level.

This chart shows a country where blacks and whites live together. Some blacks are on the same level as some whites, but they are kept apart by various customs. Many blacks are in the poorest layer of the nation. The working classes are those who work in factories, or who work on farms, or do work by hand. The professional classes are the teachers, doctors, lawyers, ministers or priests, and administrators of large companies. High society includes those who come from the oldest or wealthiest families in the country. There is some sharing of office in the highest places of government in this country between blacks and whites.

Each country and each group within each country will have charts that are different sizes and shapes. They will include different ideas, and these ideas define the layers.

Relationships within a caste system can be shown in the following manner. 'Caste' is a system in Hindu and Buddhist belief that gives different groups of people different values. Each group depends on each other but some groups may not have any direct contact with each other. The people on the bottom of this chart, the sweepers and leatherworkers, cannot even let their shadows touch the people in the highest group, the priests.



This chart does not accurately show the size of each group. The bottom groups are actually very large compared to the top groups.

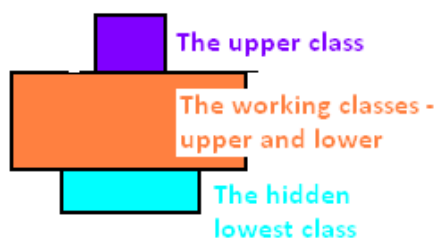
Intermarriage is not allowed between these groups. Education and health benefits are different for each group also. But these people all live in the same land and speak the same language. They all believe the stories found in the fourth layer of their culture.

When the farmers harvest their crops, they pile the grain in a central place. The priests come first and take their share. The ironsmiths and carpenters then take their portions. The iron smiths keep the farmers' ploughs working. The carpenters build the sheds and do repairs to the farmers' buildings. The potters and the washer men get their share next. They have provided pots and have washed the farmers' clothes. Then the barber, who has cut the farmers' hair, comes.

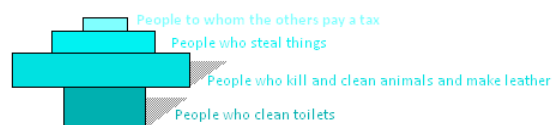
Finally the untouchables, the sweepers and the leatherworkers come. The leatherworkers are last. There may be very little left for them.

There is another country where there is a caste system but it is hidden. It is a Buddhist caste system. It is illegal to keep people in separate castes in this country. But it happens anyway. An interesting thing is that in the bottom caste one may find different levels of society. Even in this hidden lower class, those in the upper level of it-- the ones who get tax from the lower parts— may never marry someone from below them, or vice versa.”

This chart shows the country as a whole.



This chart shows the levels within the hidden lowest class.



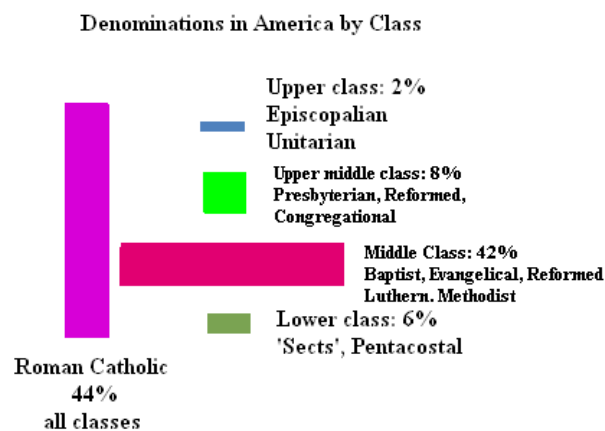
“When someone is born into one of these groups, can they move to another group?” asked Huizhong.

“That is an idea we need to talk about. How easy is it for a person to move from one level to another in each group? It is relatively easy to move from one class level to another in America. We call America an ‘open class’ nation. It is almost impossible to change one’s level in a caste system, like the system in India. India is referred to as a ‘closed class’ nation. The following chart shows ,the range of ease in changing classes in different countries.



OPEN CLASS

In open class places, class can be changed through marriage, through education, or by becoming wealthy. In some open class countries though, even if you become wealthy, you will not be accepted by families who have been wealthy for many generations. If a higher class woman marries a lower class man, she may lose her status. It is almost impossible to change class in a closed class country, by any method.



Sometimes these kinds of charts are used to show how different organizations relate to each other. Here is a chart which shows how different divisions of Christians relate to one another in America. This is an old chart from the 1960's. Today, the chart would look quite a bit different. I could not find a chart for modern times.

.

"This is quite a lot to think about," said Minzhe. "I am beginning to think that this might have a lot to do with how we are accepted in another country."

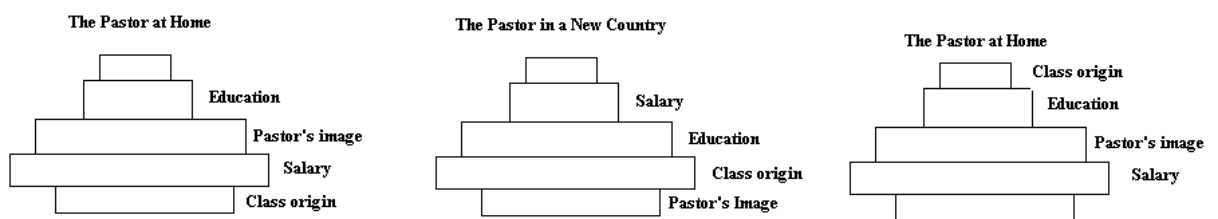
CLOSED CLASS

There were Roman Catholic believers on all levels of society. The bar representing Roman Catholics stands up, showing that it passes through all levels of society. Among Protestants, Episcopalians were considered to be in the higher level of society. The bar showing Episcopalians is at the top. This is because of education, wealth and generations of the families being in the country. There were not many Episcopalians compared to other Christian groups.

The Pentacostal movement began among the poor black populations who were not well educated. So they fit in the lower level of society. The bar is at the bottom to show this. There were not many Pentacostals then. The place of Pentacostal believers in America has changed quite a bit in recent years. There are many, many more believers in this tradition and they are found in all levels of society now."

“You are correct,” exclaimed Teacher Rifeng. “This has everything to do with how you will be accepted in another country. It also has a lot to do with how you will feel when you go into a new country.

Look at these charts. This is a made up situation but some people find themselves in this kind of situation.



The first chart is about a Christian pastor who was born into a lower class in his country. As a pastor, his salary puts him in a class above where he was born. But in this country, pastors are thought of as coming from the middle class. When people first hear that he is a pastor he may be treated as middle class. But in order to be a pastor, this man has studied in a seminary. This means that according to the level of his education, he is in the upper middle class. Even in his home country, this man can sometimes wonder who he is. People will treat him differently according to who they see him to be. The pastor in the third chart may have an even harder time. He was born in the high class but his education, image and salary are all beneath that class. In a case like this, usually the pastor’s own people will have little to do with him. He has lowered himself in his class by becoming a pastor.

What happens to these pastors when they go to another country? What if the people in this country do not like Christian pastors? The pastors will automatically be thought of as very low class. I think either pastor will have a hard time. Again, their education, salary and class of origin could cause people to respond to them in various ways. But the fact that they are pastors will probably overrule all the other areas. If their salaries are above most people’s, this will also make people angry with them.

Let me tell you about a friend who went to India. He and his wife were not Indian so they did not fit into the caste system. They became friends with a very high class Indian family. There

was to be a wedding in that high class family. Servants worked days to prepare for the wedding feast. All the food was nearly ready. My friends were not invited to the wedding. This was when they first realized that they were looked at as being outside the levels of that society. But because they were friends with the family, they were invited to come to the house privately before the wedding ceremony. The husband and wife were seated in the guest living room and were given some of the delicious food that had been prepared. When they were done, they were left alone for a few minutes. The wife decided to go to the kitchen to thank the cooks for the delicious food. This would have been a very polite thing to do in her home country. She went to the kitchen, thanked everyone, and then she and her husband went home.

Later, they were told that all the food in the kitchen was destroyed because she had entered the kitchen. She was a foreigner and therefore unclean. By entering the kitchen, she had made the food unclean. The wedding was delayed for several days while the servants made all new food.

It is very important to know your level in some cultures. My friends were not invited to visit that family again.”

“How do people communicate between various levels of society?” asked Huizhong.

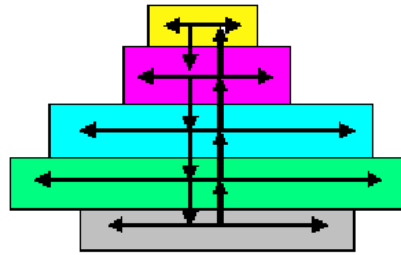
“I wanted to talk about that next,” said the teacher. We need to think about three things in relation to what is communicated between levels of a culture or people group.

First, how much communication happens?

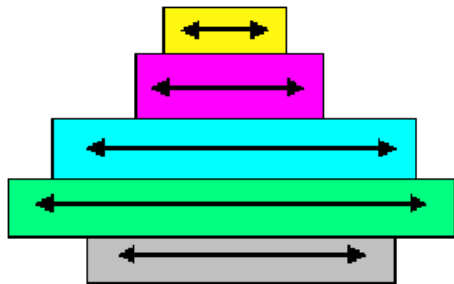
Second, does it cause people to change?

Third, how important will people think the communication is?

This next chart shows us how communication flows in and between classes. It shows how information flows within a class, and up and down between classes. It looks complicated but I will explain it, piece by piece.



Let's think about communicating information within one level of a people group. This chart shows information travelling back and forth within each level.

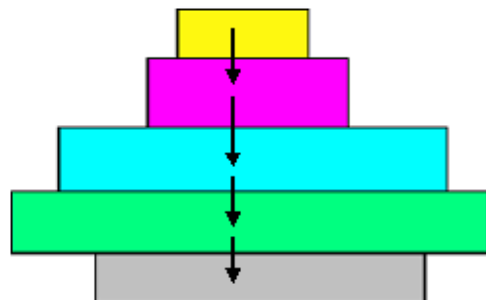


First, there is a lot of communication within each level.

Second, a great amount of persuasion happens as a result of the large amount of communication. People trust people like themselves more than they trust others.

Third, the communication/information may be seen as not so important as what comes from above, but more important than what comes from below.

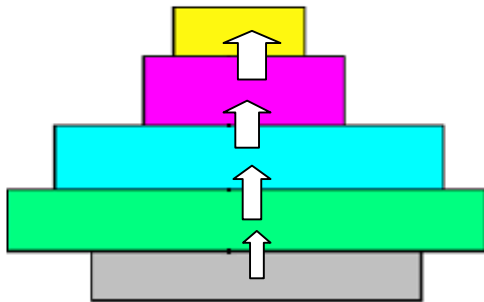
The next chart shows information travelling from a higher level of the people group to a lower level of the people group.



First, the amount of information coming down is not as great as that coming from within the level. It is definitely more important than the information coming up from the levels below.

Second, people in the lower level value information coming from a higher level more than if it comes from within their level, or from below their level.

The last chart shows information moving from the lowest levels of a culture to the higher levels of that culture.



First, not much information moves from the lower classes to the higher classes.

Second, the information that does move, does not change peoples ideas in the higher levels very much.

Third, information from the lower levels is thought of as having little importance to the higher levels.”

Third, information coming from above will not cause people to change as much as information coming from within their level. In some cases, it may cause only the same amount of change as that of information coming from below. This is strange because it is usually thought of as more important. The information may not seem to apply to the lower group though, so it is not acted on.

“That is interesting,” said Minzhe. “It would mean that if the people we are trying to reach see us as lower than themselves, we would have a hard time changing their minds about anything. If they see us as the same as them, we would have the best chance of helping them to change. If they see us as above them, what we say might be thought of as important, but people might not change very quickly.”

“You are correct,” said Teacher Rifeng. “I want to tell you another important thing that happens. It is said that when people become Christians, they change levels of society, especially if they were in the lower levels of society. Christian missionaries use a special phrase to describe this. They call it ‘redemption lift’. One example is that it seems that when people become Christians, they want to learn to read. Many times this is connected with them wanting to learn to read the Bible. When they are able to read, they can get better jobs. They may also become able to protect themselves from people who would harm them. For instance, people who cannot read may sign contracts that bind them into almost slave like conditions. Or they may have to pay very high interest, which keeps them poor. When they learn to read, this kind of thing does not happen so often because they know what they are signing. People who become Christians also seem to become more interested in their health. They give up harmful practices. Family life improves. They begin to act and live on a higher level than they did before.

This is a good thing. But there can be a difficult side to this. As their situation in life improves, they are seen to be leaving their friends--and sometimes family members--on a lower level as they move higher. This causes jealousy and it is hard for these families to maintain good relationships with family and former friends. This also happens between Animists and Muslims. Tribal peoples who become Muslim often get education, which puts them in a higher level. They get jobs, and friends in their former situations are left behind.

The levels of society influence all kinds of activities. People on one level will engage in different sports than people on another level. Language will be slightly different. We will talk more about that in another lesson. Different bars and restaurants will be known as places for different groups of people. Even grocery stores in Canada are different according to the level of society of people who shop at the grocery store. Prices are different. The way goods are displayed is quite different. People in the high levels of society will enjoy different entertainment

than people on the lower levels of society. People in higher levels of society dress differently than people dress in the lower levels.

There was a family who had come from a high level of society in my company. The man was a brilliant trumpet player. When they joined the company, the company asked them to live and work in a very high level part of the city. I had other friends who came from farming communities. They were asked to work in the farming communities in the other country. There were many reasons for this. The people with a farming background understood how farmers think. There is an attachment to the land that farmers have around the world. My friends from an upper level of society enjoyed the same kinds of music and entertainment as the people of that part of the city enjoyed. When companies send people to other countries, it is best that they think about the level of society that the employees come from. They should try to match them with people in the new country. I have quite a bit of education. I was asked to work with people from universities and colleges.

I have a friend whose family came to America three hundred years ago. His ancestors came from Wales. My friend's section of the family then moved to Eastern Canada. Much later, my friend's grandfather moved to Western Canada. Though no one has been to Wales for many years, many members of the family belong to the St. David's Society. This is a gathering of people who trace their ancestry to Wales. They listen to Welsh choirs and talk about learning to speak Welsh. There are many smaller societies--within societies--all over the world like this. People with something in common will band together. Others would not feel welcome in this group. Sometimes it is people who have done special things, like soldier's groups. There is a world wide society of very smart people called MENSA. You have to have a certain level of intelligence to join that society. Business people have groups where salesmen who sell over a certain level of goods are allowed to join the group. Sometime the presidents of big companies belong to special clubs. There is a club of people who raise a certain kind of cattle. They meet in various countries of the world.

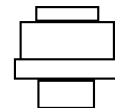
Even the nations of the world have groups based on economics or language or past history. The G7 and G 20 are two economic groups. The Francophone countries gather at special meetings because they all speak French. The British Commonwealth is a gathering of countries that were all once part of the British Empire. There are groups of nations from the same part of

the world. The Pan American Games are like the Olympics except only athletes from North and South America can participate.

We have talked about many levels within societies. We have even talked about how persons rank within the levels of society. I think next week we will talk about politics. Politics greatly influence how all the levels of society work together.

Key ideas to discuss from this story

In groups of three, discuss what charts like these are used for? What do they tell you?



Check up

These charts tell you what the main divisions are within a people group or a society. They can also be used to tell you where you fit into your society. Did you talk about:

1. the size of each level of society?
2. that each society has upper parts and lower parts within them?

Key ideas to discuss from this story

Discuss the relationships shown by this chart. Think about what it would be like to be a member of the priest's level, as well as what it would be like to be a member of the leatherworker's level.



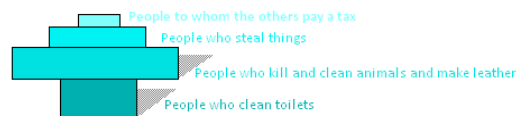
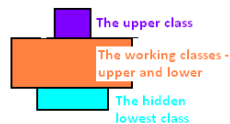
Check up

Did you discuss:

1. who may marry whom?
2. who depends on whom and for what?

Key ideas to discuss from this story

Discuss what these charts tell you.



Check up

Did you talk about the fact that there are levels within each level of a society?

This is the lowest level of society in a certain country. Even here the higher parts of the society do not marry into the lower parts.

Key ideas to discuss from this story

What does this chart mean?



Check up

Did you talk about how it is relatively easy to move from one part of society in an open class society like America? But it is nearly impossible to move from one society level to another in a closed class country like India?

Key ideas to discuss from this story

Draw a chart for yourself. What levels are in the country in which you live? Where do you fit into that chart?

Chapter Twelve: What kinds of political organizations exist?

“Someone told me that there is a saying in some countries that it is always okay to talk about the weather but never about politics and religion”, Minzhe said to Huizhong as they arrived at Teacher Rifeng’s house.

“I would agree with that”, said Huizhong, “I don’t think politics is very interesting. Teacher Rifeng has talked about many things and made them interesting. I wonder what he will say about politics.”

“We will find out soon,” Minzhe said as they entered the teacher’s studio.

As soon as they were settled Teacher Rifeng asked Minzhe what the word ‘politics’ meant.

“When I hear the word ‘politics’ I think about governments. I think about men who are powerful and rule over other people. Politics is not the nicest word I know,” answered Minzhe.

“That is true for many people. Many people have negative reactions when thinking about politics. Remember that when we talk about political organizations we are talking about the second layer of culture. That is the layer of systems, a part of culture. Politics comes out of values, the third layer. It affects the things people have and do--the first layer,” Teacher Rifeng said.

“When we talk about political organization in Cultural Anthropology, we are talking about who has authority in a people group or society. We also need to talk about how they gain authority. How do the people with authority control the population’s behaviour? How do they maintain order in the group? Every group of people has some kind of authority structure. But, how simple or how complicated the structure is, is very different for each group.

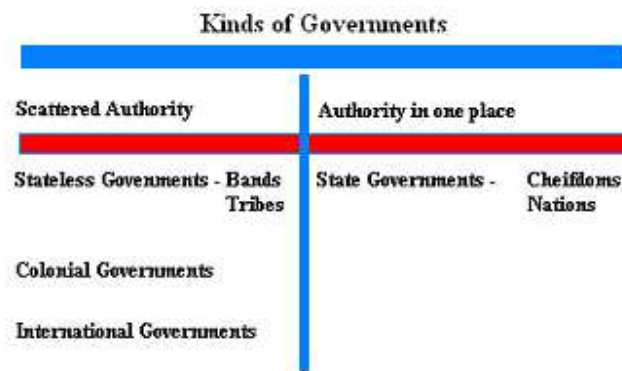
There are three ways political organizations differ.

First, do the people who hold authority in the political organization only hold political power? Or do they also hold economic power? Do they also hold religious power, as in many Muslim countries? Is power held within a large family group?

The second question is: Do a few people or do many people have authority in the organization? As well, are the political people in a separate group by themselves?

And the third question is: How large is the area of land that the political organization rules over? Is land part of the political organization at all?

We will talk about four kinds of political organization.



First, there are Stateless Governments. These do not usually own land, they simply use it. There is no central political power. There are groups of people called bands or tribes in this kind of political situation.

Second, there are State Governments. These are very large and control much land. Power is in one main place. Chiefdoms and Nations are in this group.

Third, there are countries where there are two governments. That is, some countries have their own government, but that government must follow the rules of another country. These are called colonies. There used to be many colonies. Now there are only a few very small places which are colonies. The blue places used to be colonies, and not that long ago. The red ones still are. United States, Canada and most of South America were colonies at one time also.



The fourth kind of political organization is International Bodies. I won't talk much about these today. The United Nations is one of these international bodies. Now there is the European Parliament or the European Economic Union. There is, now, an International Law Court also. The World Bank is taking more and more responsibility in economic planning for many countries. The headquarters of these groups are scattered around the world in many places.

All four kinds of political groups do three things.

First, political groups make the laws that people have to follow. Second, political groups make the goals for the group. What will the group do? What is most important to be done now? Who will be able to use what resources? These are the rules that political groups make.

Thirdly, political groups are responsible to say where resources should be used. For example, where should roads or railways be built? In many countries political organizations decide where schools and hospitals should be built. When there is a disaster such as a flood or an earthquake, political organizations decide how to help. They decide to use the army for peaceful things or for war.

What do you think is the least complicated political organization, Huizhong?" asked Teacher Rifeng.

"We talked about small groups of people who gather food or hunt animals or fish. Is that where the political organization is the simplest?" answered Huizhong.

“You are correct!” said Rifeng. “We call this kind of group a band. This is one example of a stateless government. The number of people in such a band can be as few as twenty people or as many as several hundred people. The average number in these groups is thirty to fifty men, women, and children. The size of the band depends on how much food is available. These bands do not really think about owning land. They move to where the food is, on land that others do not claim. The population of the countries in which these bands live are growing larger all the time. Therefore, the available land on which these bands can live is growing smaller and smaller each year.

There is little difference in who is important and who is not, in a hunting and gathering band. Everyone shares in the hunting or gathering. Someone may be better at taking care of sick or wounded people. That person becomes a healer. They will have some authority as a healer but they will also be a hunter. A good hunter will have authority in the hunt. Someone who understands the animal’s habits will have authority in helping to find the animals. Each person may have his own special skill, but no one has more power than the others. Power is shared.

What authority there is in the band is usually based in family relationships. You remember family structures, don’t you? It is usually hard to tell political organization and family organization apart in bands. Because the people in the band are most often related, they ‘get along’. Disputes can be settled by talking face to face. If no agreement is reached, some people will leave the band and join another, related band.

Most decisions are made by talking about the problem. When an elder says something, his advice may not be followed, if the rest all agree on something else. If an elder is wrong several times, the group will begin to listen to someone else. Decisions are usually made based on where the food is. People cannot argue much because the decisions are made for them by where the food is. If they cannot find food, they will die.

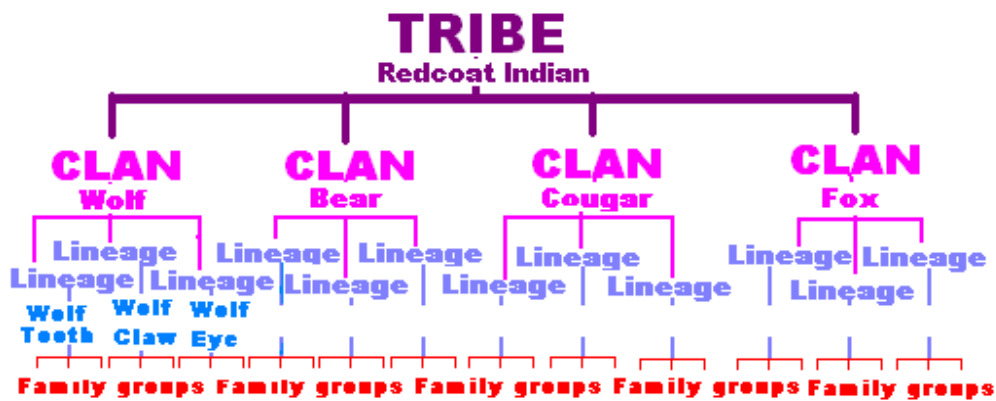
There are many separate bands in a hunting/gathering society. Bands may have agreements about where they hunt or look for food, but one band does not tell the other band what to do. They share language and behaviours because people move from one group to another, but the bands do not rule each other.”

“I think it would be hardest to convince individuals about new things in this kind of society,” said Minzhe.

“One key to change in these groups is to talk to the entire band together. Some of my friends work with bands. They call all the people together and talk to them all at once. They let the people make the decision together. It is very difficult for one person to make a decision by himself in a band,” stated the teacher.

“What is the next kind of political organization?” asked Huizhong.

“The next kind of government is also a stateless government. It is called the ‘tribal’ form of politics. It is made up of what looks like several bands. But there are different names for the smaller groups making up a tribe. Look at this chart.



Tribal politics is often found among the simple farmers and the herders, sometimes among hunters. A tribe is larger than the hunter/gather groups because it is made up of several groups. They can produce more food than hunters and gatherers. Political organization in lower parts of a tribe is not much different than in a band. There are leaders in these lower groups but they have little authority. They are men or women who are seen as wise, honest, intelligent and who care about others. These men or women help the group make decisions. They usually cannot make a decision for the group, but they do call for decisions. They often sum up what they have heard the majority of the group say. The leader’s summation of the conversation becomes what the group does.

In the 'tribe' there are groups called 'clans'. A 'clan' is a group of people who have a common ancestor. Sometimes this ancestor is not a human. Native people in America often think that they have descended from some animal. Most often if a man is seen as an ancestor, he is a legendary man. Sometimes the ancestor is a real man. All the people who think they descended from the 'bear', for example, are a 'clan'. Families in a clan may not be able to tell you how they are related to the ancestor. Individuals who think they are descended from the 'wolf' and others from other clans work together when there is an attack on the bear clan, for example. These clans all share the same language and customs and so they make up a 'tribe'. In the chart, they are all Red Coat Indians.

'Clans' are made up of smaller groups called 'lineages'. A 'lineage' is all the people known to be directly related to a person. That person is related to others in other lineages of the 'clan'. There may be a story about three brothers who descended from a wolf. The brothers are named and are the heads of lineages. One may be called 'wolf tooth', one may be called 'wolf claw' and another wolf' eye. Since they are brothers and the stories say they are from the wolf, the lineages make a clan.

'Lineages' are made up of 'families'. A family is a group with a grandfather or a grandmother, brothers and their wives, or sisters and husbands, and their children. You remember that we talked about all the kinds of families in the world. Each family will be related to one of the heads of a lineage, who are part of the clan. Families rule themselves most of the time. Only when there is danger of attack or when there is need to expand the land they live on will families, lineages, and clans band together.

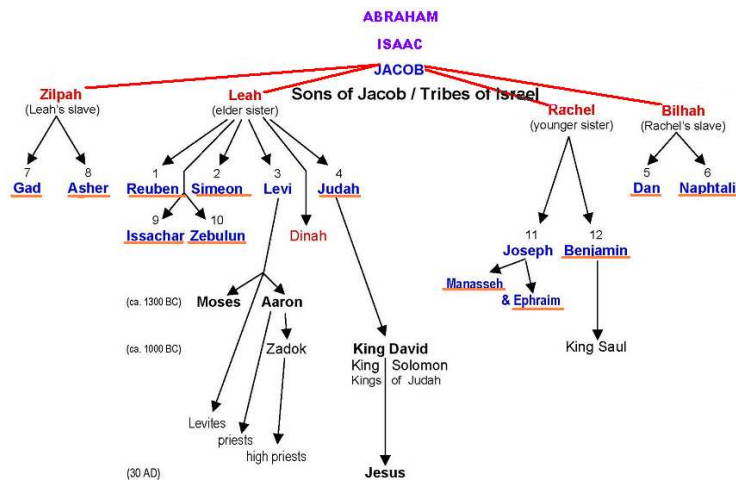
One difference between a band and a tribe is that in the tribe there are times when all related groups will work together. This happens when there is a crisis. If outsiders attack part of the society, all groups will join together to protect the attacked group. All the groups who work together are called a 'tribe'.

There are wars that take place within tribes also. When this happens people usually gather around their closest relatives to fight against the others. Clans may fight against clans, or lineages may fight against lineages.

The Old Testament in the Christian Bible tells an interesting story relating to tribal politics.

A man called Abraham is considered the head of the people group, eventually called Israelites. Abraham had a son, Isaac. Isaac's son was Jacob but according to the Bible, God changed his name to Israel. This man, Jacob (Israel) had twelve sons and one daughter by his two wives and their two servants. The people took his name (Israel) to identify themselves (Israelites). When we studied families, you will remember that we talked about families where the man has more than one wife. There was a lot of jealousy between the twelve brothers. The sons of Leah hated Joseph, the son of Rachel. He was much younger than they, but his father chose him to be the one who got twice as much as the others. Joseph was the eleventh son but the oldest son of the younger wife, Rachel. The oldest son should have gotten the double blessing from his father. Leah's children thought the blessing should have been for one of them. Jacob also loved Rachel more than he did his sister Leah. This made Leah's family angry. Remember that all the brothers thought about killing Joseph, but instead, they sold him as a slave to Egypt. The three oldest sons of Jacob all did bad things that made Jacob angry with them. So Jacob (Israel) chose Judah his fourth son to be the most important. Gad, Leah's maid's son, and Dan, Rachel's maid's son, were also oldest sons of their mothers. They also thought they should have importance. You can see that this was not a happy family.

Jacob (Israel) took Joseph's sons--Ephraim and Manasseh—as his own sons so that Joseph did get twice as much as his other brothers. These two men (Ephraim and Manasseh) also thought they were very important. Ten sons and two adopted grandsons became heads of clans. The Bible calls them tribes but anthropologically speaking each man was the head of a clan. Levi's sons became the priests in Israel. Remember that we said that some people become special at certain jobs. These men were chosen to be the religious leaders among the clans. They had no land but lived in cities among all the other clans. They became a clan set aside for religious duties.



At first, these tribes were stateless political organizations. Eventually they became a nation and had kings. The kings were to be chosen from the clan of Judah—who had been given the position of oldest son. But the first king, King Saul, came from the clan of Benjamin, who was the youngest son. This caused a lot of trouble. David, from the clan of Judah, eventually became king and his descendants were kings in what became the country of Judah. Jesus descended from the clan of Judah and the lineage of David.”

“Do political organizations change because of war?” asked Minzhe.

“Yes, when large, powerful countries took over parts of Africa, Asia and the Middle East, the boundaries of the conquered territories were drawn according to the way the conquering countries wanted them to be. This was done by Russia, England, Germany, France, Spain, Portugal, and other countries. Other, older civilizations--Rome, Greece and Babylon--had done this also. These powerful nations did not think about the tribes and clans that lived in these areas. Tribes suddenly found themselves in new and unfamiliar political organizations. Because of this, there has been much fighting between tribal peoples in Africa, for instance. Tribes who had run their own politics, suddenly found themselves in new countries under one political structure. They fought over resources such as land and water. They fought over who was most important. Much of the slave trade happened as one tribe conquered another and sold their captives to slave traders, in order to take over their lands. In the Middle East, some tribes now find themselves split between five countries. The tribes want to be together, as they share language and customs.

So they fight against the governments of the countries whose boundaries divide them, trying to make their own country.

The Kurds live in parts of eastern [Turkey](#), northern [Iraq](#), northwestern [Iran](#) and part of northern [Syria](#). It roughly encompasses the [Zagros](#) and the eastern [Taurus](#) mountain ranges. Small areas of [Azerbaijan](#) and [Armenia](#) are also considered to be a part of Kurdistan. Kurdistan is the grey area covering parts of the five main countries.”



“It would be hard to know who has influence in these tribes. It would be hard to know who to talk to, first. The authority is always changing according to what is happening,” observed Minzhe.

“You are correct,” agreed the professor. “People may move quite a bit, as well as change groups with whom they live, often. It is hard to bring them new ideas. They are only interested in land and the food it supplies. Here it is important to talk to the important people of the tribe. All the others will gather around and listen to what is being said to the important people. The tribe will decide, together, how to respond to the new information.

The next kind of political organization is called a ‘chiefdom’. This is the first of the state governments. Chief politics are found in the economic groups who practice more intense kinds of farming. In tribes, there can also be chiefs, but chiefs in tribes have less authority than chiefs in the kind of groups we are talking about now. People who are related to the chief also have authority over others. Two levels of citizens live beside each other. One group is the nobles--related to the chief--and the other group is the common people, not related to the chief.

Chiefs have a lot of authority. Often the chiefs are believed to get their authority from the gods which the people worship. Being chief usually passes from father to son. People do not move much in this group. There are Towns. Towns have more importance if the chief lives in them. Chiefs are often very involved in economics. People must give part of the food they grow to the chief. The chief will distribute this food to his family and others whom he has appointed to help him rule, as well as to friends. The chief usually supports some sort of army to stay in power. Food will be given to the army to keep them strong.

Sometimes the bigger powers who have taken over parts of Africa, Asia and the Middle East have appointed men to be chiefs where there were no chiefs before. Or they threw out the old,

ruling families and chose new families to be in power. The big powers wanted to control the people so they thought appointing their own chiefs would be a good way to do this. Instead, this has caused a lot of trouble. These newly appointed chiefs are seen as getting their power from foreigners, rather than from the people's gods or by the people's own choice. The people are not loyal to these chiefs or their families. Often these chiefs have to use a very brutal kind of force to keep order. They may become extremely wealthy because they take things from the people and from the big powers for which they rule. Chiefs are sometimes called Kings.

There is an example of this system in the Bible. The Romans conquered Israel. They set up King Herod to rule over the Jews in Galilee. Herod was not a Jew. He was an Edomite. He became very wealthy by taxing the Galileans. He also received money from Rome to rule. He was very cruel. He killed most of his family and many of the people he had set up to help him rule. He tried to kill Jesus because he was told that Jesus was the true king of the Jews. He was very afraid someone would kill him, in order to take his position.

The last kind of political organization we will talk about is the Nation. This is the most complicated of all the systems. Usually there are formal, written documents that are used as the basis for governing the very large area of land which is part of the nation. The heads of these nations are called presidents, prime ministers or even kings, or emperors.

Within the state there may be chiefdoms, and tribes. This happens in South America very often. Brazil is a state, but within the borders of Brazil there are many tribes that do not really understand that they are part of Brazil. They think they have their own land and way of doing things. The government of Brazil has set aside the land where these people live. No one but the tribes may live there. It is almost impossible to get to these tribes to bring them new ideas. There is one tribe who lives in several countries. They do not really recognize this fact. They rule themselves and move from nation to nation, planting new gardens and fields as they move.



They move freely between these places. Now, gold and oil have been found in their tribal land. Some of the tribal peoples are being killed so that other people can get the gold and oil.

These are the Yanomami people. They live in Brazil, Venezuela and Guyana.

A person belongs to a nation not because of family ties, but usually because he or she was born in the country governed by the national government. If someone from another nation wants to be a part of the nation, they must study the history, law, and customs of that nation. They are examined. If they pass the examination, there is a formal ceremony. Documents are signed, saying the person now is part of the new nation.

Authority in the nation comes from two things. The nation has written laws. These laws control everything in the country. The nation uses police or an army to enforce the written laws. In some nations a ruler takes over and decides to write his own laws.

The second basis of authority is what is closest to the third and fourth layer of culture. Nations have values that they make everyone in the country follow. These values will come out of the nation's idea of how it came into being. Sometimes stories of the gods are used. Sometimes historical happenings, like wars or rebellions, become the story that is the fourth layer in a nation's culture.

There are many levels of authority in the system. Nations have many, many layers of people with authority over greater or lesser things. The land ruled over by the national government is usually divided into provinces, prefectures, or territories. These divisions are further divided into smaller areas and within these areas are cities, towns and villages. Each division has its own authorities who govern their part, but they must follow the nation's laws and story of how and why they exist.

It is interesting that in most political organizations, women do not often have positions of authority. There are exceptions. Many times, women who do become leaders change their way of doing things. That is, they may change the way they dress and the way they talk, even the way they walk--to be more like males.

One problem with having more men than women in a nation is very important when we talk about political organization. Most violent crimes in the world are committed by unmarried men. Men between the ages of 15 and 35 often form the gangs, who commit crimes together. Some countries are taking these men into their armies. But these men may begin to cause trouble if the army has nothing to do. Young men do not just sit around, doing nothing. They will cause trouble. Countries may be tempted to go to war just to occupy these many men. This is not an

easy thing to say, but if there are too many men causing trouble, war is seen as a way to reduce the number of men and make it easier for the state to govern.

Nations do go to war with each other. They often want to gain more land. Or they want to spread their stories of why they exist. Nations often have large armies, which the smaller political organizations do not have. (Chiefdoms sometimes have armies, but not always.) Often national armies fight with tribes who have been split among several nations.

There have been two wars that have been called 'world wars' because eventually almost every nation in the world was fighting on one side or the other, or against both sides. These wars were driven by desire for more land and the desire to make people accept the story of the existence of the nation trying to conquer other nations. Many in Japan believed that they were ordained by the sun goddess to rule the world. Japan also wanted more land. Hitler taught that the German people were the superior race and were destined to rule the world. Because people believed these things, they went to war against others.

These world wars—World War I and World War II--changed much about our world. Soldiers from the large nations went to fight in other parts of the world, bringing with them new ideas to those parts of the world. Tribes people, hunters/gatherers, and small farmers all learned new things. Nation learned from nation. The world began to look the same in many ways. Today big cities of the world look very much alike. There are banks, big skyscrapers for businesses, radio and television broadcasting studios, hotels, movie making studios, railways, harbours, airports, and now the internet connecting the world. Friends of mine travel to all the big cities of the world on business. They tell me that the hotels are very much alike in each city. So do the business skyscrapers and the transportation facilities. The world is becoming one. This began during the Great Wars.

There are those who think there should be only one government ruling all the nations of the world. There should be one tax system. This system would distribute wealth equally to all parts of the world. One law court would make laws for everyone. One army would enforce the laws.

There are two systems of running nation states. One is called 'democracy'. This comes from two Greek words which mean 'the people rule'. These are the nations where a large number of the population freely vote for who will be the leader of the Nation. In this system, there are

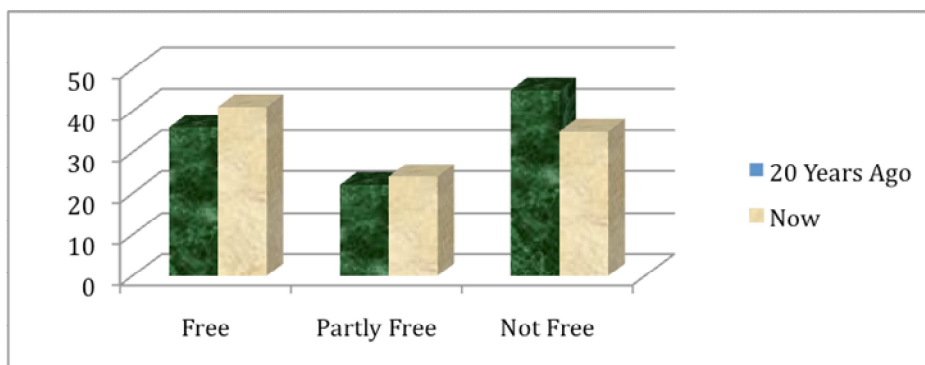
many people and ideas to choose from on the ballot. I saw a ballot which listed 50 people and 100 ideas to choose from. It takes the voter a long time to fill out.

The other system is called 'autocracy' which is a Greek word meaning 'one who rules by himself'. Another type of political authority close to autocracy is [oligarchy](#) which means 'rule by the few'. This is the system where a small group of people impose their ideas on the larger population. They may give the population a chance to 'vote' but there are usually very few, or no choices. People are usually afraid to make choices which are different from those of the small group who rules. The small group will usually say that they rule in the name of the people.

Of 192 states in the world today, 121 are called democracies.



Some experts divide the world into 'free' nations, 'partly free' nations and 'not free' nations. In the last 20 years the percentage of the world population living in 'free' nations increased from 36% to 41%, 'partly free' nations changed from 22% to 24% percent and 'not free' nations decreased from 42% to 35%.



It is interesting that 'free' nations control 86% of the world's economic activity; 'partly free' nations control 7% and 'not free' nations control 7%.



One of the biggest reasons for the changes in the way modern nations govern is the information age. We talked about that when we talked about how some people now make their living by passing on information to others. Some people do not have access to this information. They do not have computers or cell phones. Hunters and gatherers and people who follow animals usually do not. It is interesting though, that there are tribes in South America now using internet and cell phones to influence their governments. They even speak in world gatherings about what they need and how they think. The information age can be used by all kinds of political organizations to influence people's thinking. Some nations work very hard to stop people using the internet or cell phones freely. But I have seen lately many times where people have let the world know what is happening in their nation by means of cell phone or internet. This brings pressure on their government to change. The leaders of other countries may threaten not to do business with a country if it does not change because of information passed by cell phone or internet."

"What is important for us to remember when we go to live and work in another country?" asked Minzhe.

"That is a very important question", said Teacher Rifeng. "One thing you must remember is that you have to follow the laws of the country in which you live. You cannot do things the way they are done at home. When I lived in another country, I had to carry a small piece of identification that said I had permission to be in that country and work there. I was supposed to have that little booklet with me at all times. One day a policeman stopped me and asked me for the little booklet. I had forgotten it. The policeman told me he could put me in jail. But he knew my friends and so he just gave me a very stern lecture. He said if I was ever found without the

booklet again, I might have to return to my home country. Then he let me go. I did not forget the booklet again.

I had to follow the rules about driving a car. There were rules about owning houses. Many times I had to go to the city hall of the city where I lived, to work through things the government wanted me to do. It took a lot of time, but I did feel safe in that country.

You must remember that you are a guest in the country. You should act as a guest would, in someone else's home."

"What will we talk about next week?" asked Huizhong.

"What would you like to talk about?" asked Teacher Rifeng.

"I wonder how other people think," said Huizhong. "We have talked about how things are so different everywhere. Do people all think the same way?"

"That is a very interesting thing to talk about. I will do that next week," replied the teacher.

Key ideas to discuss from this story

In groups of three, talk about what the term politics means. Can you remember three ways political groups are different? Can you remember three things political groups do?

Check up

Did you talk about:

1. politics meaning who has authority to control a group of people?
2. how they gain authority?

The three ways political groups are different:

1. Do the people who hold authority in a political organization only hold political power or do they hold economic, religious power, and family power?
2. Do a few people, or do many people, have authority in the organization? Are they a separate group of people?

3. How large is the area of land that the political organization rules over, or is land even part of the political organization at all?

Three things political organizations do:

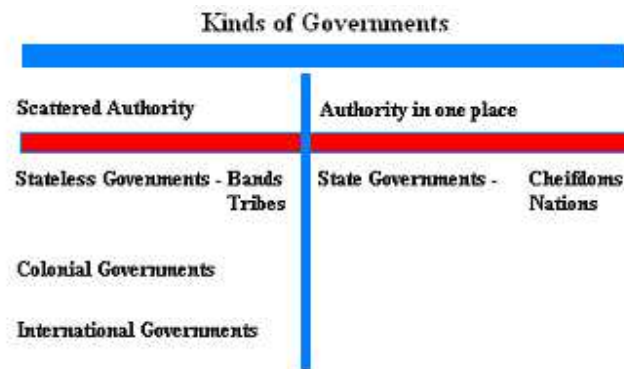
1. They make the laws that people have to follow.
2. They make the goals for the group. What will the group do? What is most important to be done now?
3. They say where resources should be used, for example, where roads should be built.

Key ideas to discuss from this story

What kinds of governments are there?

Check up

Did you remember this chart?



Key ideas to discuss from this story

What forms of politics do you see in your county?

Key ideas to discuss from this story

If you go to live in another country, what is your relationship to the political organization of that country?

Chapter Thirteen: How people think

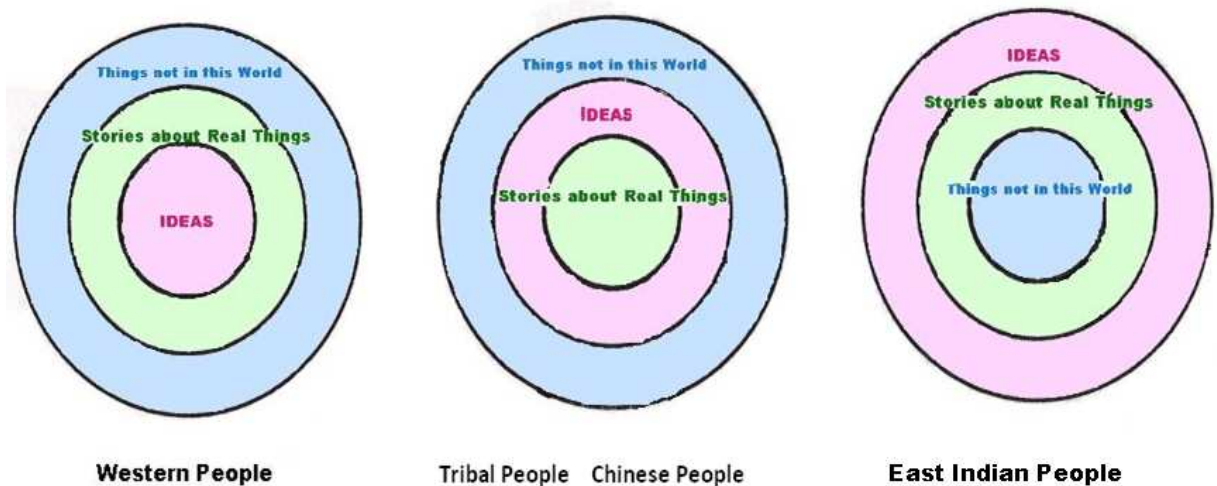
“It has been interesting talking about how many things are so different in different people groups. It makes me wonder if all the people in the world think in different ways. I am glad that is what we are going to talk about today,” said Huizhong as she prepared to go to Teacher Rifeng’s home for another chat about Cultural Anthropology.

Minzhe answered her that he really could not imagine that people would think differently than he did. “If everyone thought the same way, it would be much easier to get things done in the world,” he said.

“Are you thinking our way is the only right way again?” teased Huizhong. “Let’s hurry so Teacher Rifeng can help us understand better,” she said.

When they were settled in their chairs, Teacher Rifeng placed a new chart in front of them. They looked at it carefully.

Three Ways People Groups Think



“What do you see?” asked the teacher.

“I think I see that there are three different groups of people who think in different ways. The chart puts Western People in one group, Tribal and Chinese people in another group and

people from India in another group. I do not understand what the circles mean. Nor do I understand what the words in the circles have to do with ways of thinking,” said Huizhong.

“That is a good beginning,” said Teacher Rifeng. “I can tell you fit into one of these ways of thinking already.”

“Oh, tell me which one,” Huizhong cried.

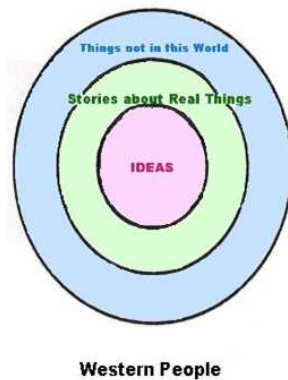
“Let’s talk about the chart and see if you can tell which one you fit into, when we are done,” said the teacher.

“You are correct in saying there are three basic ways people think. The first set of circles represents the Western Peoples. Roughly, most people in what is called the West think in a way shown by the first set. The West includes Australia and New Zealand, Europe, the Western part of Russia, and, of course, North and South America. Tribal people also live in each of these areas of the world. The tribal peoples living in the Western nations think as is illustrated in the second set of circles.

The second set of circles represents how the Tribal and Chinese peoples think. This includes other people groups in the Orient like the Japanese, Korean, and some of the Southeast Asian peoples. It also includes much of Africa, as well as significant populations in North and South America.

The third set of circles represents the people who make up the East Indian part of the world. India and Pakistan are included here. Thailand, Myanmar, Sri Lanka, Laos, Cambodia, and, Viet Nam are also included. Most of these peoples are influenced by Hindu and Buddhist belief systems.

First, let’s talk about the Western circles.



Much of the thinking of the Western world is influenced by ancient Greek and Judeo-Christian thought.

The centre circle, the pink circle, represents how these people begin thinking about something. They begin with an idea in their mind. Examples of these ideas can be: If I turned this jar upside down, I think everything in it would get mixed up. Or, I think the moon is a flat disc in the sky. Or, I should ask him to go downtown with me. Or, if I changed this gear, this machine will run better, I think.

As Western people see or hear things, they form an idea. When they hear someone talking about something, they will begin to form ideas from what they hear. Then they begin to do things based on the idea they formed. They act on the ideas they have formed from what they have heard or seen.

The green circle represents this next step in the western thinking process. After they have an idea in their minds, they begin to apply the idea to something they can see or touch or imagine. The man who asks what would happen if he turned the jar upside down, goes ahead and turns it upside down. Then he forms more ideas about what happened when he turned it upside down. If it was a jar with water and oil on top of the water, when he turns it upside down, the oil will come to the top again. So the man will have another idea. 'Why does the oil always come to the top? I think it is because it is slippery. Then he will try various things to see if he can understand if it is because the oil is slippery that it rises to the top.

Finally, the Western man will begin to think about things in the outside circle, the blue circle. This is the circle which includes things we cannot see or touch. This includes the things

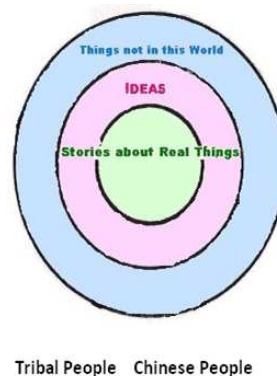
we call spiritual. Demons, angels, gods, thoughts about love, thoughts about greed, and so on are all in this area. These things are often the things that make up the fourth layer of a culture, the inner part, the heart. The Western man may see the oil always coming to the top of the water. He may then think a thought like this: 'Oil always comes to the top. That is like love always winning out over hatred and fear.'

So the Western man starts his thinking with an idea about something. Then he moves to the things he can see and touch and tries his idea out. Then he moves to thoughts about things we cannot see and touch; the things about the spiritual world."

"When you talk with Westerners, you must understand the idea that they have first, I guess," said Minzhe. "Then you can understand what they are doing and why they are doing it."

"Good thinking, Minzhe," the Teacher congratulated him. "I knew you would understand.

The next way of thinking is that of the Tribal Peoples and the Chinese.



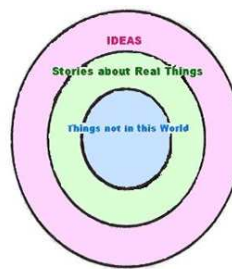
A green circle represents the centre of this people's way of thinking. That is, they begin their thinking by interacting with things they can see and touch and smell and hear. Here is an example. A North American Indian man and his son are paddling in a canoe. The man says to his son, 'Do you see that mountain over there? It looks like a deer lying down, doesn't it? We call it the 'Deer-lying-down-hill'.'

This man has begun his thinking and his teaching with something he can see. Then he moves to the pink circle which represents ideas. He may say to his son, 'Do you know when a deer lies down? It lies down when it has enough to eat and when it thinks it is safe. It rests then.

Our people will rest when we have enough to eat. We will rest when we are safe too.’ The man is now thinking in the pink circle--the ideas circle.

Finally, he will move to the outside circle, the blue circle. He may say to his son, ‘We must ask the Great Spirit to give us fish today so that our people can eat and rest. We must ask the fish spirits to allow us to catch them so that we can be fed.’

The third circle represents the East Indian way of thinking.



East Indian People

These people begin with the blue circle of thinking. That is, they always think first about the gods and ideas outside of what we can see in this world. Before they do anything they will consult the gods or the magicians to find out if it is the right time to do something. They will attribute everything to a god. I heard a story about a woman who was walking with an umbrella over her head. It began to rain. The woman sat on a big rock while it rained. When the shower passed, the woman got up and walked away. The next person who came along saw that the rock was dry, while all the grass and things around were wet. This person ran home and told everyone to come and see the rock that must be a god. It must be a god because it was dry while everything else was wet.

Another example is the place of cows in Hinduism. Verses of Indian sacred literature refer to the cow as Devi (goddess), identified with Aditi (mother of the gods) herself. So when an East Indian person sees a cow, he thinks of the goddess.

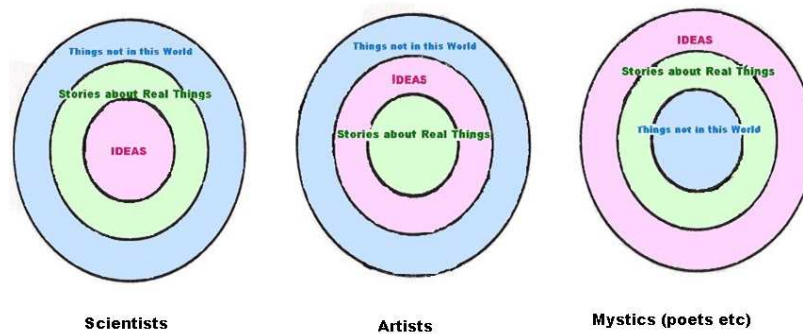


Next, these people begin to think about the real things around them. They move to the pink circle. Cows are considered sacred. The people see the cow--mother goddess--as bringing gifts to them. So they use five products of the cow — milk, curds, ghee butter, urine and dung. The milk of the family cow nourishes children as they grow up, and cow dung is a major source of fuel for households throughout India. Cow dung is sometimes among the materials used for a '[tilak](#)' - a ritual mark on the forehead. As well as using these in their homes, these things are used in '[puja](#)' (worship), as well as in rites of extreme penance.

Finally, the thinking moves into the green circle, the ideas. 'Cows are related to the goddess Devi. Therefore we must not hurt them. We will not kill the cow or eat her meat because of how they see her as connected to the goddess. We do not overly care for them either. Cows are related to the goddess so they will take care of themselves. The goddess will decide their fate and we must not interfere.' So there are the three charts and what they mean.

There is another way of understanding these charts. In all the people groups there are those who think in one of these three ways. Among Westerners there are people who think like Tribal Peoples and Chinese. There are also people who think like the East Indians. Among the Tribal and Chinese thinkers there are people who think like Westerners and East Indians. There are also people among the East Indians who think like the Westerners or the Tribal Peoples and Chinese.

Three Ways People Groups Think



Scientists think the way that Westerners think. Scientists always begin with thoughts about something. Then they test the thoughts out on things they can see and touch. Finally they make ideas about what they cannot see. Newton saw an apple fall. He thought about it. Why does the apple fall? He dropped all kinds of things and they all fell to the ground. So Newton had an idea about something we cannot see. He thought there must be something called gravity. Therefore, he formed the 'law of gravity'.

Artists start with the things they can see and touch. They draw or paint or sculpt them. Or they put them into dance or into drama. But they always move into the realm of ideas next. There is always an idea in the painting or the sculpture. Art usually ends in something we cannot really touch or see. Art brings to us feelings and emotion, or thoughts about gods. We will study more of this when we talk about art.

Mystics are found in every culture. They begin their thinking with their own feelings or their impressions about things that cannot be seen. Some poets do this too, but not all poets do it. Mystics then move to the things that they can see and touch and finally move into the world of ideas.

Among Christians, there are groups of believers who begin with ideas first. They begin with the ideas written in the Bible. They think about the ideas of the Bible. Then they do things in the world. They are very careful to follow what is written in the Bible. Finally they relate this to feelings of goodness, kindness and happiness. These are the Evangelical and Fundamental divisions of Christianity.

The Roman Catholic Church, the Orthodox Church and many of the formal churches begin thinking with things we can see. There are statues and colours and stained glass windows and all kinds of chalices and incense burners used in these Churches. These things are then attached to ideas. The colour green is used to think about living things. The priests wear green robes on Easter Sunday because green symbolizes new life. Christ came back to life on Easter Sunday. Then the ideas follow; that God is the author of life. Stained glass windows tell stories and bring ideas about light and its beauty. These Christians then turn to God as Light and Beauty of Holiness.

The Pentecostal and Charismatic divisions of Christianity often begin their thinking with things they cannot see and touch. Speaking in tongues is a spiritual activity. People do not understand what is being said. But the act of speaking in tongues is thought to mean that the Holy Spirit is present and active. When the Spirit is present, then people will do things because they have the help of God. In the early days of Christianity, many people moved away from regular life to live in caves. They tried to get rid of all thoughts and activities of normal life. They sought visions and dreams.

We can also see these three ways of thinking among Muslim believers. There are what is called the 'Fundamentalist' Muslims. These are Muslims who have an idea and follow that idea. These people, for example, begin with the idea that Islam is the only right religion for people to believe. They take parts of the Koran to be very literal ideas. Then they move to things they can touch and see. They go about bombing things, trying to destroy those who they think are evil--because they are enemies of Islam. But then they move to the spiritual. They say that if you die while you are killing enemies of Islam, you will go to heaven immediately. You will have great wealth and many women to look after you.

There are many Muslim believers who begin with what can be seen and touched. They go to the holy city of Mecca. There they run around the Ka'aba seven times. Then they move to another place picking up stones and throwing them at three walls. They wash at a certain well. All of these actions involving things they can see and touch lead them to ideas. The walls represent Satan who tempted Abraham three times. The Angel Gabriel told Abraham to throw stones at Satan each time he was tempted. So Muslims re-enact this story. This brings them to

the idea of resisting temptation. Then they move to the idea of being pure before Allah so that Allah might favour them. That is the spiritual circle of thought.

There is another group of Muslims, called Sufi. These Muslims think about spiritual things first. They go for dreams and visions and ‘touching God’ with their spirits. They are the mystics of the Muslim world. They begin to dance, imitating the movements of the planets, things they can see. Finally they form ideas about what has happened.

These three ways of thinking occur in the Christian Bible. Jesus told many parables. He said, ‘Look at the lilies of the field.’ The people looked at the flowers growing around them. Then Jesus gave them an idea. ‘The lilies do not spin cloth, but look how beautifully they are dressed.’ Then Jesus made a statement about God the Father. ‘Will not God who dresses the lilies look after you?’ Jesus was a Tribal, Chinese thinker.

The Apostle Paul was a Western thinker. He began with an idea. He said, ‘If I could speak any language, but didn’t love, speaking those languages would be worthless. If I had lots of money but didn’t love, the money would be worthless.’ Then he began to talk about the practical things that love does. ‘Love is kind. Love does not boast,’ he said. Then he moved to the realm we cannot see. ‘Three things will last forever, faith, hope and love’ but the greatest is love.’

King David was sometimes an artist and sometimes a mystic. He begins Psalm 42:1 with a picture of real things--‘As a deer pants for water.’ In many of the other Psalms, David begins with a conversation with God and his relationship to God. These are not the things that we can see or touch on earth. These are the things inside of us. They are feelings and longings. They are the spiritual side of life. David would then express thoughts about how he felt and finally would make statements about how God was his strength. The Old Testament Prophets were true mystics who saw things of the future and who began their thinking with the reality of God. Then they talked about events in the present world and then brought out thoughts about who God is and what He is like.

Most of the writers of the Old Testament were Tribal thinkers. For example, they do not try to define ‘joy’ by writing all kinds of ideas about what joy is. Rather they say, ‘the mountains skip like lambs’. They use something we can see, mountains and lambs to explain joy. They were familiar with lambs skipping about. They thought that if mountains skipped like lambs that

would tell us something about joy. Many scientific thinkers would see the phrase as nonsense. 'Mountains do not skip', they would say.

These differences in thinking can be seen in the way languages are constructed. English is a very blunt language. People say their ideas, plainly. Then they talk about the ideas and apply them. English is a language that comes out of a Western, scientific, Christian kind of thinking. The Japanese language is much less direct. In formal Japanese one does not say 'yes' or 'no' directly. The language used is vague and imprecise. When I asked a Japanese grocer if he had any bananas, he answered me, 'Yes, we have some lovely apples today.' I guessed there were no bananas in the store that day. An English speaker would have said, 'No, we do not have any bananas.', much more directly. These languages illustrate how differences are caused by the fourth layer stories from which the Japanese and English grew. Buddhist thinking does not see things as permanent. Things are in a constant change. Everything is heading towards nothing, which is its real state. So Japanese is never very precise. It comes from the Tribal Chinese way of thinking. It starts with seen things and then expresses ideas according to how the things they see are interpreted. English is tied to the idea that there is a definite beginning and a definite end to everything--except God--Who is eternal. Do you remember when we talked about time and how people see time differently? Those influences on how people see time also influence how they think and how they speak.

To Westerners and scientists, asking 'Why?' is very meaningful. It is used all the time. The question 'Why?' is the beginning of their thinking up an answer, an idea. To Tribal and Oriental peoples, 'When?' is the question that is asked. A Westerner would say, 'My toe hurts. Why?' The Tribal thinks, 'My toe hurts. 'When?' The answer in both cases sounds the same. Both questions end in people doing the same thing. But the way of thinking through to the answer is different. The Westerner answers his 'why' by saying, 'because I stubbed my toe'. Then he asks 'Why?' Again he will answer 'Because my toe hit something in its way. In this case, a chair is in the way. What should I do? I should move the chair.' The Tribal person says 'When did my toe hurt? After I stubbed my toe. When did I stub my toe? When I hit the chair. Can it be prevented from happening again? Yes, let me move the chair.'

Japanese are known by Americans for taking things and improving them. They are not known for inventing many new things. Japanese tend not to ask 'why does this happen?' and

then think through to something new. Rather, they ask 'when does this happen?' and then develop ways of making it happen better. Even when Japanese use the word 'why,' they mean what Westerners mean when they ask 'when' or 'how'. When Japanese ask 'why', they tend to get answers more like what Westerners get when they ask when and how. Japanese' answers will tend to be see-hear-touch-taste-able explanations rather than new ideas.

An example of Tribal thinking comes from Papua New Guinea. A villager who thought his neighbour's son had violated his daughter would never say so straight out. He might be wrong, and even if he were right, to shame his neighbour would be wrong. So he might say, 'One of my chickens is missing!' To the Western or scientific thinker, this seems to make no sense, but it is picture language. It talks about things we can see and touch and hear first. The neighbour knows the father is not worried about chickens, and also knows it was not his own son who was messing with the neighbour's daughter. So he may say, 'I saw your chicken around So-and-so's garden.' He, too, does not say what he thinks straight out, but the father gets the idea from the picture and can investigate further. It was not that neighbour's son but maybe the other neighbour's son.

Children think like Tribal Peoples. If you say, 'The moon is made of green cheese', children want to know what it tastes like. To think that something means something else is difficult for the very young to do. Most children are unable to think ideas first, until they are eleven or twelve years of age. There must be some kind of brain changes as well as other physical changes that take place at this time of life.

We talked about the different levels of people within each people group the other day. In our world today, in many ways, the higher class of people are usually the more educated. They will think more by beginning with ideas. They think more in a scientific way. The middle classes think more about the things they can see and touch around them. They may more often begin to think starting with objects. The poorer classes may think more in the realm of the spiritual. They do not have education, nor do they have many things. They think more about the unseen side of life. They long for help, so they turn to the spirit world first."

"Sometimes I seem to think in all three ways," exclaimed Huizhong. "Is that possible?" she asked.

“Yes,” answered teacher Rifeng. “We all, at times, think in these three ways. Sometimes we begin with an idea. And sometimes we begin thinking because we are seeing or feeling or tasting something. Sometimes we begin with a feeling.

None of these ways of thinking is better than the other. They are just the ways that people groups in the world think.

When you go to another country you will try to persuade people. You will need to understand how these people think. You will need to put your message in the way they can understand it. They will understand much more quickly if you begin as they begin.

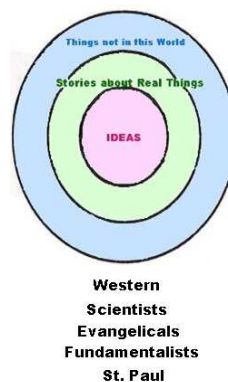
I think it is time to talk about talking. Next time you come we will talk about the differences in language all around the world. People sometimes do their thinking aloud, so that is a good subject to follow today’s talk.”

“You did not tell me how I think yet,” said Huizhong.

The Teacher laughed gently. “No, I did not. Why don’t you and Minzhe talk about that on the way home and see how you think you think.

Key ideas to discuss from this story

In groups of three, discuss what this chart means.



Check up

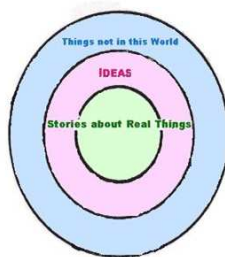
Did you talk about these things?

4. People who think this way begin with ideas about things – the pink circle.

5. They then interact with touchable, see-able things around them to check if their ideas are in line with reality – the green circle.
6. Finally they think about things that are not seen or felt but are part of the spiritual realm - the blue circle.

Key ideas to discuss from this story

In groups of three, discuss what this chart means.



Trial Peoples, Chinese Peoples
 Artists
 Roman Catholics, Orthodox
 Children
 Jesus

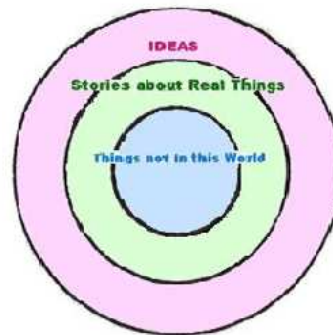
Check up

Did you talk about these points?

5. These people begin their thinking by looking at things they can see or touch, or by listening to things they can hear – the green circle.
6. They draw ideas out of what they see – the pink circle
7. They then think about things in the spiritual or feeling realm

Key ideas to discuss from this story

In groups of three, discuss what this chart means.



East Indian Peoples
Mystics (poets etc)
Pentecostals, Charismatics
The Prophets

Check up

Did you talk about these things?

1. People who think this way begin with ideas about things in the spiritual world or the world of feelings – the blue circle
2. They then interact with see-able, touchable things around them to understand how those things relate with the world that is seen and felt – the green circle.
3. Finally they form ideas - the pink circle.

Key ideas to discuss from this story

Does your culture fit with one of these ways of thinking?

Do you know people who think in these three ways?

How do you think?

Do you have difficulty understanding those people who think differently than you do?

Chapter Fourteen: Talking about talking

“The thought of having to learn another language is a bit frightening to me,” said Huizhong to her husband Minzhe as they hurried to their meeting with Teacher Rifeng.

“Yes,” her husband agreed. “I wonder why we can’t just use an interpreter when we go to another country.”

Teacher Rifeng met the couple at the door and said, “Dé la bienvenida, es sentado por favor.”

The couple hesitated but then went in because the teacher was gesturing to them to come in so they guessed that is what he meant.

When they had settled in their seats, Minzhe asked Teacher Rifeng what he had said at the door.

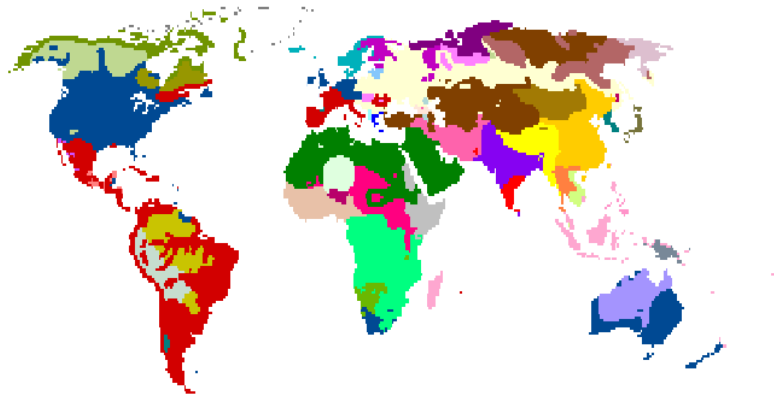
Professor Rifeng smiled and said, “I said, ‘Welcome. Please be seated.’ I was speaking in Spanish,” he said.

“Spanish is a nice sounding language. That makes me wonder, what is language?” asked Huizhong.

“Language is hard to define. People who study language think that if one group of people understand each other but other groups do not understand them, that group has its own language,” said Teacher Rifeng. “So a spoken language is something that one specific group of people will understand. Within each large group, there will be differences in how that language is used. However, most people will understand each other. We call the differences ‘dialects’. Each language may have many dialects and sub-dialects. The farther a group of people live from each other, the more differences there will be in the language they use. But it will still be the same language. ”

“How many languages are there in the world?” asked Minzhe.

“There are about 6000 known languages. This chart shows where some of these 6000 languages and where they are spoken.



Can you guess which language is spoken by the most people?” Teacher Rifeng asked.

“Probably English,” answered Minzhe.

“Many people think that, but actually, English is in third place. Mandarin is first. Here is a

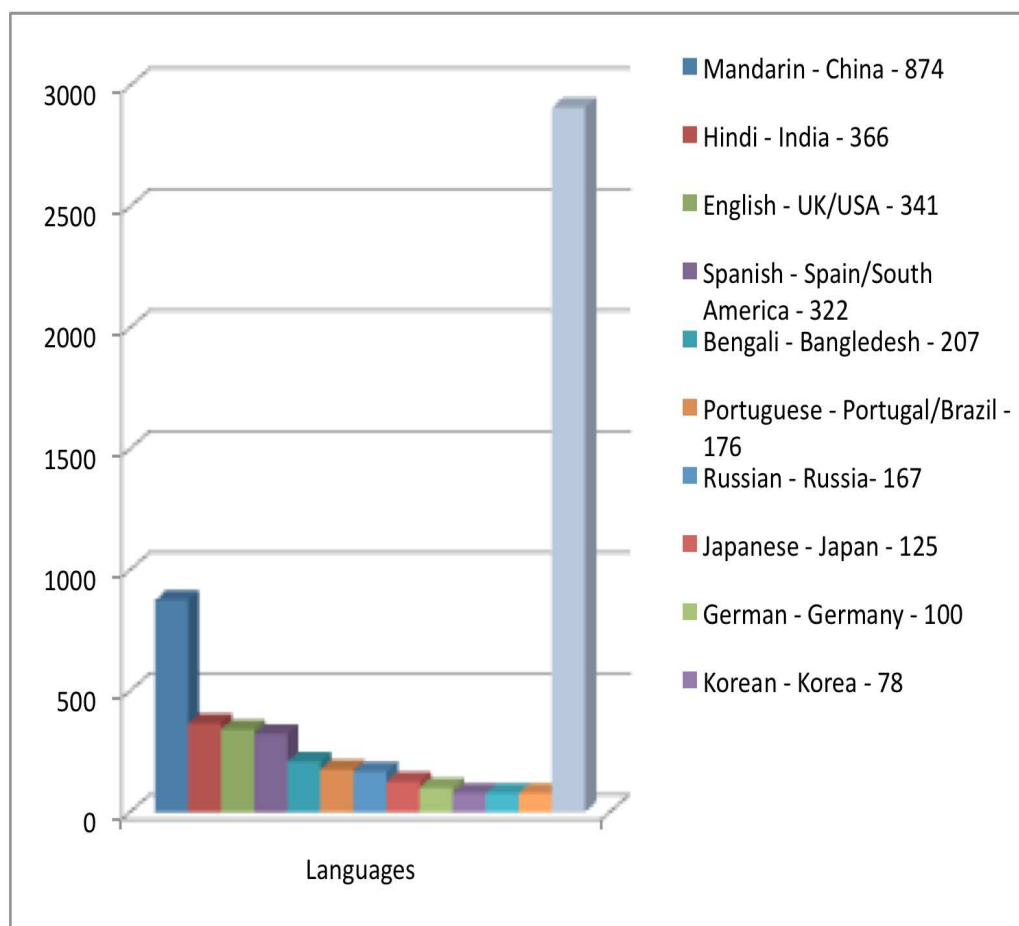


chart that shows you the top 12 languages used in our world. 2,910,000,000 people speak these languages. That means a little less than half the people in the world speak twelve languages.

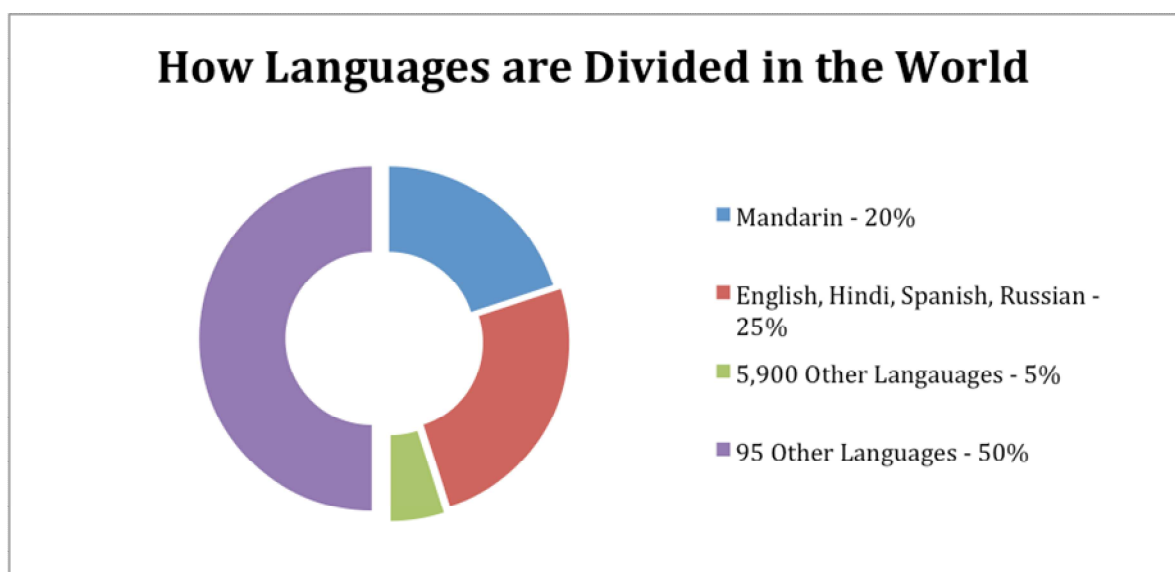
Within those twelve languages, there are many, many dialects.

The numbers in the chart are in billions.

95% of the world's population uses only 100 languages. 5% of the population uses the other 5,900. Only a very few people speak each of the 5,900 languages in the 5%.



One out of every five people in the world speaks Mandarin. One out of four people in the world speaks English, Hindi, Spanish, or Russian.



No one knows how many languages have disappeared from the world. In North America, there were many hundreds of languages before white men came. Now there are only about 200 languages left. A few elders are the only people to speak some of these languages

Have you ever thought what life would be like without language? Language makes it possible to think about the past and the future. How could there be religion, systems of law, science, literature, written music, help for health problems, sports rules, or meaning for anything without language?

There are three parts to language. That is, there is spoken language, there is written language, and there is language that does not have anything to do with words. In the next session, we will talk about this kind of language. Not all languages have a written part. There is no written part in many of the spoken languages making up the 5,900 small languages. This is one of the reasons why those languages are disappearing. There is nothing to preserve them. All languages have the spoken and not spoken parts.

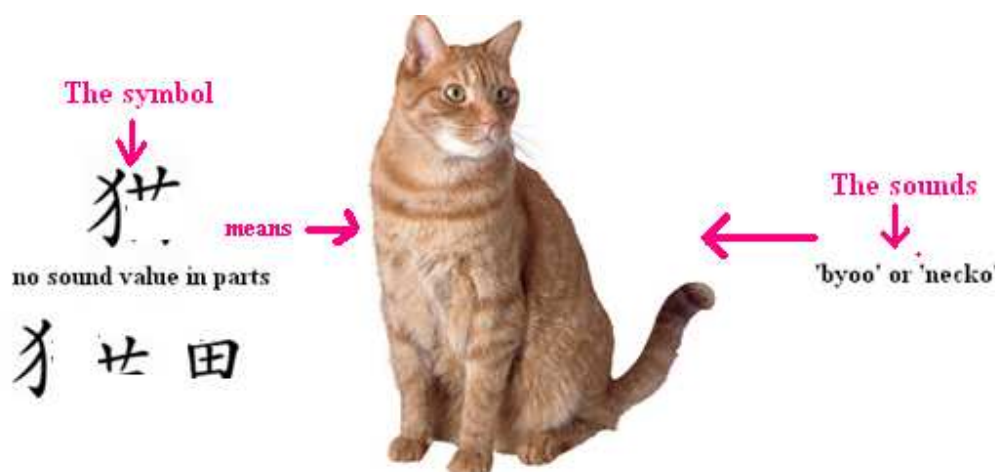
Think about spoken language for a bit. What is spoken language?

Spoken words are sets of sounds put together to bring an object or idea to another person's mind. The sounds are not the object. Any set of sounds can mean anything any group of people choose it to mean. Different groups of people have simply agreed that certain combinations of sounds point to certain things. The sounds do not usually originate from the object or idea. I should say in most languages some words copy sounds from around us. Animals cries – the 'meow' of a cat - the sound of a gunshot – 'bang' – the sound of falling rain – 'pitter-patter' – these all are part of spoken language words with meaning which mimic other sounds. Some languages have many more of these kinds of words than others do.

Written language is even more interesting and complicated. There are two kinds of writing used in the world. There is picture like writing and writing that uses symbols for sounds. Western languages use this kind. This kind of writing uses symbols for the sounds that refer to the object meant. When English readers see, 'cat' it brings to mind an animal that purrs, hunts, and usually has a long tail and whiskers. The written symbols stand for sounds: 'C' standing for a K sound, A standing for an A sound, and T standing for a T sound. Put the sounds together and you say 'Cat', a set of sounds causing English speakers think of the above-described animal.



Other written languages, for example Japanese, use a sort of picture writing which does not symbolize sounds. The symbol for cat does not symbolize separate sounds in the Japanese mind. The reader just sees a cat in their mind when they see this symbol. When the reader wishes to speak, he or she must choose whether to make the sounds 'byoo' or 'necko' to make the hearer think of a 'cat'. People who use this form of writing, read much faster. They do not have to think sounds, and change them to images, they just see pictures. Their brain does not have to work as hard as when symbols stand for sounds that have to be put together to understand what is meant.



Humans are not the only beings who communicate. Animals, birds, fish and insects communicate. Every living thing communicates. But there is a great difference in how human and animal communication happens.

Koko, a gorilla, learned 250 signs in one hour. Koko was able to put two signs together to make a new idea. People thought animals could not do this. We also know animals have memories. It is not certain that animals communicate their memories but some species of whales and crows seem to do this. One main difference in human communication and animal communication is that humans can communicate about the future. Also, humans communicate ideas about things they cannot see, touch, hear, or smell. People talk about love, fear, right and wrong, heaven, or what makes someone do what he or she does. We pass the ability to communicate to our children because of our own experience of learning it rather than each one again making communication up on the spot. Animals are born with the knowledge of what special calls mean. Animals do not change those calls but humans communication changes all the time. Humans constantly add new words and forget old words.

All children are born able to make any sound used in any language used in the world. All children can learn any grammar form in the world. Suppose a Chinese baby was born and taken immediately to Serbia without hearing Chinese spoken. If that child heard nothing but Serbian from birth, he or she would grow up learning to speak Serbian with no difficulty. Suppose that child returned to China some years later. He or she would have to work hard to learn Chinese. Children learn to imitate a language they hear rather than suddenly speaking the native language of their parents. Suppose the mother of Chinese child who learned Serbian had talked a lot in Chinese during her nine-month pregnancy. Suppose she specifically talked to the child in her womb. There is evidence that that child could learn Chinese more quickly than any other new language (beside Serbian). The child would be familiar with the rhythms and tones of the Chinese language even though he or she had not heard them after birth.

How children learn a language is fascinating. Parents around the world use a simpler language when speaking to children. Short exclamations are used *like 'LOOK!'* Parents often touch children when talking to them. Eye contact is very important. People use higher pitched voices when they talk to children. Sentences are simpler. Topics are about the present rather than the past or future. Adults repeat a lot for babies. They use child talk. (*Horsie for Horse*). They stretch out the pronunciation of words. (*Oooooopen up wiiiiiiide*)

(I do not know Chinese so I do not know if these illustrations will all translate across, but I do know that there are similar things done in all languages when talking to children around the world. Whoever is translating this may have to find appropriate illustrations)

Imitating adults is not the only way children learn language. They are able to put words together to produce their own unique ideas as soon as they have a certain number of words to use. How do children figure out the rules of grammar? How do they know what is a noun and a verb? How do they know where the noun and verb go in a sentence? Every child in every language figures this. Every child in every language learns things in the same order and at about the same age in whatever people group they live in.

It is believed that all children are born with a sense of basic patterns of grammar used in the world. As they grow older, they listen and fit what they hear into the basic patterns. They keep the patterns suiting their language and reject the patterns not suitable. This is why it is harder for adults to learn a new language. They have rejected patterns they were born with but did not use. A child who learns several languages at the same time keeps more patterns and can learn new languages more easily.

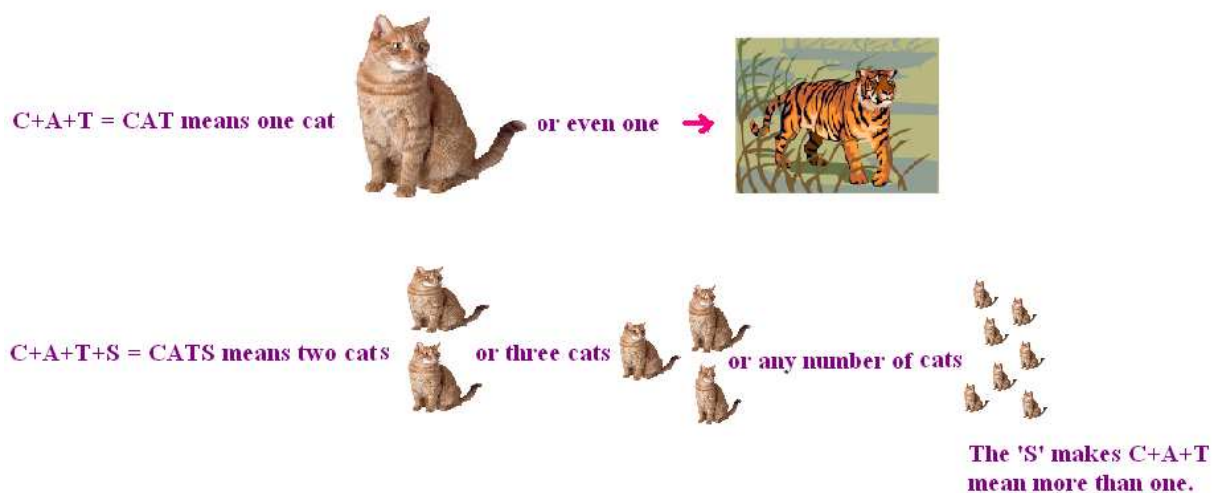
“Are there things that are the same about every language? It would be a lot easier to learn a new language if we knew that there were similarities,” said Huizhong.

“Yes, there are basic similarities,” answered Teacher Rifeng. “All languages have a logical structure. There are rules in every language about what sounds to use for what and how to combine those sounds to make meaning. That means there are two basic things about every language. Out of all the sounds humans can make, there is a chosen group of sounds for each language. Out of the hundreds of ways of combining those specific sounds, there is a chosen pattern for combining them.

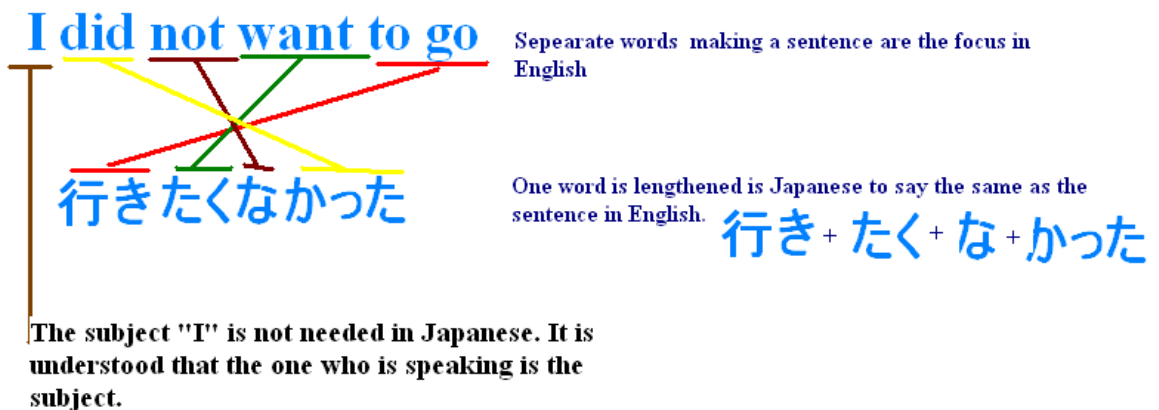
Some languages use only about 15 specific sounds while other languages use as many as 100 sounds. Each sound is the smallest part of a language. These single sounds usually have no meaning or very little meaning by themselves.

However, single sounds have meaning when combined into groups of sounds that by common agreement stand for some object or idea. People who study language look for the smallest groups of sounds that when used together have meaning. Sometimes a group of sounds

has another sound added to it that changes the meaning. Remember 'CAT' in English. If an English speaker adds an 'S' sound to CAT making it CATS it means more than one cat. The 'S' sound is then considered one of the small sounds that has meaning. The 'S' does not have meaning by itself but it adds meaning to the smaller group, 'CAT'. 'CAT' is considered a 'free' smallest part of English because it can have meaning by itself. 'S' cannot have meaning by itself so it is considered a 'bound' part of English. It must always be bound to a free small part to make meaning.

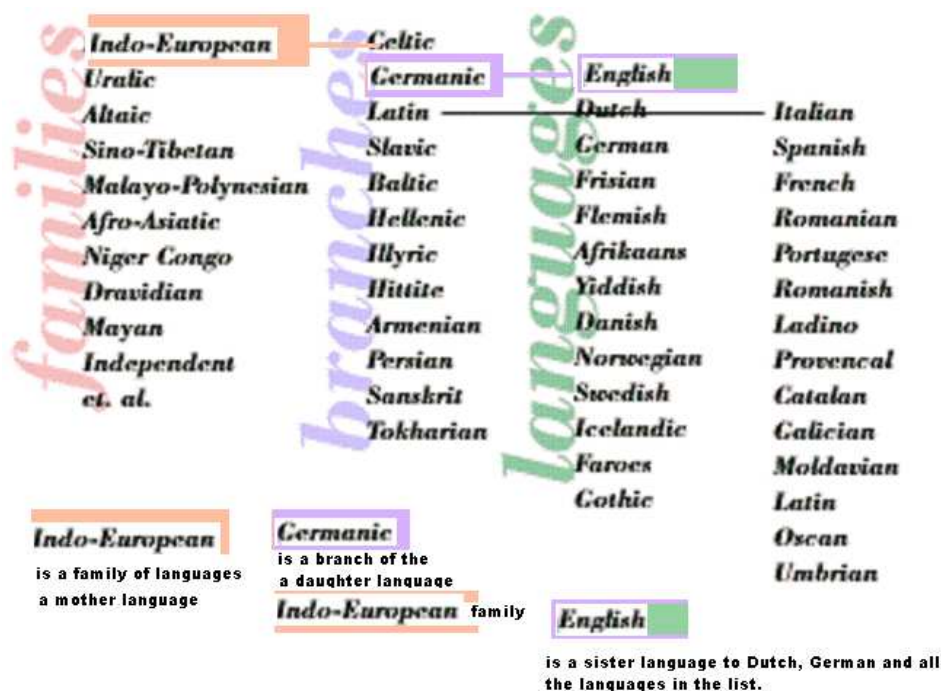


The next section of language is grammar. Grammar has two parts. First, there are rules about how the smallest parts of language can be put together to make meaningful words. There are languages that focus on how words are made. These languages make meaning by adding to the words making them longer. Other languages focus on putting words together in certain order to make sentences.



Notice that English and Japanese are almost opposite to each other in order of meaning.

Among the 6000 languages that exist, there are families of languages. That is, there are groups of languages that relate to each other. Similar sounds are used. Grammar rules are similar. People who study languages talk about ‘families, branches of families, and individual languages in each branch.



Italian and all the languages listed under it come from Latin and are called Romance languages

For example, the languages used in Europe come from a family of languages called Indo European Languages. There is a branch of this family called the Germanic branch. English is one of the languages on this branch. French and Spanish are called sister languages to Italian because they come from the Latin branch group.

The second part of grammar is how to put the words together to make sentences, paragraphs, and whole stories. I am not going to talk much about paragraphs and stories. That is a whole different course of study.

I will talk a bit about sentences. One interesting way of dividing languages is according to the order the verbs, subjects, and objects are used in a sentence. Here are all the possible word orders for the subject (S), verb (V), and object (O) in order from most common to rarest:

- SOV - the largest number languages including:
 - Japanese, Mongolian, Basque, Turkish, Korean,
 - many of the languages of India such [Hindi](#) and [Urdu](#), (about 540 million), [Bengali](#) (about 260 million), [Punjabi](#) (about 100 million), [Marathi](#) (about 90 million), [Gujarati](#) (about 45 million), [Nepali](#) (about 40 million), [Oriya](#) (about 30 million), [Sindhi](#) (about 20 million), [Sinhala](#) (about 16 million), [Saraiki](#) (about 14 million) and [Assamese](#) (about 14 million) with a total number of native speakers of more than 900 million.
 - The Dravidian languages mainly spoken in [southern India](#) and parts of eastern and central [India](#) as well as in northeastern [Sri Lanka](#), [Pakistan](#), [Nepal](#), [Bangladesh](#), [Afghanistan](#), [Iran](#), and overseas in other countries such as [Malaysia](#) and [Singapore](#). About 200 million people use this form. Persian usually follows this pattern but also uses other patterns.
- SVO languages including:
 - English, the Romance languages, Bulgarian, Chinese and Swahili, Indonesian, Javanese, Finnish, Polish, Thai, Vietnamese among others.
 - About 75% of the world languages use SOV and SVO.
 - Some people feel this is the order most children would first choose to speak in.
- VSO languages include Classical Arabic, and Hawaiian.
- VOS languages include Fijian and Malagasy.
- OVS languages include Hixkaryana, a Caribbean language.
- OSV languages include Xavante from Brazil and Warao from Venezuela.
- Some languages are more complicated: Russian allows all possible combinations SVO, OVS, SOV, OSV, VSO, VOS. Changing the word order influences tiny changes of meaning. Usually the last word in a sentence is emphasized.

Languages are always changing. Both the written form of a language and the spoken form change. New inventions and new ways of doing things bring new words and ideas to languages.

Values change because views in the fourth level of culture change. This brings new words to the language. Outside events cause change. During war, soldiers bring new words to the places where they are fighting. Several cultures living together result in words crossing cultural barriers. Most Western Alphabets do not change much but Eastern symbols used in writing will often be simplified or changed. Formal Chinese characters began to change in the 1950's to simplified characters."

"We talked about the different ways that people make a living. Some people live very simply, hunting and gathering. They do not have many belongings as they move often. Is their language simpler than people who live in industrial cities?" asked Minzhe.

"People used to think that might be so," answered the teacher. "However, as they learned more about languages; they learned that all languages are complex. In all languages, people can talk about things unseen. In some places like Australia, where the people have few belongings, they have very complex and long stories about the unseen world. We talked about Australian 'dream time' when we talked about time.

Each language has cultural focus. For example, the Nuer people in Africa are herders. They have large herds of cattle. Their language focuses on cattle. They have ten terms for the colour of cattle. There are many terms for the markings on the hides of the cattle. Many terms describe the shape of a cow's horns. When you put all these terms together you have thousands of words to choose from to describe one cow. If you were speaking English, you would have to use many words where the Nuer could use one word to describe the same cow.

Some people think that because we use the words we do in a language, we see the world according to the words we use. An example is people who live where there is not much ice have only a few terms to describe ice. They do not see many kinds of ice when they look at ice. They see only ice because they have only one word for ice. People who live in the North surrounded by ice all the time have many more words to describe ice. The people who don't have much ice do not physically see the different kinds of ice that people in the North do because the south has only a few words for ice. This idea has not been totally proven yet but it is an interesting idea. Others say we see what we see because we have words for what we see. Some cultures have only one word for the colours green and blue. It has been shown that these people's eyes do not distinguish between the different shades of green and blue well. So they have one word for both green and blue.

This is one reason that it is important to learn the language of the people to whom you wish to bring new ideas. You need to see things the way they do and language is one way of seeing what they see. When you try to explain something, if the words and the ideas behind those words don't match what people see and feel, you will create confusion.

The values of the third layer of culture influence language. Japanese do not value individualism. They have a saying 'The nail that sticks up, gets hammered down'. Americans

value individuality highly. Therefore, many words in English use the word 'self' as part of the word.

Americans will say 'I think...' very quickly. Japanese will say rather more thoughtfully, 'We Japanese think...'. Very few Japanese will say 'I think...'. This comes from their view of who they are and why they exist.

There is a difference in how thoughts are expressed in languages. Many Western speakers chose very direct, blunt words. They try to express ideas as clearly as possible. Many Eastern speakers prefer to be softer, less blunt, and vaguer. These two ways of expression come from the fourth layer of culture. Eastern religions believe that everything is constantly changing. There is therefore certainty to ideas. Christianity believes God never changes. His will does not change. So people who believe this speak much more directly.

Silence is much more acceptable in some language groups than in others. Silence means different things to different people groups. We will talk more about that in the next lesson.

There is one other thing very important thing about language. People within one language group choose to use words differently. They even use different words in different situations. Sometimes it even seems they are speaking different languages. Remember our talk about levels of a culture. People will use one set of words in front of someone they respect. They will use different words in front of someone they feel is lower than themselves. They would never use those words for someone they feel is higher than they are. The Japanese language has three distinct levels. In those three levels, there are also many levels. Very different words are used when speaking to a teacher than when speaking to a fellow student. In America, people use one set of words in a religious service, speaking more quietly than they would in a market place. A university professor giving a lecture will use different words than he would if he were speaking to his friends. There is a different way to say things in a political speech than when giving instructions to an employee. Young people use a very different set of words when talking among themselves than when talking to teachers. A young man will speak differently to his grandmother than he will when he speaks to his male friends. But everyone understands what is being said.

In some countries, children will use one set of words, women use another, and men use a third set. In each of the gender or age sets, different words are used in different situations. Children will use a set of words between themselves but they will use a different set of words when speaking to adults. Adults will not use these words. Again every one understands what is being said.

Every different kind of work has its own words to use when describing the tools and tasks done in that work. Doctors use different words than lumberjacks. Lawyers use different words than people working in railway work. There are special words used in each kind of work that only those in that kind of work will fully understand. Doctors and pharmacists work in the same kind of work, treating illnesses. So there are words that both will use that patients in the hospitals

will not understand. Skateboarders have a whole vocabulary that very few people outside the skateboard community understand. We call this language ‘community of practice’ language. The use of computers has brought many new words into many different languages. In each language, words that were used first for the computer only are now used to describe other things in the culture.

Earlier today, I mentioned how people in different parts of a language group will have their own way of saying things. Most languages have what is called a standard group of words to use when speaking to the largest group in the area. Radio and television broadcasters will all speak a standard variation of the language. Politicians and teachers will also speak this standard language. The variations used in smaller parts of the country are considered less correct. The use of non-standard language is looked down on when used to speak to the whole language group. People in the South of a country will often speak differently than people in the North. They may be able to understand each other with some difficulty but they know they are using the same language. There is usually a third way of speaking a standard language, which both can understand and use when speaking to the general population who use the language. These regional languages may be used in theatre and movies. That makes the movie or play seem real. Wealthy people and educated people tend to speak the more standard kind of the language.

Language is used to change people. A conquering nation may force everyone to learn its language in order to squash opposition. Russia forced the Latvian, Lithuanian, and Estonian people to speak Russian instead of their own languages. The government of Tanzania faced ruling a country using 250 different languages. In order to run the country, the government said everyone had to learn and use Swahili. No one had used Swahili before. All schools, radio stations, government offices, and most large business had to use Swahili immediately. France began to police the use of the French language in 1635. No words are allowed to enter the language from other languages. This produced some strange word combinations when the internet came into wide use. The common words used by many languages for internet activities came from America where the internet had become popular. The French changed these words to words that had French origin.

Some countries have two or three official languages. Canada uses both French and English. All products in Canada have both French and English directions written on them. If a product comes from a country like Great Britain where only English is used, the label must be changed for use in Canada. Canada uses French and English because of its history. Both French and English founded parts of Canada. The population is almost equally divided between French and English. An interesting point is that in the Canadian province of Quebec, there are laws, much like in France, enforcing the use of French only.

The United Nations uses only six languages even though there are 191 countries with many more languages represented in the Assembly. The European Union has decided to let each nation use its own language. Therefore, everything in the Union must be translated into the 20 official

languages and even into 360 other languages found within the boundaries of the European Union. This is very expensive.

“Oh, I don’t think I can learn another language, even though I know it is important,” cried Huizhong.

“Well, be sure to come next week,” said Professor Rifeng. “I will talk about talking without talking. You can do that. In fact you do it all the time. See you then.”

Key ideas to discuss from this story.

In groups of three, try to remember what language is, how many languages there are in the world, what language has the largest number of speakers?

Check up

A. Language is

1. a group of vocal sounds and written symbols used by one group of people who will understand each other. Other groups will have different sets of sounds and symbols.
2. a third part of language is neither spoken or written
3. not all groups of people have written language but all have spoken and unspoken language.

B. There are 6000 languages in the world

C. Mandarin is spoken by one out of five people in the world

Key ideas to discuss from this story.

In groups of three, talk about the difference between spoken and written language.

Check up

Did you talk about the fact that spoken language is made up on sounds grouped together in a way that a group of people agree means something.

Written language can be done in two ways. One is a group of symbols that mean sounds that are spoken to mean something. Or written language can be symbols that themselves point to the object without one having to think in sounds.

Key ideas to discuss from this story.

Discuss the way language is different even within a language group

Check up

Did you talk about:

1. Dialects – the different ways words are used between the North and South or East and West of a country. Do you know some examples in your own language?
2. Men, women, and children may use different sets of words. How does that happen in your language?
3. People in different jobs use special words. What special words do you use in your jobs?
4. Standard language used in place of the regional languages
5. Languages reflect the values of the third layer of culture and the ideas of the fourth layer of culture
6. Languages change, many die

Key ideas to discuss from this story.

Why is it important to use the language of the people you are trying to talk to?

Check up

Because they see what they say and say what they see and if you really want to get ideas across you must do so using what they see and say.

Chapter Fifteen: Talking without Talking

“I was very interested in learning about all the languages in the world the last time we visited with Professor Rifeng,” Huizhong said to her husband, as they walked to the Professor’s house. “I wonder what he means by talking without talking.....Oh, the way you just looked at me told me something. Maybe that is what we are going to talk about.”

“I did not say a word,” said Minzhe. What did I tell you by looking at you?”

“You told me that you think I was asking a silly question, I think,” answered his wife.

“I guess I thought that. Was it so obvious on my face?” laughed Minzhe, slowing down his walking pace.

“Yes, it was, and you just told me another thing. You slowed down your pace of walking. You told me you were thinking. You always walk more slowly when you are thinking.” Huizhong said smiling.

“Maybe the teacher doesn’t have to tell us much today,” Minzhe said, laughing. “We seem to talk well without talking already.”

They both felt a little self-conscious as they took their places after exchanging the proper greetings. They wondered what they were telling their teacher by their actions.

“Do you know that from 60 to 90% of what people communicate to each other is done without spoken or written language?” asked Teacher Rifeng.

“No, I am surprised,” said Huizhong looking more self-conscious. “I had no idea that it happens so much. How do we talk without talking?”

“Before I tell you how we talk without talking, there is one more thing I need to tell you,” Teacher Rifeng replied. “That is, you are always talking without talking. You can never stop talking without talking. It is happening all the time. As I talk about how talking without talking happens, you will understand that it takes place all the time.

Humans communicate in twelve ways. We talked about two forms of communication last time you came. We talked about spoken and written language. People in all cultures also communicate in ten other ways. Let me list the ways for you. Then we will talk about each one, separately.

Here are the ten ways. People communicate using:

1. numbers
2. pictures – things in two dimension (flat things), drawn symbols
3. three dimensional objects we use everyday, or representations of things—like statues
4. sound and silence
5. the way we move our bodies, faces, hands, and feet
6. how we use light and colour in our clothes, in our houses, in our decorations
7. touch
8. how we use the spaces around us
9. how we use time
10. how we use taste and smell

What each of these ways of communication communicates is somewhat different in each culture. The same body movements usually mean different things in different places. People in each culture learn what these methods of communication mean, just as they learn what spoken and written communications mean. Unspoken communication is difficult to understand. We do not always understand what a smile means, or what an object means. We cannot tell exactly what the way someone stands means. Sometimes people dress in ways that are opposite to what they really mean to communicate. People can tell untruth with non-spoken communication just as they can with spoken communication. Some unspoken communication is very reliable. There are changes in the pupils of people's eyes when they tell a lie. No one can stop this change. Police use cameras and computers now to watch these changes in people's eyes as they question them. These tiny changes never lie.

This next chart tells us two very interesting things about the twelve ways of communicating.

Twelve Ways of Communicating



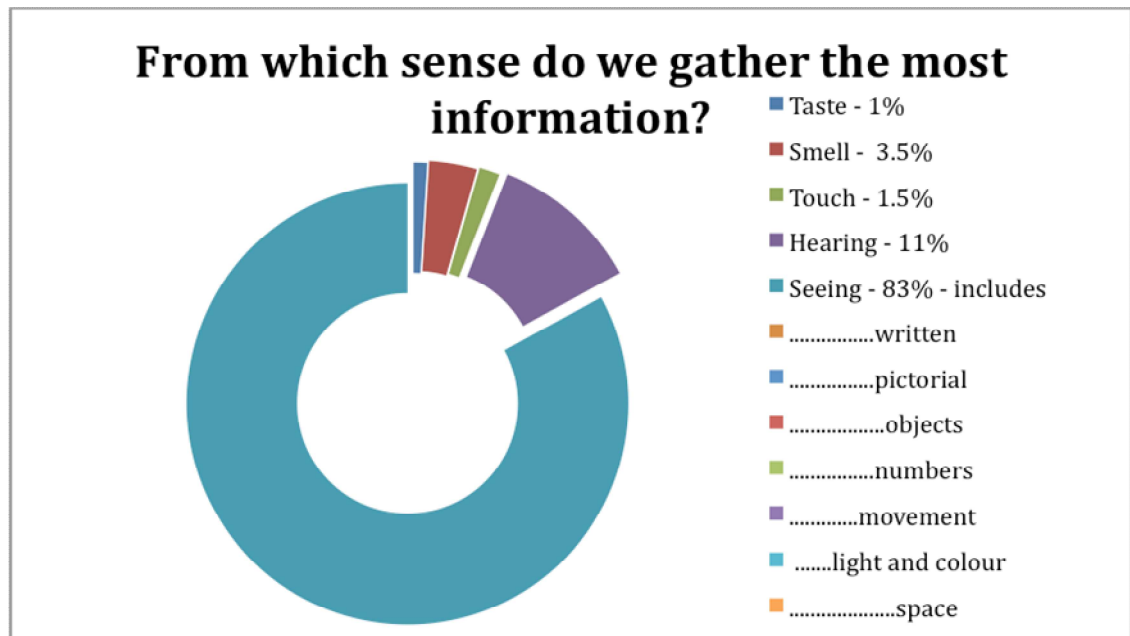
People tend to believe the kinds of communication they are least aware of using, more than they believe the kinds of which they are most aware.”

“I don’t understand. Can you give me examples of this?” Huizhong asked.

“Well, suppose I said to you that the house was on fire right now,” replied Teacher Rifeng. “You would stop to think about that. You might sit for a bit and wonder if I was really telling the truth. However, if you smelled smoke you would not question if it were smoke you smelled. You would immediately begin to look for the source of the smoke. You would believe your sense of smell right away. ‘Something is burning,’ you would say as soon as you smelled it. You would try to smell it more clearly, not really listening to what I was saying, if I just went on talking about communication. You do not think about smelling, you just smell. You do not think about tasting something, usually. You just taste it. If something is very sour, you will spit it out immediately. You will not think about it but you will believe that it is sour and spit it out. If I tell you it is very sour, you may wonder how sour it is, or you may say that you like sour things and taste it anyway. You would not believe my spoken communication as soon as you would believe it, if you tasted it first.”

“That is true,” said Minzhe. “If what Huizhong is cooking smells delicious I believe it right away. However when I cannot smell it, if I just hear Huizhong say it is delicious, I do not necessarily believe her, until I taste it.”

“That is true,” laughed Huizhong. “He never believes me until he tastes the food first. Now I wonder what sense we use most in communication,” she said. Oh, I see you have a chart for that too.”



“Yes, I do,” said Professor Rifeng, smiling. “‘Seeing’ is used the most – 83% of the time. It includes seven of the ways of communicating: writing, pictures, objects, numbers, movement, light and colour, and the use of space. Hearing is used only 11% of the time in communicating. I wonder why we talk so much? Taste is only 1% of our communication, smell is 3.5%, and touch is 1.5%. The use of time is not on this chart. But, time is a very important communicator in some situations.

There is something very important about this list of the kinds of communication. That is, the more kinds you use together, the longer people will remember what you want them to know. People remember a staged drama longer than they remember just reading a play. They have seen and heard the drama, not just seen the words. People remember a drama they have acted in longer than one they simply watched. Movement, use of space, and colour of costumes--among other things--are used when a person acts out a drama. If people can touch and smell things while they do the drama, the memory stays longer and more clearly. Remember this when you go to the country you are going to work in. Do not just tell people what you have to say. Notice in this

chart that we only gather 11% of what we learn by hearing. Get people involved in telling the story. Give them pictures. Let them feel things. Let them smell things. They will understand and remember much better.

Let us talk about the ten ways of communicating, one by one, now.

The first method of communication on the list after writing is numbers. Numbers can be spoken and written. They can be marks on a wall. Nevertheless, they are a specific kind of communication. Numbers tell us very specific information about how many things there are, or how far away they are. They tell us how big or small something is. How heavy, or how light, is a newborn baby. Numbers tell us many things.

There is an odd kind of communication connected to numbers. Many Westerners believe the number 13 is unlucky. There are no 13th floors in tall buildings. 13 people will not eat around a table. Other cultures do not use the number 4. You would never send someone a present with four things in it in some cultures. You would not give someone four flowers. That is because the word for four is the same word as the word death. The numbers 13 and 4 communicate more than just how many things there are, in these cases.

Pictures are interesting. Not everyone in every culture has seen photographs. People who have not seen photographs do not know how to interpret them because photographs are two-dimensional. Pictures have height and width, but no depth. People have to get used to seeing things with no depth. Drawn illustrations can also be misinterpreted because they do not have depth. A group of people who eat bananas all the time thought that a black and white illustration of bananas was actually an illustration of fingers. They were not used to seeing bananas in black and white, with no depth. Some people who see a motion picture for the first time get up and run around to look behind the screen, in order to see where the people went when they went off the edge of the screen. People have to learn to see in two-dimensions.

Next is the use of sound in communication. People make many sounds, besides the sounds used to make spoken words. Clicking your tongue can mean you disagree with someone, someone was naughty, or it can mean that what was just said was a very clever idea. What clicking your tongue means depends on where you are.

When English speakers raise their voices at the end of a sentence it means they are asking a question. People use many different tones in their voice when they say words, adding to the meaning of the word. They can use an angry tone, a pleading tone, a happy tone, or a sad tone. People can communicate almost any emotion humans have, by the tone of voice used. The sound of catching a breath quickly can mean surprise, fear, disbelief, or agreement. Breathing out quickly can mean relief, anger, or contempt. Laughter and crying are sounds that mean different things at different times, in different places. Sometimes the sound of crying means sadness and sometimes it means joy, depending on where you are, and on what is happening. All of these sounds communicate things to the people who hear them.

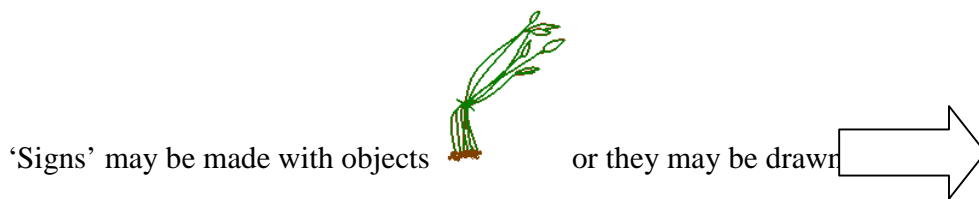
Objects can communicate very clearly. Having someone give you flowers at your door, or having them give you a severed ear, communicates two, very different, things. In Canada, receiving flowers can mean many things. It may be your birthday. You may be sick, and friends want to cheer you up. Someone may be telling you they love you, or someone may have died and the flowers express sorrow. However, the flowers will not tell the same story as a severed ear would tell.

Objects communicate because of past experiences. Something you have never seen before does not necessarily communicate anything to you. However, if the object looks like something else you are familiar with, it can communicate to you. In this case, we usually misinterpret the message the object brings. We rely on what we have seen or felt before, in order to interpret the meaning of new objects.

In the West, young men want to own certain kinds of cars because it tells young women what kind of a man they are. Some cars mean the fellow is single and sporty. Owning other kinds of cars tells people you are from a wealthy level of society. Other cars tell you that the person driving the car is a family man. Cars are a very great communication object. People who don't have cars, but have to take busses or the trains in cities, are usually a certain class of people. They are not wealthy enough to own cars or to have a place to park their car in the city where they work. The fact that they ride the bus or train to work tells you something. Different kinds of motorcycles tell you a lot about the person who owns them. Even people who use bicycles have different styles and kinds of bicycles, which communicate things about the rider.

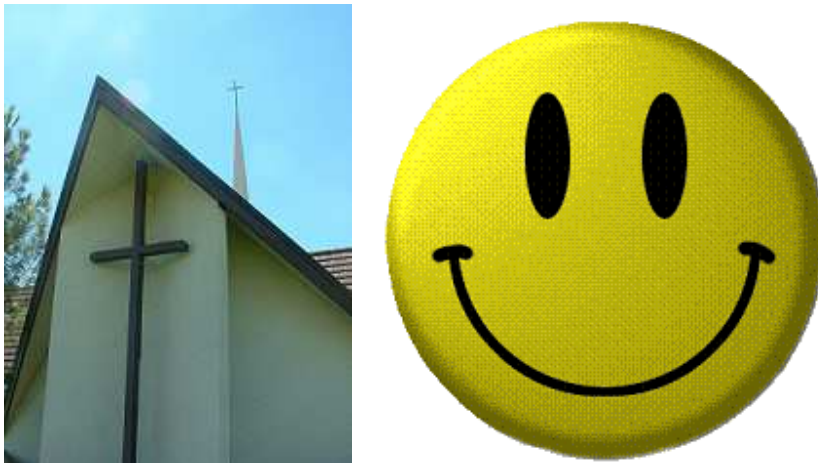
Girls in America who do not want young men to pay attention to them often wear a wedding ring on their finger. It communicates that they are married; therefore the young man's attention is unwelcomed. The girls are deliberately using the ring to misinform the young man. You can see that a great amount of communication is done with objects. This communication has a lot to do with the first level of culture, the things we have.

There is a special group of communications called 'signs'.



Both these signs tell people to look to the right or go to the right. Someone tied a bunch of grasses together in a way that points right, so it means 'go to the right'. Others drew an arrow, which means 'go right' or 'look right'. The sign is not a copy of a real thing. A sign is used to tell us something.

There is another set of things called 'Symbols'. Symbols are real things that tell us something other than what it really is. Here are two symbols.



The cross is a symbol that the building to which it is attached is a church. The cross reminds people of Jesus Christ's death. Crosses are real things. However, this cross is not a real cross to hang people on. This cross is a symbol that the building is a church. Smiles are real things, but this little fellow--called a 'happy face'--means that someone is happy. If I put this at

the end of a sentence, it is a symbol that I am happy about what I just said. 😊 If I see it in a window, it tells me that the room inside is a happy place. We use many symbols to communicate.

What one wears, or does not wear, communicates much. Young people want to wear only certain kinds of shoes because those shoes are what everyone thinks are special. In Los Angeles, you dare not wear certain kinds of running shoes on certain streets unless you are a member of the gang who lives on that street. The gang will hurt you if you are not a member of the gang, but wear their shoes. In Muslim countries women wear a great deal of gold jewellery. This is a sign that their husbands value them. People use fine clothes to tell other people that they are rich. Prostitutes in different countries wear different clothes that communicate to men that they are prostitutes. Objects communicate many things.

Movement is also a very important part of communication. A Swedish woman in French Polynesia asked a question of a local person. She became very frustrated because she felt she got no answer. The person said nothing to her. Months later, the lady found she had been given a ‘yes’ answer. The person she had asked the question of had slightly raised her eyebrows when she was asked the question. That meant ‘yes’. The same movement in Greece would have meant ‘no’. The woman was listening for words, not looking for the non-spoken communication. She thought she did not get an answer, because she heard nothing.

There are six centres of communication on our body. The face and the hands are both very important means of communication. We often use our heads and feet to communicate ideas. How we use our arms and legs is important. We also communicate with our whole body, for example, how we stand or sit.

There is a popular TV show in America, called ‘Nuances’, which is about detectives videotaping people’s faces while they are asking the people questions. The detectives then watch the people’s faces, replayed in slow motion. They look for tiny changes in expression that happen very quickly. From these tiny changes, they can tell how the people are feeling and if they are being honest when they answer the questions. It is interesting how the use of masks in drama, and cartoons in magazines, exaggerate the communication made by our faces.

You can watch what people really mean by watching their hands and sometimes their feet. A Prime Minister in a certain country lost his job because he was twiddling his thumbs when reporters asked him questions on television. The population felt questions they thought were important bored the Prime Minister. The population, therefore, thought that the Prime Minister was unfit to rule. He lost his position.

Our posture tells others whether we are eager, frightened, bored, interested, ill, tired, nervous, or happy. It was very interesting to watch how students sat in their desks when I was teaching in the classroom. When everyone was slouching in his or her desk, I knew I was being boring. The students were not looking at me. I had to change how I was teaching to catch interest again. If everyone was interested, they leaned forward and looked at me intently. Probably they were even slightly smiling.

Many movements have completely opposite meanings from place to place, as in the story I just told. As I was growing up, I learned that I should not look a teacher in the eye. That would be disrespectful. One of my English teachers was a Canadian. My Canadian teacher called me to his office one day to ask me why I would not look at him when he was teaching. He thought I was not looking at him because I was doing something I did not want him to know about. He thought I was hiding something. It took a while to understand each other's interpretation of eye contact. Eye contact means many different things in different countries.

A South American woman married a man whose mother was Russian and whose father was French. Every morning she greeted her in-laws as she was used to greeting other South Americans. She would brush her lips on their cheeks, a sort of kiss in the air, next to a person's cheek. This is very common in Spain and other parts of Southern Europe. She later found out that her mother-in-law, the Russian woman, complained that she was a very cold daughter-in-law. The mother-in-law expected her daughter-in-law to kiss her fully, on the lips, as everyone in Russia does, whether they are male or female. The daughter in law was doing what she had done in South America and what her husband's father did, in France. She did not know that her brush kisses meant coldness to her mother-in-law.

A friend told me that when he lived in Africa, he lived with a family in a round hut with no dividing walls in it. He wanted to change his clothes. He did not know where to do that. He went

to the wall and faced it. He began to change his clothes but was very embarrassed because every one gathered around him to watch him. He found out that he should change his clothes in the very centre of the hut. Going to the wall meant that he had something to hide. No one would have paid attention to him if he had changed in the middle of the room, because he would signal he had nothing to hide.

Only a few movements have universal meaning. Many of these universal movements apply first to children. Fear is expressed by quick movement away from something. Movements connected with grief are also more universal, but not completely so. Another almost universal body movement is showing submission by lowering one's body in front of another person. This is a major part of Japanese culture. Japanese people bow to each other on every occasion. I even watched a person bow several times to the invisible person on the other end-of-the-line, while talking on the telephone. Japanese bow many times during a conversation. They signal the end of the conversation with a bow. Everyone carefully calculates the length of each bow to suit the situation. Some one of higher position will not bow as low, or as long, as someone of lesser position must do for them. A person of higher position may also embarrass another person by extending his bow a very long time, until it becomes uncomfortable. It is rude to rise from a bow before someone more important than you does. It is also rude to rise before an older person does. You may be saying polite words, but the length of your bow will speak louder.

Sometimes people lie on the ground to show submission. Muslims sometimes lie flat on the ground when they pray. Many people groups used to lie down before a king. Christians often kneel when they pray. Each group shows submission by lowering their body.

Light and colour have great meaning. On Mother's day in Canada, a mother--whose own mother has died--receives a white carnation, but a mother whose own mother is alive receives a red carnation. In India, the colour blue shows deity The gods of India are often pictured with blue skin. In Tibet, only demons dress in brown, so people do not use brown in pictures or in formal clothes. For many years, women in America would not wear red dresses. Only prostitutes wore that colour. That has changed now. Older woman would not wear bright colours. That has also changed. Dark colours are thought of as cold. Black is often connected with evil and with death in the West. In other countries, white is used when someone dies. White often means 'clean' and 'pure'. Brides in the West have worn white for some time now to mean purity.

Normally, a bride will not wear white for a second marriage. This is changing, too. Brides in other cultures wear red because it is a congratulatory colour. It is good to find out what colours mean in the country to which you are going. You will want to dress in appropriate colours for your age and for the kind of work you are doing.

An interesting combination of light and colour that communicates to us is traffic lights. We use red for warning. In the case of traffic lights, the red light means 'stop'. Move, and you could die. Green is the symbol of life in many cultures. Green traffic lights mean 'go' – it is okay to move, you will live. Yellow means use caution; the light is soon going to turn red; be careful. All of this is communicated to us without the use of words. There is a place in Sydney, Australia, where five streets come together. There are 140 red, green, and yellow lights at that place. I had to watch very carefully to know which set of lights were 'talking' to me and my car.

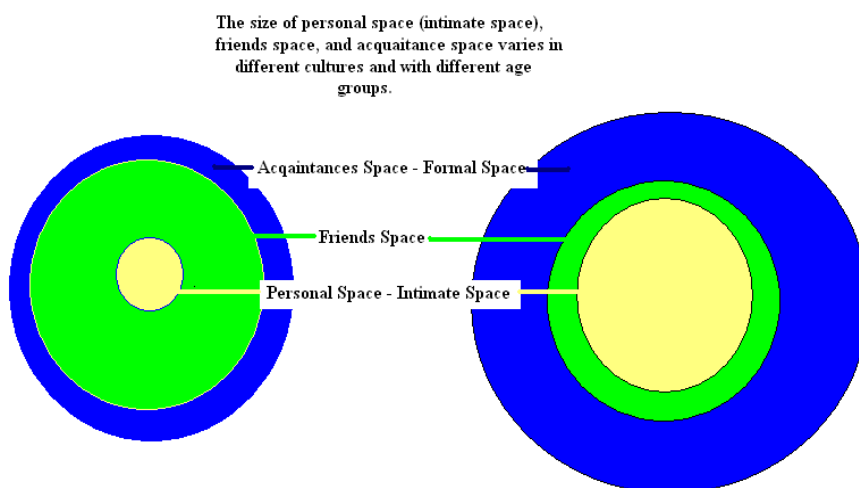
Touch is probably the most personal way of communicating. Some cultures are touch-a-lot cultures, and some cultures are touch-very-little cultures. It took me a long time to get used to African men wanting to hold my hand as we walked together somewhere. It was a sign of good friendship for them. However, it was uncomfortable for me. Slapping and hitting can mean very opposite things. Young men in some countries hit each other on the arm as a sign of being buddies. They would not do that with their mothers. They might do it with their fathers if their father did it first. At other times and in other places, slapping and hitting is a violent act. I was shocked when an American friend punched me on the shoulder when we finished making an agreement about some business. It was a sign from him that he was happy and that we were friends. At first, I thought he was angry, but he was smiling and laughing, so I guessed he was not angry. In another culture, he might have smiles and be laughing, even though he was angry, and the punch would have told me that. In the West, a young woman may slap a man's face when she feels very angry or embarrassed by the man. That communicates she is very hurt, emotionally.

Touching is often a sign of acceptance or comfort. Jesus often used touch when healing people. No one would have touched a leper for many years, previously, but Jesus touched him or her.

My wife teases me that I touch everything in sight. It is how I learn about things. Babies put things in their mouths to learn about those things by how they feel on their tongues. My wife says I have just progressed one-step from babyhood. I do not put things in my mouth but I touch things with my fingers to learn about them.

The use of space is very interesting. Hispanic peoples stand very close to each other when they speak. I have watched a Spanish person speaking to an American. The American kept stepping backwards as the Spanish person kept moving in closer, to talk to him. Soon they had moved across the room, with the American uncomfortably trapped against the wall. Oriental people can be jammed together in trains or busses with strangers and seem not to feel very uncomfortable. However, if there are only two or three people present, there needs to be more space to feel comfortable. Americans are very uncomfortable in crowded places and want a certain space between people. I have seen Americans choose to walk up stairs rather than enter a crowded elevator. It is very amusing to watch Canadians on busses try to protect the space beside them by putting their shopping bags on the seats next to them. They try to ignore the people looking for seats, until the last empty seats are taken. Then, they must move their bags to the floor, so that someone else may sit beside them.

There are three rings of space surrounding people, which vary in size in different cultures.



It is a good thing to find out, if you can, what these spaces are like in the culture to which you wish to go. Or, you can just observe very carefully. It is important to know when one's status changes from acquaintance to friend, to close friend.

I grew up in the country, far from the city, where there was a lot of space. I do not like the city because it is crowded and cramped. I have to be careful not to offend people by signalling my discomfort in crowded places. People may think I don't like them when it is just the crowdedness that makes me uncomfortable. I have taken people to my home where they have been afraid because of the big rooms with just a few people in them. At first, I misunderstood what they were telling me by their body language. I thought they were uninterested in what we were doing. When we went into a smaller room in the house, these people were much less nervous and enjoyed the evening better. I like big rooms because I grew up with plenty of space around me, I do not like small rooms. My body language can tell people this, but they may also misunderstand why I act the way I do. My use of space means different things to different people.

How we use time tells people things about us also. In another country, it is very important to know when to arrive at an event. If you arrive too early, it tells people something. If you arrive too late, it tells people something. You can be two hours late in some countries and not be late at all. There, if you came on the agreed time, you would find the host and hostess not ready for your arrival. The order in which people arrive at an event tells us something. In some countries, the most important people arrive last. If you arrive after them, you are saying you are better than they are. That may cause a bad problem. Students who always arrive in the classroom late are telling me that they are not interested in what is going on there. Students who love the class get involved, and come on time.

We have already talked about smell. Hundreds of dollars are spent in some countries making things smell nice. Americans spend much money to keep their homes smelling nice. The fragrances make statements about the people living in the house. The perfume industry tries very hard to make perfumes that will signal different ideas to people. Men's cologne has become big business in the West. Is the man an outdoors-type person, a fellow who takes risks, or is he a very calm, thinking man? The smell of the cologne he chooses will tell you. Women use perfume very carefully. The names of some perfumes signal what the intent of the communication is to

the person who smells them. 'Wild Thing'. 'Seduction'. 'Allure'. Shakespeare wrote in his play, Hamlet, that 'things smelled rotten in Denmark'. He was referring to the fact that the king had been murdered and lies were told about how he died. Things did not 'smell' right. The smell of food can bring many memories to a person. The smell of certain foods cooking can take us back to our childhood, reminding us of how things were in our homes. Smell and taste are very closely related, and both bring thoughts and memories to us.

Much about taste is personal. However, when it comes to wines, people in Europe vie with each other to make statements about themselves by the taste of the wine they serve to guests. A thoughtful hostess finds out what her guests like and she strives to please them with the tastes of the foods she serves. Her thoughtfulness in taste signals that she is a good hostess. In the West it is interesting that when something does not sound correct in a business deal or proposal, people say, 'It left a bad taste in my mouth.'

I think that is enough about talking without talking. Next time you come we will talk about another important way people communicate. That is, through the arts.

Key ideas to discuss from this story

In groups of three, talk about what talking without talking means. How much of our communication does not use words, written or spoken? How do we learn unspoken communication? Is the meaning the same in every culture?

Check up

Did you mention that:

- ❖ 60% to 90% of our communication is without written or spoken words?
- ❖ People learn communication without words in the same way they learn what words mean, except instead of listening, they watch people around them?
- ❖ The same things can mean different things in different cultures?
- ❖ It can be hard to understand communication without words?

Key ideas to discuss from this story

In groups of three, list the ten ways of wordless communication, tell what they mean and give each other examples of each kind of communication.

Check up

Did you talk about the things on this list?

1. numbers
2. pictures – things in two dimensions (flat things), drawn symbols
3. three dimensional objects we use everyday and representations of things like statues
4. sound and silence
5. the way we move our bodies, faces, hand and feet
6. how we use light and colour
7. touch
8. how we use space
9. how we use time
10. how we use taste and smell

Key ideas to discuss from this story

In groups of three, talk about whether you agree that by using combinations of the kinds of communication together, people remember more.

Key ideas to discuss from this story

In groups of three, talk about what distance between people is comfortable with people in general, with friends, with family. Would you feel comfortable with someone who is just an acquaintance talking very closely to your face?

Chapter Sixteen: Teacher Rifeng Talks about the Arts

“I think I will really enjoy meeting with Teacher Rifeng today. I love art. It will be fun to see what people in other parts of the world think about art. Maybe he will show us some art from other places,” Huizhong said to Minzhe, as they walked up the path to the teacher’s house.

“I wonder what is included under the topic. There could be a lot to talk about. But I really wonder what art has to do with us going to another country,” said Minzhe.

“It was exciting to see all the bows and arrows from all over the world covering the walls of Teacher’s studio when we first visited him. I always like looking at the carvings of people and animals standing in the corners. Then, there are the models of tiny houses and other objects peaking out from between stacks of books. Is that all art, I wonder?” said Huizhong as she hurried up the steps to the teacher’s house.

As they entered Teacher Rifeng’s studio, they found the room was even more exciting. Paintings, cloth hangings, and photos from all over the world covered the studio.

“A good place to begin is to define what we are talking about,” began Teacher Rifeng, as soon as they were seated. “But it is very difficult to define art. There are five things I want you to think about when we try to define art. So let’s begin.

First is the idea that making something we call art should be creative, playful, and enjoyable. To be art, something does not have to be useful or even practical. Remember that creating art should be enjoyable.

A second idea is that when people interact with what we call art, it should make them feel something. There should be an emotional response. Maybe they will feel happy or sad. Maybe they will feel warm or cold. To be art, something needs to make people respond with feeling. Some poems about the moon make people feel lonely. Other poems about the moon may make people feel frightened. On the other hand, when a poem talks about the moon turning a mouse’s whiskers to silver, it may make you feel playful.

The third idea is a bit harder to explain. Art comes from something that people have seen around them or experienced inside themselves. What they saw or experienced is then used to make something else. That ‘something else’ is art. Suppose you see a horse running. Seeing the

horse running is not art, though it may be a beautiful experience. It may make you feel something good. Art happens when you write a poem about the horse running. Or you may make a dance that feels like the horse running. Or you may make a sculpture of the horse running.



The fourth idea is also a bit harder to explain. When you take the ordinary thing, like a horse running, and make a poem or a dance or a sculpture, that thing you made should tell you something. Your poem, dance, or sculpture should not just show a horse, but it should express an idea as well as a feeling. My friend says that the horse sculpture tells him something about gracefulness. He sees the horse standing on one hoof. That hoof is resting on a swallow. Swallows fly so gracefully. It makes him think of freedom also. This statue gives him the idea that true grace happens in freedom. What do you understand when you look at the statue?

The last idea about art is that the artist must have some skill that he or she has developed. Others around will not have the same level of skill that the artist has. The skill is shown in two ways. The way the artist makes the art is not like another's way of making things. And what the artist communicates is different than what others communicate when they make something.

People in all cultures, in all people groups, are artistic. All people groups have skill in making sounds, movements, or objects that resemble something around them or something in their minds. These things tell us something about the thing new or different than we would have thought of, with ordinary use."

"Where did art come from? Why are humans artistic?" asked Huizhong.

“That is a great question,” replied Teacher Rifeng. “You have to go to the fourth layer of culture, the deepest one, to find an answer. That is where you find what a people group thinks about themselves. In that layer, you find how people groups think they began. When these groups imagine how they began, they often imagine why they do what they do.

Christians have a clear answer to why people are artistic. They believe that their God is an artist. When you look at all the things He made, He must be an artist, they say. Moreover, His art has a purpose. Christians refer to a verse from the book of Romans, chapter 1. In that verse, verse 20, we read, ‘From the time the world was created, people have seen the earth and all that God made. They can clearly see His invisible qualities--His eternal power and divine nature. So they have no excuse whatsoever for not knowing God.’ Here is how Christians explain this verse. We cannot see God. He is spirit. He is invisible. Therefore, He created things which, when we look at them carefully, help us to begin to understand His power. We can begin to understand what He is like. God has taken ideas about Himself and made them into things that people can see and touch and smell and taste. These things should show people how wonderful God is. Some things are funny, like giraffes. Some things are awesome, like huge waves pounding on the beach. Some things are majestic, like a lion. Some things are incredibly delicate and beautiful and clean, like a snowflake. These all tell Christians what their God is like.

The Bible tells Christians that they are made in God’s image. God speaks through the things He made, causing feelings and thoughts in people’s minds and hearts. People are in His image, so people can also make things that cause thoughts and feelings in others’ hearts and minds. Christians believe humankind broke God’s law. The result is that what people create is not always beautiful or helpful to others.

Some folks think that that is one of the most important things about God and about people. Both God and people are creative, are artistic.

There are all kinds of ways of changing material, sound, and movement into art. The changing of material into art includes painting, sculpture, body painting and tattooing, carving, architecture, and writing. Changing sound includes story telling, poetry, and all kinds of music, both singing and using instruments. Movement includes dance and making sculptures that move.

Some things combine all these forms of art. Drama uses writing, speaking, sound, and movement. In fact, much art combines two or more of the three basic divisions.

Every society has standards for what is good art and what is not such good art. These standards may be very different in each society.”

“We talked about different ways of making a living. Is there a difference in how each way of making a living makes art?” asked Minzhe.

“Oh, that is an important question. Thank you for asking it,” said teacher Rifeng. “What do you think?”

Huizhong began, “Well in the societies where people move around a lot, they cannot carry big things, or a lot of things, with them. They move too often and do not have a way to carry many things. Their art must be shown on the few things they have. For instance, maybe those people spend more time on personal decoration because they have very little besides their bodies to decorate.”

“Correct,” said the teacher. “They do leave pictures on rocks and in caves in special places that they may return to sometimes. However, much of the artistic effort focuses in making dances and in decorating their bodies.

They will also decorate the few things they have, like their cooking pots, their bows and arrows, their clothes if they are in a cooler climate, or their jewellery and hair, in warmer climates. There are no specialists in these societies. Every one is more or less equal. There are no people who just make art. Everyone decorates their own things or helps each other. Because there are no specialists, the art that is made is equally accepted. In societies where there are different levels in the society, there are people who say the kind of art done by these people is of less value than the art specialists produce. The idea that some art is of better quality than other art does not occur in simpler societies.

In the simple societies, art connects more clearly to other parts of that culture, than in more complex societies. Art, religion, and daily life are usually closely connected.

Things used in everyday life are decorated, but the decoration must not get in the way of the use of the tool. An arrow must be a good arrow so you cannot add things to the arrow that would hinder its flight. The feathers used must aid in the flight. The colour of feathers used can be varied and have many meanings, as the colour does not harm the flight of the arrow.

Music gives us an example of the differences in the way art is done in simple societies compared to complex societies.

Simple Societies

- **Phrases are repeated often**
- **Pronunciation is not so clear**
- **Little solo singing**
- **Larger space between tones of music**
- **Simple melody only**
- **Few instruments**
- **Singing in unison**

Complex Societies

- **Not much repetition**
- **Very clear pronunciation**
- **Solo singing happens often**
- **Small space between tones of music**
- **Added harmony around the melody**
- **Many instruments**
- **Singing in many parts**

There is also an interesting connection between art and politics in some places. In some island societies, there is really no chief. We talked about the fact that someone may be head for a while until he makes mistakes or someone else's ideas seem better. Then someone else becomes the important person. On other islands, chiefs always come from one family and do not lose their position. On the islands where the headman may change, people use paint to decorate their bodies. If they lose their position, they will wash off the paint. On islands where the chief is always the chief, special lasting tattoos are applied to his body. One cannot change a tattoo easily. The tattoos signify that that person is always the chief. The use of art can tell us different things if we think about it.

Another important point about art is that there is personal satisfaction in art. Art is not just something for a whole society. The person who makes the art gains much from the act of producing the art. There is pride in what has been made. There is peace, or a feeling of fulfillment. Christians point to the fact that God knew that all He had made was good. He rested or was satisfied and at peace after He finished making all of creation.

There is also something personal for the person who sees the art. There is a feeling that the person takes from the art. The kind of feeling the person gets is very different from what other people may get. Each person has his or her own special memories of experiences that will be touched when in the presence of art. When someone else looks at the horse statue, they may not feel what my friend felt about grace and freedom. The horse might be seen as proud. They may feel that the horse is dangerous. There is too much speed and too much freedom. Maybe they fell off a horse once, and remember the feeling of danger.

The arts are a way of helping societies survive, as a whole. May I tell you a story from Europe? When Hitler set out to conquer all of Europe, one of the things he did was to take all the great art of each country he conquered, sending it back to Germany to his private collections. He collected many paintings and sculptures and other things from each country. He also destroyed or forbade much of the everyday kinds of art. When Hitler threatened to capture Holland, the Dutch did something unique. They took all their important art, all the paintings by the Dutch masters and many other objects, and sent it to Canada. It was very dangerous to put it on a boat to cross the ocean during the war. The Dutch did not want this art to fall into Hitler's hands. They were willing to send it away to a place where it would be protected. Canadians protected the art and returned it to its place after the war. Now each year the Dutch send tulip bulbs to Canada where they are planted around the Parliament buildings. Each year Canadians have a beautiful reminder that they helped the Dutch survive the war against them and their culture.

There are stories telling how prisoners have survived long times in jail by doing something artistic. Many of the Jews in prison camps made things out of scraps of paper, or bits of wood, or wrote music or poetry. Many of those who did such things survived and many who would not take part in artistic efforts did not survive. There are museums where you can see what these prisoners made.

Art plays a role in controlling--or in changing--a culture. In Russia, much of the architecture was huge. Statues were huge. These oversized pieces of art spoke to the people of strength. They reminded people of the strength of the government, which made people afraid to try to change. This is an example of art used to control thought. An example of the way culture may be changed by art is the little book 'Uncle Tom's Cabin' It is a story of what it was like to be a slave in the United States. Through very skilful storytelling, the author changed many people's view of what freedom was. Some people thought Black people were not quite human, but the story showed that these people had the same feeling, hopes, and desires other humans have. The book not only influenced people in the United States, but it influenced people around the world, in places as far away such as Thailand. One good story can change much.

Art is also very educational. Ideas are taught through art without people realizing that the ideas are being put into their minds. The combination of personal reaction to the art, and feelings brought about by the art; make it easier for new ideas to come into people's thinking.

It is important to understand art when you are trying to bring new ideas to a culture. How do these people portray their most important ideas? Is it in dance or drama? Is it in poetry or in painting? Is it in simple everyday things they use, or is it in special things set apart for special times? It is important to think about how you can put your message in an artistic form that will make it more easily heard by the people you wish to influence.

A friend of mine worked in one of the small countries south of Russia. In this country, poetry is very special. Not many people listened to what my friend had to say until he learned to put his ideas into their form of poetry. In South America, there was a tribe that felt it was their duty to sing to the sun every hour of the day in order to make it move around the world. All the tribes around them thought that this tribe did that for them, too. Another friend of mine wanted to introduce the idea of the Christian God to this tribe. He listened to their songs. He got friends to help him understand how the people made the songs. Then he wrote a song using the first chapters of Genesis to explain his Christian view. One day, after the people had finished the hourly song ritual, my friend strolled out into the square and started to sing his new song, using their style of music. (By the way, this style of music sounds very bad to me. However, it was the style of the people.) The tribe was immediately interested in the song and asked if they could learn it. My friend taught them. Soon everyone was singing it. They began to think about what they were singing and soon they wanted to become Christians. The tribes around them were very frightened, thinking that if this tribe did not sing every hour, the sun would not rise and everyone would die. They threatened the tribe, trying to make them stop singing the new songs and return to the old ones. However, the tribe taught the new song to the next tribes who--through the songs--began to understand and accept the Christian way of thinking. Twenty tribes have now heard the new songs and accepted the Christian way of thinking.

Music is one of the most important ways of reaching people's hearts. Most people in the world have ways of singing. They sing in groups, or they sing to themselves. Ideas do not pass

from one culture to another very quickly if one culture tries to impose their music on another culture. However, ideas pass quickly by putting the new ideas into the music of the culture one wishes to change.

Dance is another very important way of communicating ideas. It involves a person's whole body. This is a powerful tool to bring change. People use their whole bodies to express the ideas of the dance. Dance may be just for fun. It may just relieve stress. But it also teaches. In Indonesian dance, stories of the gods and goddess are acted out in detail. Sometimes the dances last for several days. Dance is very important to each culture. I was with a group of people from the Cook Islands on Pentecost Sunday once. That Sunday was the first time that the Christians in that group used their own Cook Island form of dancing on a Sunday. They chose to tell the story of Creation through their dance. It was emotionally powerful for them. People were weeping and laughing, all at once. The Genesis story of Creation became their own story in a very new and personal way that day."

"What about folk stories and telling them. Is that an important art form? I like words and stories. I learn a lot through hearing a story," Huizhong said.

"Folk stories are very important. They tell you what people value. The third layer of culture cannot be seen with the eye, but it can be heard with the ear. Story is one way to find out what a people group values. Of course, much story telling comes from the fourth layer also. I think it is very important to learn some of the stories that a culture tells. That way you learn a lot about what they think. You learn how to present new ideas in story form. Use the form that the society uses. You learn what the ideas are that you want to try to change. When one of my friends was going to work in a new country, his company asked him to read ten of the most famous books of stories from that country. He told me how much reading of those stories helped him understand how the people thought and what they valued.

Some stories are mostly just for fun. In the Province of Alberta, in Canada, sometimes, during the winter, a warm wind comes through the Western mountains. Temperatures rise very quickly. Snow melts very fast. When the wind dies down after a day, or perhaps after a few days, then it is winter again. There are funny stories in Alberta about this wind. There is a man who is named after the wind. One day he was driving in a horse-drawn sleigh. He heard the warm wind behind him. He lashed the horses to make them run faster. The back of his sleigh raised dust because the wind was drying the snow so fast. The front of the sleigh ran on the snow. He got home just in time so that the horses did not have to pull the sleigh over dry ground, which would have been hard for them. This is just a funny story, but it comes out of something that happens in Alberta weather. Of course, it is exaggerated. It makes everyone laugh because they have seen the snow melt quite quickly, when the winds come.

Another story tells how certain hills came to be. Two Indian bands were fighting. The Great Spirit was not happy that his children were at war. So one night he scooped out a lot of

land and built hills between the two war camps. The tribesmen walked on each side of the hills until they found a gap in the hills. They met there and smoked a peace pipe. They realized that the Great Spirit was not happy with their war, so they made peace. The hills are now called the 'Neutral Hills'. This story is not just a fun story. It teaches things about how the people viewed their god and his relationship to them. It also answered some questions about their surroundings and how they got there.

Remember that only 11% of what we learn comes by hearing. It is powerful to tell a story, but an idea is presented more powerfully if it is presented in drama, using colour, movement, and objects.

There are powerful, new tools to present art nowadays. Film, television, and internet take artistic ideas all over the world now. These three are powerful tools. These tools are doing more to change the whole world than anything else has done. Even when a program seems to be mostly for fun, certain ideas are being taught. People see the objects the actors use, and begin to want those objects for themselves. They see new houses and new ways of doing things. They see ideas from the third and fourth layer of culture being worked out in the film or drama. This changes the way they feel about their own culture, and moves them to rethink the way they feel about the third and fourth layers of their culture. If they begin to understand that certain beliefs keep them from obtaining the things they want—things they may have seen in a movie, or on television, or over the internet—they will discard those values and accept new ones. They will even change the ideas in the fourth layer. They will accept new ideas about who they are and where they come from. In many ways, the world is coming to look the same way everywhere, because of these three tools and the art they bring to people of the world.

Sometimes it is hard to say if something is art, or if it is not. One area where there is much debate is photography. Some people argue that photographs simply record facts. They say looking at a photograph is just like seeing a horse running. Photographs are used to communicate information. Simply communicating information is not art. However, photographs can be used to create feeling and change how we think about something. Paintings can simply record information also. But paintings usually record more than simple information. The artist's feelings usually show, somehow, in the painting. How people take photographs can also show how the artist interprets something. This is especially true when a series of photographs are taken to tell a story. Remember, art not only records information, but it changes our understanding of the information the art is based on--revealing new thoughts. Photography remains an activity that is debated about. Is it art, or isn't it?

Art is constantly changing. There are new ways of blowing glass. There are new ways of building buildings. New materials have been found with which to make things. People have more opportunity to see and hear things from other parts of the world. They begin to borrow from each other and unique forms of art appear which blend two cultures. I was at a fireworks festival. The festival was a competition between five countries, to see who could make the best fireworks

display accompanied by music. The night I was there, the program was done by the South American country of Columbia. The rhythms of a Colombian folk singing group accompanied the dazzling fireworks. Suddenly I thought something was strange in the music I was hearing. The Colombian folk singers were singing a folk song from Japan. They blended the melody and words of the Japanese song with the rhythms of Colombian music. It was a unique experience, especially when it was done in time to the exploding fireworks. The Japanese song sung by Columbians and the patterns of the fireworks combined to produce a very special artistic experience.

As people's ideas change, forms of art change. Western art painting used symbols to tell stories. Now much art relies on the emotions of the people who look at the painting. I will show you two paintings. One is old and one is modern. You can see the difference in them right away, I think.

(insert the painting here)

Let me tell you about a painting for a private chapel. The painting is about the angel, Gabriel, telling Mary she will have a child, Jesus. At this time, many people in Europe could not read. This painting was made just before the invention of the first printing press. This type of painting helped them understand the story. It was to help at private prayer time.

This painting has three hinged, wooden panels. The home shown in the painting is like a European home, 600 years ago. The city is the city where these people lived. Peter Inghelbeut and his wife are the people kneeling in the panel on the left. They are the ones who paid Robert Campin to do the painting. Peter was a cloth merchant. His name means 'angel bringer'. This may be why the artist painted about the angel coming to Mary. Peter's wife's family name meant 'cabinet maker', or 'woodwork shop'. This may be why the right part of the painting is about Joseph, the carpenter. One thing the painting helped them understand was that the story was not just something that happened a long time ago. It was a story for them too. Therefore, the old story was painted as if it were in their time. Everything in the painting was used in a house of the Inghelbeut's time. A carpenter's shop was like this. The tools were tools of that time, not Mary's time.

The painting was to help people understand Isaiah 7:14 – 'A virgin shall conceive and bear a son and will call Him Immanuel.' The painting tells the story of the Angel Gabriel coming to tell Mary she would be the mother of Jesus. The painting shows an instant just before Mary sees the angel. The painting is full of symbols. So look at the painting and then look at the explanation of some of the symbols.

(Insert the painting with explanations here.)

The second painting is a very different sort of painting.



It is called 'The Scream'. It is also from Europe. It is also a real place in a certain city. Do you see the differences between the two paintings? The city is not important in this painting. The purpose of this painting is to give the viewer a sense of a certain feeling, rather than to tell a story. The person in the painting has just heard a horrible scream and has covered his or her ears to block out the sound. The colours and the shapes make Westerners think of something loud and harsh. The shapes are somewhat weird, which also adds to the feeling of fear. The other people in the painting don't seem to hear the scream. This adds to a feeling of being disoriented and afraid. This painting does tell a story too, but the main point in this painting is to make you feel the feeling of the story. How frightening would it be to hear a scream, which only you heard? Modern painters do not use detail like those found in photographs—or in the first painting that we looked at. Now, they use a different style for a different effect."

"I really enjoy hearing about all the art. Thank you for telling us how important art is. Huizhong and I will have to think hard about putting the ideas for communicating with the people into some kind of art form. I think it will be exciting!" said Minzhe.

“We have probably talked enough for today. I enjoy this subject too,” said Teacher Rifeng.
”Next time you come, we will talk about religions of the world.

Key ideas to discuss from this story

In groups of three, try to remember the five points used to define art.

Check up

Did you remember these points?

Art

1. is creative, playful, and enjoyable, not necessarily practical or useful.
2. produces feelings.
3. often uses real life objects or events around us to make something else.
4. communicates information to us.
5. is made by those who have skills in making things differently from others and in communicating ideas that are special.

Key ideas to discuss from this story

In groups of three, talk about the three divisions of art. Give some examples you enjoy from your own country.

Check up

Did you talk about

1. Art that uses materials or writing, such as sculpture, painting, writing stories or poetry?
2. Art that uses sound, such as singing or playing instruments, or reading poetry aloud?
3. Art which uses movement?

Key ideas to discuss from this story

Tell each other what you have felt and learned from something artistic. Maybe you saw a painting, heard a poem, saw a drama, or took part in a dance. What did you feel and what did you learn? It may be hard to say what you learned, but think about it.

Key ideas to discuss from this story

Talk about the changes you have seen in art in your country. What influenced those changes? Have television, movies and internet brought new ideas to your country? How have those new ideas affected you?

Chapter Seventeen: Religion, the Fourth Level of Culture

“I wonder how many religions there are in the world,” Huizhong said, as she and Minzhe enjoyed their walk to Teacher Rifeng’s house for their next talk.

“Does everyone in the world take part in religion? I guess that I am not really sure what religion is, when I think about everyone in the world,” answered Minzhe.

“I am sure that Teacher Rifeng will tell us about that,” said Huizhong, as the couple went into the teacher’s house.

“We should begin with a definition of religion,” Teacher Rifeng said after exchanging proper greetings.

“Yes, that would be good. I think I know what religion is. However, when I try to think about the whole world, I am not sure I could define it,” said Minzhe.

“I will give you two definitions,” began the Teacher. “Religion is what people believe about beings or forces that we cannot see in the natural world. People believe these beings and forces control the world we see. Stories about these beings or forces explain where the people and the world around them came from. The stories help people understand how they should live their lives. People use these stories to try to understand what will happen after life in this natural world is over. This is a common definition used in Cultural Anthropology.

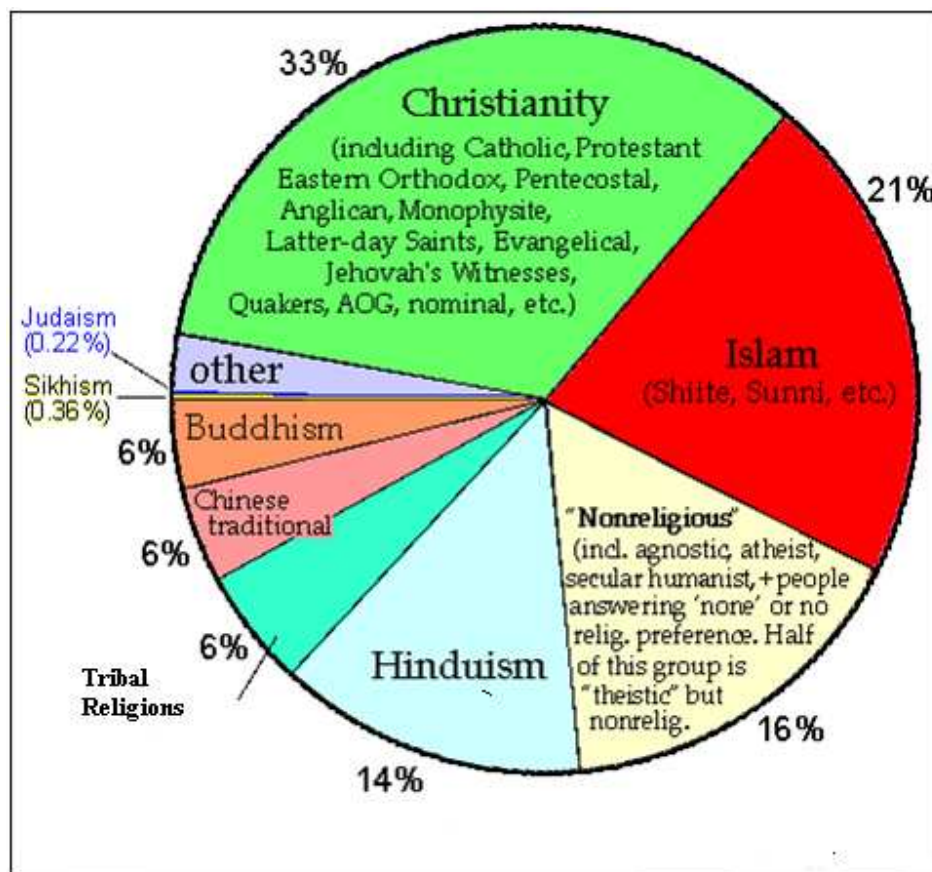
I think there is a bigger definition. This is it: Religion is any belief system that people use to explain life, its origin and what happens at death. This definition includes those people who do not believe in supernatural beings. Some people believe that science gives us all the answers about where we came from and where we go after death. Science has become a religion to many people. Other people have used political stories to explain to whole societies why they exist and who they are. In these cases, I think politics has become a religion. I know most cultural anthropologists would not agree with my definition. Whichever definition you use, it applies to the fourth level of culture, the ‘heart of the cabbage’ of culture.

One difficulty in understanding religion is that it is a part of everything else. Politics, economics, the arts, education, how people relate to each other as friends, how families relate,

even language – all these things relate to the fourth layer, somehow. There are aspects of religion in all the systems of a culture.”

“How many religions are there in the world?” asked Huizhong.

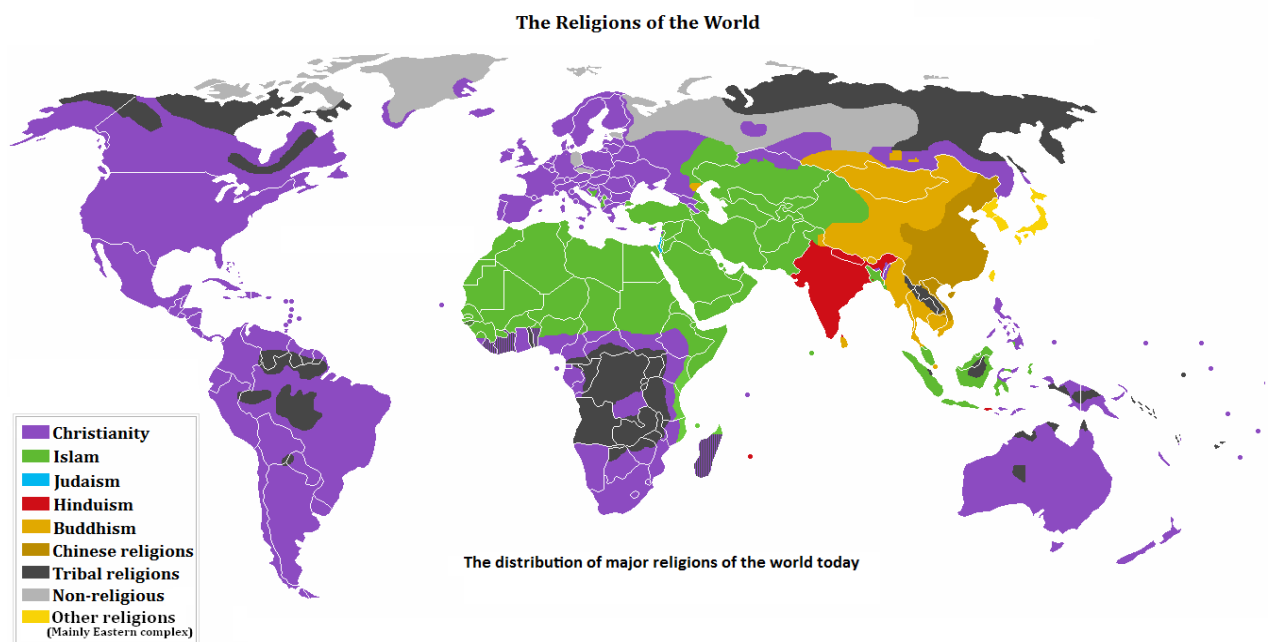
“The following chart shows 10 main groupings with many sub-groupings. The map shows you where to find these religions. Then I will show you a chart that has 22 divisions listed.



This chart tells us that Christianity is the largest religion. When we use the term ‘Christianity’ in Cultural Anthropology, we include anyone who thinks of Jesus Christ as a central person in his or her faith. Different groups will believe different things about Jesus, but everyone sees Jesus as central to what they believe. The next largest group is Islam. Like Christianity, there are central beings in Islam. Allah and the prophet Mohammed are central to Islam. Different groups within Islam will think different things about Mohammed and Allah but all groups think about them as central to their beliefs. The non-religious group includes two main

groups of people. Some people do not believe there is any kind of god. Others believe there is probably a god or gods but humans cannot really know about them. Others in this group believe that humans can care for everything; humans do not need a god. Hinduism has many, many divisions. However, there are common core beliefs that all Hindus accept which differ from other religious belief systems. We will talk about tribal religions later. They are found all over the world where there are still small tribes of people living. Some people do not think of Chinese systems of belief as religion but understand them to be more of a pattern for life, a way of life. Chinese belief systems are at the heart of the Chinese cultural ‘cabbage’ still, so I think of them as religion. Buddhism and Sikhism grew from reforms to Hinduism. The Jewish faith is the foundational faith for both Christianity and Islam. Jewish faith is based in the Old Testament. Christ faith comes from both the Old Testament and the New Testament. Islam is based in the Koran, which is much like the Old Testament, in many passages.

The map shows you where you will find these religions in the world. The chart after it tells you about 22 different religious groups, how many people are in these groups, and what some of the main divisions are, in those religions.”



Religion	Number of Adherents	Major Divisions / Places Found
Christianity	2.1 billion	Catholic, Protestant, Orthodox, and many

		smaller variations. 34,000 separate Christian groups have been identified in the world
Islam	1.5 billion	Two large divisions, Shiite (10 – 13%) Sunni,(87 – 90%) and many other variations including Sufi, Ismailia, and as many as 40 other small divisions.
Agnostic/Atheist/Humanist	1.1 billion	Atheists do not believe there is a god. Agnostics are not sure if there is a god or not. Humanists believe people are all there is and people can do what they want.
Hinduism	900 million	<p>Folk Hinduism- based on local traditions and cults of local deities at a communal level</p> <p>Vedic Hinduism - practiced by traditionalist Brahmins</p> <p>Vedantic - based on the philosophical approach of the Upanishads.</p> <p>Yogic Hinduism</p> <p>"Dharmic" Hinduism or "daily morality" - based on the notion of Karma, and upon societal norms such as Hindu marriage customs.</p> <p>Bhakti</p>
Chinese traditional religion	394 million	combination of religious practices, including Confucianist ceremonies, ancestor worship , Buddhism and Taoism .
Buddhism	376 million	Two main divisions, Theravanna and Mahayana – divided into many groups such as Pure Land and Tibetan Lamaism in Tibet; Zen, Tendai, Shignon, and Nichiren in Japan
Tribal Animism	300 million	the beliefs of the remaining tribes of the

		world
African Traditional	100 million	includes the religions slaves in North, South and Central America developed
Sikhism	23 million	a mixture of Hinduism, Islam and Animism
Juche	19 million	the political/religious teaching of North Korea
Spiritism	15 million	belief in spirits of people who will guide them and give power to them
Judaism	14 million	numerous divisions, Hasidim, Orthodox, liberal, Kabbalistic (occult), Reform
Baha'i	7 million	an attempt to combine ideas from all religions together
Jainism	4.2 million	came out of Hinduism/Buddhism
Shinto	4 million	a Japanese animistic religion – a sort of tribal religion
Cao Dai	4 million	a political religion found in Viet Nam
Zoroastrianism	2.6 million	an old Middle Eastern religion
Tenrikyo	2 million	a Japanese mixture of various religions
Neo-Paganism	1 million	new form of European worship of various ancient European gods
Unitarian-Universalism	800 thousand	a kind of Christianity which denies the Trinity
Rastafarianism	600 thousand	a mixture of Christianity and African magic religion
Scientology	500 thousand	a kind of religious thinking supposedly based on science

“There are so many religions in the world. Is there a way of dividing religions into groups that have similar beliefs?” asked Minzhe.

“Yes, let’s talk about some big differences in religions around the world,” said the teacher. Here is a chart and some maps to look at, while I talk.

Four main Divisions of Religious Belief

Religious Belief	There is One God	Everything is one	There is nothing spiritual, only matter	Spirit is in all matter
How Many Main Religions	There are three main religions here	There are two main religions here	There are many kinds of belief here	There is one main belief here with thousands of variations
What are they?	Islam Judaism Christianity	Hinduism Buddhism	Atheism Evolutionism Materialism Naturalism Humanism Darwinism	Animism
Where are they, mainly?	Islam – the Middle East, North Africa Judaism – Israel Christianity – the West	Hinduism - India Buddhism – countries around India, Japan, Southeast Asia	Communist countries – increasing in the West	Tribal groups all around the world

We could divide religions into four basic groups. The chart shows a group of religions that believe in one god--who is a real and eternal being--who created everything else that exists.

Another group of religions believe that everything is the same. Let me explain this in the simplest way I know. These religions believe that everything came from one indefinable source and will eventually return to that one indefinable source. That source is not a being, as is the god of the first group of religions. It is a force, or power. There are many gods and half gods, angels and demons, and all levels of life, in this system. However, these are all one and the same thing, trying to escape being different, and getting back to just being ‘one’.

Then there is a group of beliefs that some would not call religion. These people say that there is no spirit realm at all. Everything is just what we call ‘matter’. The ‘matter’ may move because of chemical and electrical energy. There are no gods; man does not have a spirit. Man is just a collection of chemicals, run by electricity. Of course, there are no demons or angels in this system.

The tribal peoples of the world tend to think of two things at once. They see the world around them as real. A tree is real. The wood, the leaves, and fruit are real. However, they also believe that there is a spirit in the tree. These people will often make an offering to the tree spirit before they cut the tree down. When they kill an animal, they will make a sacrifice to the spirit of the animal. I have also seen a ceremony where people who sewed clothes gathered all the broken needles at the end of the year. They made a sacrifice to the spirits of the needles thanking them for the good service they had provided. Then they buried the needles.”

“Do the different ways that people make a living lead to differences in religion?” asked Huizhong.

“That is a good question. Cultural Anthropologists talk about this, a lot. There does seem to be a difference,” answered Teacher Rifeng. “There are four kinds of belief systems, commonly identified with the four ways of making a living. But the differences are not hard and fast rules. You will find all kinds of beliefs mixed together, in most places of the world.

Way of Living	Belief System	Specialists	Example
Food Collecting	Individual	No specialists	Vision quest

Hunting, Simple Farming	Shamanist	Part time specialist	Tungus Shaman
Advanced Farming	Communal	Groups perform rituals	Totemism
Industry	Ecclesiastic	Full time specialists	Christianity, Islam, Bhuddhism

In simple food gathering societies, people often seek their own spiritual direction. Young men of the North American Indian tribes go on vision quests. They go to a special place away from other people. There, they fast. Sometimes they will cut themselves. What they seek is a dream or vision that will tell them their future. Sometimes they see an animal or bird, who is to become their guardian. This animal or bird becomes their guide through life. A pregnant woman may want to find something to ease the pain of birth. She will go on a vision quest. In a dream, she will see a kind of plant. That plant will ease her pain in birth. These people groups may also use a shaman at times.

In Siberia, Tibet, Mongolia, Southeast Asia, and in the jungles of South America, one finds the Shaman. Shamen are usually part-time specialists. They have other jobs, as well. They may become shamen by birth, by training, or just because of their own thinking about life. They perform healing, telling of the future, and explaining what is happening in certain situations. The basic belief in Shamanism is that the spirit world controls the seen world. If something goes wrong in the seen world, people pay the shaman to travel--by his spirit--to the spirit world, in order to find out why things are going wrong. The shaman may also try to influence the spirits to help or to harm people, depending on what is happening. The Tungus Shamen live in Siberia. People call on them to influence the spirit who guards the seals they want to hunt. This female spirit lives under the water. The Shaman may take offerings to her to convince her to let the hunters find seal to kill.

Something is happening in cities of the world now. We have 'urban shamen'. People come to the shamen in cities now to get help with the problems they face in the city. These 'urban

shamen' do not 'go to visit' the spirits, but call the spirits to themselves. This is happening, especially in South America.

The settled people in advanced agriculture often have a communal aspect to their religion. That is, they share the responsibilities of their belief system together in community. There are specialists like shamen involved, but ordinary people usually also take part in regular and special ceremonies. The ordinary people return to their everyday life at the end of the ceremonies.

There are two kinds of ceremonies in communal religion. One is rites of passage. A rite of passage is part of the cycle of life about which we talked. Rites of passage have three parts. There is separation, transition, and incorporation. Teenagers often undergo special ceremonies that cut them off from their parents and siblings. They may be shaved, have ritual baths, be scarred, be circumcised, or any number of other things. After the ceremonies of separation, they will spend time away by themselves, but usually in groups. Boys or young men go off by themselves into the jungle to take care of themselves for a period. This symbolises cutting off former life patterns. Girls may be kept in special huts, with no contact from the outside. After a set period, the young people are brought back to the village. There are more washings, special clothes, food, dancing and so on. Then these young people become a new part of the community. Usually fathers, mothers, uncles, and aunts are involved in these ceremonies. When the rite of passage is over, the family members go back to their regular activities.

We call the second kind of ceremony a Rite of Solidarity. A group of people holds these ceremonies when there is a crisis that threatens them. When someone upsets the peace of the community, for example, by committing a murder or by stealing, often the elders will conduct rituals or will call on a specialist to find out who has done the deed. When they find out, the group will gather to decide what to do with that person. In Northern Canada, the Government of Canada allows the elders of the Inuit to sentence someone who has been found guilty of a crime. Sometimes the elders send the person away from the tribe to live on an island by themselves for a set period. When the person comes back to the tribe, there are agreed-upon things they will have to do to gain the trust of the tribe again. These council sentences can sometime last for many years. These councils are practicing Rites of Solidarity.

Ecclesial religions are found in the industrial and information societies. Paid specialists serve the community. Priests, monks, nuns, or pastors perform regular ceremonies for the community. They also do the teaching. These religions have written scriptures. The paid leader follows written ceremonies that are sometimes very old, sometimes newly written. There are usually many layers of people in these groups. The Catholic Church includes lay workers, nuns and monks, priests, then bishops, archbishops and finally the Pope at the head of the Church.”

“I have heard people talk about magic, said Huizhong. “ Is magic a part of religion?”

“Magic is what people do to influence the supernatural beings to help themselves. Hunters try to influence spirits to help them with the hunt. Farmers make offerings to gods to influence them to make their crops grow better. People all around the world seek the supernatural for healing for health problems. Others try to use the influence of spirits to make friends. Other people beg the spirits to take vengeance on people they do not like.

Some people think of religion and magic as different from each other. They say ‘Prayer is a part of religion. Through prayer, people ask the gods for help in all their problems. Magic is different from prayer. Using magic, people try to make the gods pay attention and take their side. Religion seeks to serve the gods; magic seeks to make the gods serve us.’ I think magic is a part of religion. In magic, people still are focusing on the core of what they believe. Magic is a selfish approach to religion. People use their beliefs for themselves, rather than in serving the god or spirit they say they worship.

There are forms of magic in which people believe power is contained in objects. North American Indians gather bunches of feathers, bones, stones, and other things into what they call ‘medicine bundles’. They believe these bundles carry the power to heal. Often the tribes believe there is a spirit trapped in the bundle. People in Southeast Asia use bracelets to bind tribal spirits to themselves. In the South Pacific, stones are believed to hold power. Tribal chiefs gather many of these stones to increase their power.

There are differences between other so-called religious practitioners and those who practice magic. In most religions, people are set apart to serve the gods and to teach others how to serve the gods. These special people often bring prayers to the gods on behalf of others. Priests, nuns and monks, pastors and teachers are all part of the more formal religions. In magic, shamen,

witches and sorcerers, also help people but they are there to help people gain the favour of the gods, not to help people serve the gods. Shamen are usually thought of as doing good magic or 'white magic'. They try to benefit people. They try to help people who are sick, need good crops or good hunting. Witches and sorcerers are thought of as having evil in them. This magic is called 'black magic'. Black witches and sorcerers seek to harm people. People go to them to aid them in helping someone else, or harming their crops or animals.

There is a difference between magic rites and other religious rites. Formal religious rites usually acknowledge that the god worshipped will make his choice according to what he or she knows. When the ceremony is completed, it is finished. People put their trust in their god and are willing to wait for the answer. In magic, people always feel that if the answer is not what they wanted, something was wrong with the ceremony. They feel that the god was not pleased. There must have been a mistake in the ritual, or the offering was not big enough or good enough. Therefore, they will try it again. They will try to get all the words correct and all the actions just right. People believe that they do not have the proper stone or the proper contents in the medicine bag. They will try to obtain a more powerful stone or new contents, for the bag. Magic always strives for perfection in the carrying out of the rituals. Sometimes they believe that evil has attached itself to the stone, medicine bag, or even to an idol. They then take the idols or stones to an ocean, lake, or river. They beat the idol to drive away the evil spirits that have attached themselves to the idol, stopping the idol from being effective. Then they wash the idol or stone. They must clean the idol so that its power will renew. The answer to their wish might be in their favour after the cleansing."

"I do not think many people really believe what they say they believe," said Minzhe. "I think they just try anything that might help when they are in trouble."

"In every religion around the world, there are people who truly want to serve their gods," said Teacher Rifeng. "However, there are many more people who only want to make the god serve them. Even Christians try to make deals with God. They may pray like this, 'God, if you will heal my daughter, I will give you some money.' Or, they may give the money first and then say, 'I have given this money to you, will you now heal my daughter, God?' Or they may say, 'If you heal my daughter, I will do something for you.' They are trying to make God their servant. The true Christian says, 'You are God and I lay my daughter before you that you will do what is

right. If healing her is right, I ask you to heal her. If there is something else you want to do, I ask for the wisdom and strength to carry on loving you and others in spite of what happens to my daughter.’

I want you to remember one thing. Very few people in the world follow their gods out of pure devotion to the god. Most people believe in their gods, but try to make the gods do their will. We call this ‘Folk Religion’. There is some sort of folk religion in among most followers of Islam in the African countries and in China, where Islam is strong. Even in so-called very devout Muslim nations, many people believe in magic. One very common idea is called the ‘Evil Eye’. People wear charms and draw symbols on things to keep ‘bad luck’ away. They believe someone might look at them with evil thoughts and cause them harm. They wear all kinds of charms to keep this from happening. They buy charms for their children. Sometimes they paint symbols or even verses from the Koran on the child to keep him or her from the harm of the ‘Evil Eye’.

Many in the tribal religions believe in a good god who is far, far away. He is so far away he does not help them. They worry about the evil spirits who are closer to them and who seem more powerful. Even though they think there may be a good spirit or a good god, they spend all their time trying to make the evil spirits, who seem closer, leave them alone.

One of the main functions of religion is in bringing about social control. The beliefs of the people control their behaviour. We have seen that when we thought about the cabbage-like layers of culture. Religion tells people how to run their lives. Religion tells people how to relate to one another. Religious control can be a good thing. It can be a troubling thing. We talked about how religious beliefs in India influence how woman are treated. Political, religious cults like those of Eastern Europe can enslave an entire population in poverty. A sign above the airport in Romania used to say, ‘There is no God in Romania.’ However, the political leader there had become a father-god figure to the people and ruled every aspect of their life. The people did not know how poor they were. The same situation is happening in North Korea now. The former leader called himself ‘God, the Father’; his son, ‘God, the Son’; and his political system, the Holy Spirit. North Koreans are extremely poor but do not know it. Religious control and political control have become the same thing, there.

Many cultures now face situations where the old stories of the fourth layer do not satisfy anymore. War, disease, famine, or new ways of doing things bring desperate need or show the inadequacy of the old to explain life. Modern times threaten an end to many cultures. If someone comes to a people group, at a time of difficulty, with new ideas that help more than the old ones did, people will listen. If they accept the new stories, it is possible to renew their culture. This has happened in many tribal areas. Due to war between villages and clans, some tribes in South America were nearly all killed. However, when the tribe has found a new story and accepted it--like the biblical story of forgiveness--the tribe has been preserved.

There is a trend in the world toward religions becoming more and more alike. The World Council of Churches began in 1948. Catholic and some Orthodox Christian Churches are observers at Council meetings. Now people from other religions are also invited to join in the Council meetings and give their opinions on events in the religious world. I cannot find how many participants are in the World Council now. It is a fellowship of about 348 denominations. This represents about 550 million [Christians](#) throughout more than 120 countries. However, with other religions sitting in on the discussions, much of the world is represented there now. As the religious leaders discuss things together, their beliefs seem to become more alike.

A final thing I want to say about religion. The Ecclesial religions all have stories relating to the end of the world. Today, in our world, many are active in promoting the idea that someone is coming who will end the present world systems of politics and economics. This person will bring about a peaceful, prosperous world. Islam has a slightly different view from the other religions. Some Muslims are looking for the Mahdi to return. They believe that, before he will come, there must be a great confusion and war in the world. This idea is especially popular in the countries that used to be part of the Russian Empire. Iran at present is the centre of this teaching. Terrorists are trying to create very bad situations, which they believe will cause the Mahdi to return and bring the whole world under a peaceful, Muslim reign. Many Christians are talking about the return of Jesus. Judaism is actively awaiting the coming of the Messiah. Hinduism and Buddhism also have stories of a god who will bring in an age of peace. There are people in most of these religious groups who feel that the person they look for, will come soon.”

“This is a lot to think about,” said Huizhong. “I did not know that religion was such a big topic. Thank you for telling us these things. What will we talk about next time we come?”

“I would like to talk about how people have fun. What is entertainment? How do people relax and why is that important? answered Professor Rifeng.

Key ideas to discuss from this story

In groups of three, talk about the two definitions given for religion.

Check up

Did you talk about?

1. Religion is what people believe about beings or forces that we cannot see in the natural world, but who control or influence the world we see.
2. Religion is any belief system that people use to explain life, its origin and what happens at death. This definition includes those people who do not believe in supernatural beings.

Key ideas to discuss from this story

Discuss the following chart that breaks the religions down to four groups that share similar beliefs. Do you understand these divisions?

Religious Belief	There is One God	Everything is one	There is no spiritual only matter	Spirit is in all matter
How Many Main Religions	There are three main religions here	There are two main religions here	There are many kinds of belief here	There is one main religion here with thousands of variations
What are they?	Islam Judaism Christianity	Hinduism Buddhism	Atheism Evolution Materialism Naturalism Humanism Darwinism	Animism

Where are they mainly?	Islam – the Middle East, North Africa Judaism – Israel Christianity – the West	Hinduism - India Buddhism – countries around India, Japan, Southeast Asia	Communist countries – increasing in the West	Tribal groups all around the world
------------------------	--	--	--	------------------------------------

Key ideas to discuss from this story

Talk about what kinds of religion are practiced among your families, your town, your province, your country.

Key ideas to discuss from this story

Discuss what magic is. Give examples of how you have seen people around you try to make the gods or spirits serve them.

Check up

Did you agree that magic is trying to make the god you believe in into your servant to do what you want done, rather than you being the servant of the god in whom you believe?

Key ideas to discuss from this story

How have you seen religion influence the layers of society around you? What influence does religious belief have on the values around you? What influence does religion have on the systems of your society--like education, marriage, death ceremonies, law(police), etc? How does religion influence the visible parts of the culture around you? What objects or activities are influenced by religion?

Chapter Eighteen: Why and How People Play?

“Why would Teacher Rifeng want to talk about how people play? What would that have to do with us working to share the Gospel in another country? I really wonder why we will talk about this,” said Minzhe to his wife as they walked toward Teacher Rifeng’s house.

Huizhong smiled and answered, “I am not surprised that you ask this question. You are always so serious Minzhe. I think probably Teacher will have something important to tell us about play.”

“I will be very interested to hear what it is,” stated Minzhe as they entered the teacher’s home.

When Huizhong and Minzhe settled in their chairs, Teacher Rifeng asked them some questions. “First,” he said, “what is play? Is there a difference between play, sports, recreation and other forms of entertainment? Second, why do people play? Third, how do people around the world play? Fourth, what do play, sports, recreation, and entertainment have to do with you going to another country?”

Let us begin with the first question. Just what is play? There are two things that makes play different from other things people do. True play is something that just happens. I mean that play can begin anywhere with anything at anytime. Children, and even adults, just start playing. Play begins on impulse, or whim. The second thing about true play is that children begin playing by themselves. No one says, ‘Now you must play.’ It is not scheduled. Rules or coaches are not part of true play. Sports usually involve physical strength and ability and follow a set of rules. Rules come from tradition. Or, sometimes, people who feel responsible for the way the sport is played write them. Sport often involves competition. Play does not usually involve competition. Play does not include a purpose or goal. Recreation is any activity people engage in to help them relax. Recreation is done to get away from everyday routine. Entertainment involves a group of people watching others do something. This may be someone singing or playing an instrument. It may be watching a drama or listening to poetry. It may be watching sports live, or on television. Play may be entertaining but it is not watched, as an entertainment would be watched.

I think it is helpful to talk about play, entertainment, and sports and recreation by thinking about three different ages in people's lives. First, we should think about children and play. Then, think about how adults have fun. The last age to consider is how older folks entertain themselves."

"I know that children just naturally seem to want to play," said Huizhong. "Do all children in all cultures want to play? Why do they want to play? What do they do when they play?"

"Those are important questions you just asked, Huizhong. It does seem that it is natural for children all around the world in every people group to want to play," replied Teacher Rifeng.

"What children do while playing may include the following: Children pretend something is something else. Little girls all around the world pretend dolls are real babies. Boys pretend sticks are swords. Children pretend 'as if' something is something else. 'Let's pretend as if we were going to the city,' they will say. A box becomes a car, a train, or even an airplane. Children will take pretend roles. 'You are the father, I am the mother, and you are the baby', they will decide. Children develop their thinking ability by pretending. They develop an understanding of how to get along with other people through play. This pretending and taking on roles is preparation for becoming adult.

True play does not have to have a stated purpose. Play is 'just for fun'. Yet, all the time children truly play; they are learning and growing in very important ways. Play helps children to grow in the use of their imagination. A child who has never been allowed to play will not think up new ways to improve him, herself, or others in the world. True play is an important part of learning how to use your body. It is amazing to see the difference in the way a child who has free playtime walks, in contrast to a child who has never played, freely. Mastering physical coordination is an important part of what a child learns in play. This kind of learning takes place best in the freedom of true play. A person may develop physical coordination in formal sports but the foundations of true freedom in movement are best laid in free play.

At three, children's brains are two and a half times more active than the brains of adults. This is true until about the age of 10, when unused thinking ability falls away. The child who plays learns to use his or her brain. Playing children learn to handle emotion and grow physically stronger. Children who are locked into scheduled activities at a young age may become very

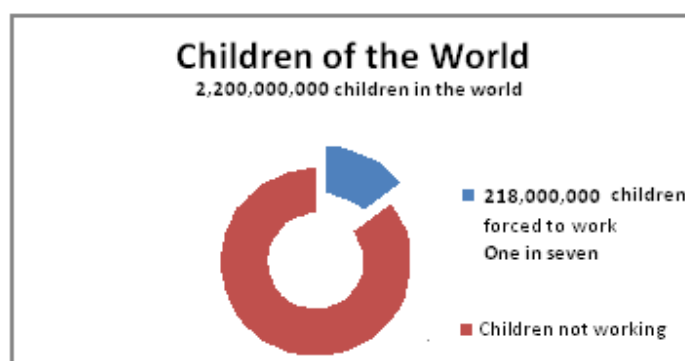
intelligent in a few things. They will suffer in the areas of emotional strength. They also have less fulfilling relationships with others when they grow up.

Children's play does not usually have rules. However, children will make up rules for what they are doing as they play. I have watched children dance and make up rules about who could do what and how often they could do it. This is a valuable learning tool about how to share responsibility with others. Children learn how to negotiate through play. Someone else is not making the decisions for them all the time. Children deprived of play become dependant on others to make decisions. In play, children learn how to settle arguments between themselves. They learn how to solve problems. They do not need to depend on others to control life's situations for them."

"If all children want to play, naturally, what happens to children who cannot play?" asked Minzhe.

"Before I answer your question, I want to tell you some things about children who are forced to work, sometimes from very young ages.

In our world today, there are 2.2 billion children. 218 million children cannot play; they are forced to work, instead. That means one out of every seven children cannot play, but must work.



Child labour is a terrible crisis in our world. Let me tell you the story of one such child. Shortly after Iqbal Masih was born in a small village in rural Pakistan, his father abandoned the family. Iqbal's mother struggled to support her children as a housecleaner, but could not. When he was four years old, Iqbal's mother sold him for \$16 to labour at a carpet factory. He worked 12 hours a day. He was horribly undernourished. The supervisor beat him many times.

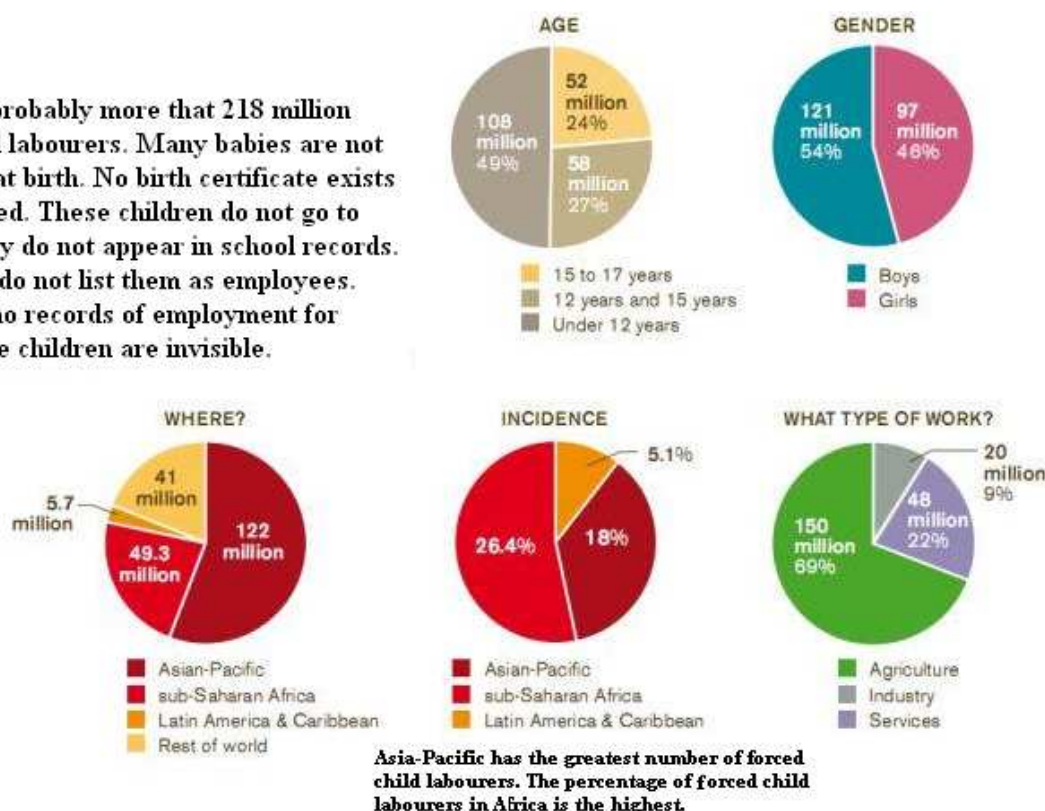
When Iqbal was nine years old, a local organization helped him escape the factory. They took him to a school for freed child labourers in Lahore where he would be safe. Iqbal began telling other child labourers about the law in Pakistan that made forced child labour illegal. These children had never heard about this law. Children started to follow Iqbal's example and escape the factories. The owners threatened Iqbal and his family. He did not stop talking. At age 12, he travelled to Sweden and the U.S. to speak out against child labour. When he returned to Pakistan in April, 1995, Iqbal was shot and killed.

Child labour is terrible. When a child less than eighteen years of age is forced to work, it is Child Labour. These children may work as long as 12 hours a day with next to no pay and very little food. Such a child will not receive an education or have time to play, as children should.

Between 40 and 50 per cent of all forced labourers in the world are children.



There are probably more than 218 million forced child labourers. Many babies are not registered at birth. No birth certificate exists to be counted. These children do not go to school. They do not appear in school records. Employers do not list them as employees. There are no records of employment for them. These children are invisible.



As you can see by the charts, almost half of the children forced to labour are under 12 years old. Many of them die so the older ages are smaller in number. You can also see that more than half the children forced into work are boys.

126 million of these children are engaged in hazardous work. 73 million children working in hazardous jobs are less than 10 years old. Every year, 22,000 children die in work-related accidents.

The largest number of children in forced labour--122 million--works in the Asia-Pacific region. One third of the children (48 million) aged 14 and under in sub-Saharan Africa are in the labour force. There are more people in Asia than Africa, therefore even though the child labour percentage is lower than Africa, more children are working in Africa.

Nearly 70% of the children work in agriculture. Rural children, especially girls, usually start working in agriculture when they are very young, often between 5 and 7 years of age. 22% of the children are in services, including wholesale and retail trade, restaurants

and hotels, transport, and personal services. 9% of the children are in industry, including mining and quarrying, manufacturing and construction. Children, forced to be soldiers--mostly in Africa, but also a few in Asia--number about 300,000.

1.2 million children have been bought by, and/or sold to people, who then own them and use them – mostly in the sex trade.

Many children all over the world do some kind of work. They might have an after-school job. Maybe they help with chores around the house. This kind of work is good for a child: Children build skills and earn extra cash. This is not child labour. Only work that is harmful to a child's physical and mental development is considered to be child labour. It is considered harmful to the child to be working long hours, and not being able to go to school.

Why is it important for children to play? One of the main reasons is that in play children learn how to be good adults in their culture. Having to spend long hours at work interrupts social development. Though children are forced to work like adults, they do not really ever become adults. When they grow up and marry, they do not know how to care for others. They were never cared for themselves. They never learned the valuable lessons children learn in play.

There are children all around the world who do have time to play. In hunting societies, little boys make toy bows and arrows to practice shooting at things. In herding societies, children may take care of a pet lamb or calf. Children learn how to look after something that is living by looking after a pet.



Children often play by mimicking things around them. It is interesting to see children play school. They will mimic the teacher they like best, doing things the way the teacher does it. In countries where there is war, children will play war games. They will draw pictures of war. I watched an Aztec child learn to dance by joining with the elders for a few steps, then sitting down to watch until he tried again. ”

“I understand. It is amazing how children will use the simplest things to keep themselves amused. However, they are not just amusing themselves. They are learning,” said Huizhong. “That makes me wonder why adults play or do they?”

“Adult play is more for rest and giving their minds a break from everyday things. It is often for the purpose of recreation. On the other hand, adults also play to continue to grow more skilful in the things they need to do in daily life. Adults also play as a way to get to know and trust each other. Adult play usually involves more of what we would call sport. Adults do not often engage in true play, as children do.

In Mongolia, there is a festival called Naadam or ‘the three games of men’. The games are [Mongolian wrestling](#), [horseracing](#), and [archery](#). This festival is held throughout the country during the midsummer holidays.



As you can see, now women may join in the archery competition and also in the racing, but not in the wrestling!

There is a violent Afghan game played on horse back called 'Buzkshi' or 'goat grabbing'.



Men divide into two teams to try to drag the carcass of a dead goat over a goal post. The game is intense competition, on one hand. On the other hand, men must learn to ride their horses very expertly when doing this. The games are very important so that people will be able to work better when they get back to everyday work. It helps their skill when they work on horseback with their cattle. Their brains and emotions are rested, or livened up, as the case may be. It used to be part of skill training for strategy in war. Now it takes the place of war. This game provides an alternative to war. Rival teams work against each other in such a way that they do not kill each other. There are people who do get hurt in these games, though, as the games are quite wild.

We talked about dance in the section about art. Dance is also a fun thing to do for recreation. In some cultures, a group of people gather in a circle with one person in the middle. This person does a fantastic move, in time to the music, and then points to someone in the ring. That person must copy what the first person did. Then they do their own special dance and point to someone else who must copy them and then create their own steps. This can go on for hours. People have fun and laugh at each other. They each try to be the most interesting. Sometimes the person who cannot copy the move must drop out. The winner is the most skilful dancer. This is more like true play than sport.

We can think of ‘sports’ in two ways. There are sports that have rules and special times and places to do them. People take these activities very seriously. You can also do the same thing, but do it for fun, for recreation. An example would be ping-pong. Some people get together and just play ping-pong. There are rules for ping-pong but the people can play it for relaxation and fun. Some of my friends and I play ping-pong making up new rules and ways of doing it. However, others play ping-pong very seriously—often in competition that includes judges and strict rules. They spend much time practicing. There are competitions in their cities, in their provinces, in their countries, and then between countries. The people who do ping-pong seriously are not really playing; it is more like work for them to play ping-pong. Other people will relax by going to watch these matches and cheer the players on. IT is entertainment for the watchers.

Older people usually have a lot of time that they do not know how to fill. They cannot do the work they used to do. We are finding out that if older people are to remain healthy, they must use their minds. Therefore, there are many games and things older folks take part in to keep themselves healthy and keep their minds working. Companies are finding out that it is good to have these older folks around. They have much experience, but if they are to share that experience, their minds must be healthy. Therefore, there are games for them with which they challenge themselves, and others, to keep fit. Canada has Senior Olympics. The sports events are not as vigorous as the world Olympics, but many seniors take part every year. There are community events leading to regional events, then provincial events, and finally national events.

Entertainment is either an individual or a group thing. All age groups enjoy entertainment. Children love to hear stories. People, of all ages, listen to music. Radio and television now are

huge sources of entertainment for the peoples of the world. Of course, there is also the whole movie industry that provides entertainment. Zoos and circuses are other forms of entertainment.”

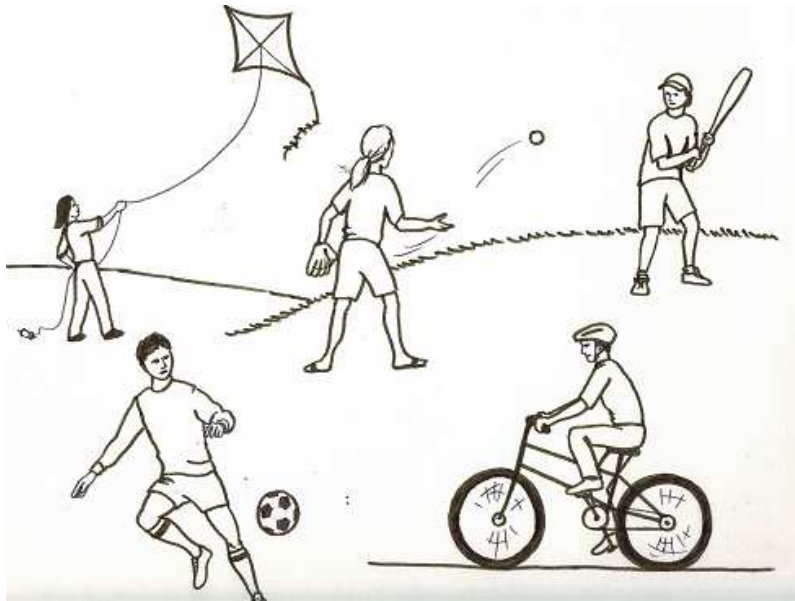
“How do people play in different parts of the world?” asked Huizhong.

“We talked about people being artistic. I think there is as much creativity that goes into play around the world as there is in art. People have invented many, many ways to find enjoyment in life.



Mankala, an African game, may be the oldest game in the world. The name means ‘to transfer’. Gameboards look like the one in this picture. The six pockets on each side and the two large pockets on the end are sometimes dug into the dirt. Sometimes, the boards are made of stone. The game pieces can be seeds, small pebbles, or glass beads. The object of the game is to move the seeds around the pockets until all your seeds and some of the other persons seeds are in your large pocket. You can find variations of this game all over the world. Games played on boards of various kinds are very popular family pastimes. Children learn to count and gain various other skills while playing with each other or with their family members and friends.

Many games use balls. Balls were made of animal bladders many years ago. Now they are made of rubber. Balls may be kicked, or thrown. They may be hit with various kinds of sticks or paddles. Balls may be bounced, as in basketball. People everywhere play games with balls.



It would take a long time to talk about all the kinds of ways people find pleasure. Many people, who live in cities, like to go hiking in the woods to relax. People climb mountains or tall buildings. People swim, dance, walk, run, paddle boats, sail boats, fly airplanes, or glide in hang gliders. Even in big cities there are horseback riding clubs. Many people like to get away from the city and ride in the woods. There really is no end of imagination in the ways with which people enjoy themselves and others.



In industrial, manufacturing, and information societies where people work a certain number of hours each day, many folks have hobbies when they are not working. Hobbies are activities or interests carried out for pleasure or relaxation. These are not connected to people's main work.

Hobbies are done for fun, not for making money. Some people make pottery to sell and make a living. Some people make pottery to relax and enjoy what they are doing. Wealthy people around the world engage in hobbies. They may collect cars, butterflies, hunt trophy animals, learn various skills, paint pictures, or collect stamps. Ordinary people in many countries also have hobbies. Older folks who are retired from their jobs will take up hobbies to keep active. Almost anything people do to make a living can also be a hobby. However, people do not make a living from hobbies.

Now, there is a new pastime called 'extreme sports' among young people in many countries. Extreme sport is doing something people do in ordinary sports, but making it very, very difficult and dangerous. In mountainous, snowy countries, many people ski. Now many young people look for the steepest places to ski. They may even use parachutes behind themselves to slow the descent down. Others jump out of airplanes and wait until the last minute to open their parachute. Some go into very deep and dangerous caves just for the excitement. Others climb very dangerous rocks in the mountains. Extreme sports seem to be popular because people want to experience the over-excitement that doing these things brings. Some wonder what has made ordinary life so boring that people push themselves to extremes, to find pleasure.



Often there is a connection between religion and sports. This connection is not to the extent that art and religion are connected.



In Japan, sumo wrestling has definite connections to religious activity. A Sumo match between the gods, Takemikazuchi and Takeminakata, determined possession of the Japanese Islands 2,500 years ago. The two gods wrestled on the shores of Izumo along the Japan Sea coast until the Takeminakata finally lost. Takemikazuchi gave control of the islands to the Japanese people. Takemikazuchi is said to have established the imperial family, from which the present emperor traces his ancestry. Thus, Sumo wrestling, from the start, was different from most other sporting matches; each match a historical recreation. Sumo is still sometimes performed to entertain the deities during important festivals. It is an offering as entertainment to please the gods and consequently be assured of a good harvest and divine protection.”

“This is interesting to talk about. However, I still wonder what this has to do with us going to do our work in another country. Does it matter how people have fun?” asked Minzhe.

“Minzhe, my serious one,” said Teacher Rifeng, “it is important to know how people have fun. Children, adults, and even older people learn the quickest and the easiest when they are having fun. Do you remember when we talked about talking without talking? We said that people learn the least when hearing only. Well, play greatly increases the learning that happens. One can teach very serious lessons using something that is fun.

The second reason to know about fun is that you can learn many things about people by watching how they entertain themselves. You can learn what people value. Who is important in the village or family? You can understand these things by watching how a people group plays together. The things you learn will tell you about how they think. As you learn how they think, that will help you know how to communicate your message with them. Many of the ideas that lie buried in the fourth layer of culture become visible in play. It is important to understand how these beliefs shape daily life.

However, I think the most important thing about fun is that when you learn to take part in fun with others, they will accept you. I have three stories to tell you. The first happened to a friend of mine in Canada.

My friend moved to a little town in the northern part of his province. During the fall hunting season, many people in that town hunted moose and deer for food to eat during the winters. They made fantastic targets to test their shooting ability when these men gathered out of hunting season. They were having fun, but they were practicing their skills at the same time. There was also friendly competition. Who was the best? That person would be popular. People would want to go hunting with him. My friend had moved to that town to pastor the church there. Not many people were Christians in that town. They thought pastors were weak and that knew nothing about shooting guns. One day when the men were playing with their guns, my friend happened to walk by. 'Come, shoot with us', the men yelled at him. So, he did. They gave him a gun and explained to him how to sight the target. I will tell you something that the men did not know. My friend had never hunted and had never shot a gun before. He was scared. However, he sighted the big target they set up and shot. He hit the target right in the centre. So, the men put up a smaller target. My friend hit it again. After several more shots at smaller and smaller targets, my friend excused himself and went on down the road. The next day, the men asked him to come to coffee with them. He was accepted. They did not know how much he had been shaking inside. He knew that if he had not shot the gun well, he would not have been accepted, but been made fun of. Those men would never have listened to his message.

My second story is about a Japanese friend who was visiting in Canada. This friend had never been to a summer 'camp' before. The people he was visiting took him to visit a camp where many children had gathered for a week. The staff always had a party at the end of the

week when the children went home. They wanted to relax and have fun. Someone started to play tricks on other staff members. There was much laughter and fun. Finally, they asked the Camp Director to join. He knew he had to because, if he did not, he would signal to the staff that he felt superior to them. He joined and the trick played on him was quite funny. The Japanese guest laughed and laughed. Then the staff asked if he would participate. He did, but when the joke happened to him, he became very angry. He walked out of the camp circle and back to his cabin. And he lost the chance to be accepted by the staff as a friend.

Another friend was working in Africa. One night he heard drumming and laughter, so he went out to see what was happening. There was a big fire and people were jumping up and down around the fire. He sat on a log to watch. Soon one man did a very funny jump and challenged another man to do the same jump he had done. The other man did it. Then he made up his own jump and challenged another man. And so it went, until someone challenged my friend. He knew that he had better try to mimic the challenge, jumping even if he was not very good. Therefore, he got up, went into the circle, and tried. After trying the challenge jump, he made up his own jump and challenged someone else to do the same. Then he sat down. Later, a man came to sit beside him. ‘Why are you different than others who have come with your company?’ the man asked. ‘You are the first person who has come out and played with us from your company. What do you want to tell us?’”

“Oh,” cried Minzhe. “I think at last I understand why play is important. Thank you, Teacher Rifeng! Playing with people is accepting people.”

“That is good,” said Teacher Rifeng. “I think we will talk about law next time we meet.”

Key ideas to discuss from this story

In groups of three, talk about what true play is.

Check up

Did you talk about?

3. True play just happens anywhere, anytime, at a whim.
4. True play is not bounded by rules or dictated to happen.

Key ideas to discuss from this story

What happens to children who cannot play freely, but are forced to work?

Check up

Did you talk about missed

1. physical development?
2. mental development?
3. social development?

Key ideas to discuss from this story

Discuss the differences between play, sports, recreation, and entertainment.

Check up

1. Play is free from rules and set times.
2. Sports are very physical and usually have set rules.
3. Recreation is for relaxation, for getting away from what is everyday activity.
4. Entertainment is usually something that people watch. They do not take part in what is happening.

Key ideas to discuss from this story

Discuss why you should learn to play with the people you are going to be with.

Check up

Did you talk about play being a way of learning about people's values, who is important in the community, and most important of all, that it is a method of being accepted?

Key ideas to discuss from this story

In groups of three, talk about the kinds of things people do in your country for play, for sports, for entertainment. Talk about the play, sports, and entertainment you take part in.

Key ideas to discuss from this story

Do you have a hobby? What do you do? Why do you do it?

Chapter 19: What is Law and Etiquette?

“I enjoyed talking with Teacher Rifeng last time we met, about how people have fun,” Huizhong said as she and Minzhe walked to the Teacher’s house. “Etiquette will be interesting I think. It will be quite different to talk about law, though. Law sounds a little frightening to me.”

“I suppose people would not be free to have fun if there was no law to protect them and keep peace,” said Minzhe.

“You are always thinking, aren’t you, Minzhe?” said his wife. “But that is a good thought. Without some sort of safety, people could not really enjoy things. I wonder what the Teacher will say. What all is included in the subject, I wonder.”

When they were settled into their seats, Teacher Rifeng began.

“Every group of people organizes itself somehow. We have talked about how families, government, religion, and even playing games are organized. In spite of that organization, conflicts and disputes do occur. Arguments make it difficult for people to carry on regular activities peacefully. Long standing arguments result in people beginning to take sides. Then people may begin to seek to harm each other. Feuds may go on for years. Wars occur when arguments become extreme. Where feuds and wars are allowed to take place, without any process to stop them, societies may destroy themselves. The WaiWai tribe in South America allowed feuds to go on for years without any method of stopping the feuds. One group in the tribe raided another group of the tribe, killing people and stealing food. The raided group sought to get even. After about 50 years, the population became very small. Many men died in the feuding. The people were constantly moving and hiding from each other. No one could keep the gardens safe, so there was little food. Young children and old people died because of lack of food. The tribe’s existence was threatened. If outside influences had not come to help the tribe--bringing methods to stop the feuding--the whole tribe would have perished.

There are also individuals within each group who cause problems. They behave in ways that the group as a whole does not think are the correct ways to live. Some of these people become harmful to others around them.

People try to settle differences within a group by feuding or by war however, there is a third way. The third way of settling disputes and dealing with behaviour that is not 'normal' is called 'law'. Law is difficult to define. Law is a system put in place to help the group maintain a healthy balance in the way things are done by the group, and by individuals in the group. Law defines what the rights and duties of a people group or a nation are. Law defines what should be done when a group or an individual do what is not acceptable to the group as a whole. In some cultures, law is written down, while in other cultures, it is not written. Unwritten law is carried in the minds of either the whole group or of just a few people chosen to remember what is called 'good' and what is called 'bad' in the group. These are usually the elders of the group.

There must be some way of making laws effective. Sometimes it is just the pressure from people making up that society that make people behave in ways acceptable to the group. Sometimes punishments--such as having to pay money, being put in prison, or even being given a death sentence--are used to keep people doing what is right. There are people who are especially chosen to make others obey the laws. These people are given the authority to make the whole society obey the laws. Judges, lawyers and police men and women are part of the system of law.

When those given the authority must deal with a broken law, there are three things to think about. First they must think about what people are supposed to do or what they are not supposed to do. This is either written down or carried in people's minds.

Then those who guard the law must decide what has actually happened. They must gather the facts. What was the dispute about? What did the person really do? How were others hurt, if they were hurt?

Finally, it must be decided how the law-breaker will be punished and who will carry out punishment. Sometimes these punishments are already decided and have been written out. Sometimes the punishment is decided on the spot."

"Can you explain 'law' by talking about the 'cultural cabbage'?" asked Huizhong.

"Yes," Teacher Rifeng replied. "The outer layer is what we can see. We can see policemen, lawyers, judges, and juries. We can see court rooms and books in which laws are written down.

In a family, we can see a father. We can see and hear what a father does when he disciplines a child. So the law has a visible outer layer of things and behaviours.

The law is part of the legal system. The whole legal system is the second layer. Policemen, judges, books, courtrooms, and what happens in them, are all part of the legal system.

The legal system is constructed from what a people group values. That is the third layer. If a people group values private property--like most Westerners do—there will be many laws that tell how private property can be used and protected. The written property laws are part of the legal system--the second layer. The actual writing in books is part of the first layer.

Under the value layer--the third layer--is the heart of the cabbage. Remember that is the part of culture that explains where the people come from and where they are going. Much of Western culture derives its values, and therefore its system of law, from the Bible. There is a belief in right and wrong, in good and evil. That belief comes from how God is described in the Bible. For example, God is said to be the source of life. Jesus said that He is Life. Man is made in the image of God. Therefore it is wrong to murder someone. God is life, God gave life. When you kill a person you are acting against God. So there are many laws in the legal system that deal with how someone dies. Were they murdered on purpose, or did they die because of an accident, or were they sick and died?

Another belief system says their god is above all law. Their god cannot be bound by any law. Therefore if you follow law, their god is not bound to reward you. So killing someone may not be a bad thing because that god might decide to reward you according to how he feels at the moment he makes his decision. He cannot be bound by law. The laws about murder in this system are applied differently than are the laws that come out of a Christian value system.

I have a chart that may help us think about the legal systems in cultures.

	The Society	The Legal System
Ideal Behaviour	What the group thinks is best behaviour and what is punishment for lack of best behaviour.	
Acceptable Behaviour	What the group thinks is allowable even if it is not the best	What is written and needs the group to decide to change
Unacceptable Behaviour	The group deals with what is considered misconduct or 'sin'.	The legal system deals with injury to individuals and injury to society

Let's talk about the labels on the left side of the chart first. Ideal Behaviour means that every people group have ideas of what is best behaviour. If everyone lived this way things would be good all the time. Acceptable Behaviour means that everyone knows people will not always follow best behaviour so each group has an idea of what kinds of behaviour that group can accept. For example, if you do this, it is not the best, but we will let you do it anyway. Unacceptable Behaviour means that there are also ideas of what the group will not accept. If you do this, the group will not accept that what you have done is okay. It is too far from what is ideal or acceptable.

The three ideas on the left are dealt with in two ways. We see this in the centre and right columns. The centre column deals with the group as a whole, that is, with society. How does society impose certain standards of behaviour? The right column is the legal system, that is, the system which the group has set up to help people behave. Both begin with what the society thinks is the best way of behaving. Those ideals may be written or they may be unwritten. In the centre column, society as a whole, pressures people into behaving in certain ways. However, in the legal system, the laws are usually written, but not so in every culture. If societal pressure does not help people, then law is brought into effect. Just as everyone has an idea of what would

be best behaviour, everyone also has some idea of what would be allowed for various reasons, even if it is not the best behaviour. Society as a whole brings pressure on those who behave in ways society has decided is unacceptable. The legal system is in place to keep people from injuring other people or society as a whole.

Let me try to give you an example of how this works. In many countries in the Orient, it is acceptable for men to urinate wherever they wish. In the West, this practice is unacceptable. Most Western men do not urinate in public because of public pressure. But sometimes some men have chosen to do it in public as a protest. Then the legal system comes into effect because there are written laws defining what to do when these men ignore public, social pressure. I have just heard that in some countries in the Orient, a few important people have decided that urinating in public is bad but the public still does not mind the habit. The important people decided to go to the legal system and make laws stating that such behaviour is unacceptable and there will be punishments for doing that. It will be interesting to see what happens in these countries.

Another example might be health. In the West, the ideal is that if you are not well, you should stay at home or go to the hospital. People will not be too upset if you appear in public with just a sniffle here and there, or sneeze once or twice. If you sneeze you must cover your nose. It used to be that covering your nose or mouth with your hand was okay. But now you must sneeze into your arm. That is because if you sneeze into your hand and then touch something or shake someone's hand, you will pass the germs on. However, people will move away from you or even say things to you if you constantly blow your nose, or if you let your nose run, or constantly sneeze. Continuously sneezing in public is misconduct. The means of control is public disapproval. This disapproval is shown in nonverbal ways like moving away from the sneezing person. It is also shown in verbal ways where someone might say, 'You should stay at home and not give us your cold.' There are no written laws saying you cannot sneeze in public and no legal punishments for it. But few people are willing to risk public disapproval and appear in public often sneezing and coughing.

On the legal side, laws are the rights and duties people have in specific times and places. There are ways of making people do what the law requires of them. There is a person (or persons) who is responsible to see that the laws are kept. When laws are broken, these people enforce punishment or discipline. Again, an example from the West would be that the public

thinks that driving a car faster than 140 kilometres an hour (k/h) is not wise. However there are written laws saying how fast one may travel on each kind of road. 110 k/h is usually as fast as anyone may travel on the best highways according to the law. Other roads may be limited to 80 k/h. In areas where children play, the road signs say 30 k/h. There are highway patrol officers watching traffic for people travelling faster than the written law. These officers stop cars and hand out traffic tickets. A person may have to pay many dollars for travelling too fast and endangering the public around him.

Law may apply to the local or tribal level. It may also be on the state or provincial level. There are national laws that apply to everyone in a certain country. International law is also a fact in our world now. There are laws that try to govern war and trade between nations. The United Nations tries to keep the countries of the world behaving with both social pressure and with written law. There is now a Court of International Justice where world leaders may face court hearings, with judges and juries from many countries taking part in the procedures.”

“I think the hardest kind of law to understand would be unwritten law,” said Minzhe. “It would be hard for me to live in a country where the laws are not written but are only in certain peoples’ heads or in the groups’ mind.”

“Yes!” agreed Huizhong. “I think it is also very hard to live in a new culture and find out what is acceptable and unacceptable behaviour in that culture. Would not most of that be unwritten also?”

“I agree it is very hard to live where law is unwritten. One must consult the elders or those who carry the law in their head. These people can hold a great deal of power because they hold the law in their heads and no one else really knows all the details. By experience, many people will understand parts of the law. These people will talk to each other and help each other out. But it is difficult to know the law because it may change according to how the people who hold it in their head feel about different situations. Written laws can be changed also, but usually that takes time.”

“Are there special rules about how you may enter a different county?” asked Huizhong.

“Yes, there are”, replied Teacher Rifeng. “Before you go to another country, carefully check out what you must do to enter that country. Some countries require that you have certain inoculations before you can enter that country. You will need a doctor’s letter to say that you have had the inoculation. There are things you can take into a country and there are things you cannot. Hopefully, your network will be able to help you by telling you what to do and what not to do.

When you arrive in the country, there are laws that govern how organizations do things in that country. How may your organization advertise itself? In some countries one can use a speaker on top of a car to tell their message. In other countries, that would be called ‘noise pollution’ and strictly forbidden.

I want to mention something about international law, now. We all know that there are great problems in the world about trade and commerce. The economies of many countries are in difficulty. Because of this, many people are thinking that there should be one government in the world that would make laws for everyone. This would keep every country balanced with every other country. Really, the point of all law, from the smallest point in etiquette between two people, to the largest international law, is to try to keep things in harmony. Remember we said that all groups have organization. Families have organization, religions have organization, communities and countries have organization. The purpose is to make things run smoothly.

When one group becomes very powerful, they may begin to make laws that only benefit themselves. Law can be very unjust. Tax laws may be made to benefit only a small group of people. Laws may be made to keep people in subjection, so that others can benefit. The law of slavery was this kind of law. The laws benefited only those who could own slaves. Slaves certainly did not benefit from the laws. The laws kept them in slavery. Those who could not afford to own slaves did not benefit. They were not able to have the extra help that those who held slaves had. Slavery laws were made very much for the benefit of one group only.

There is always conflict between what the legal system says is law and what society says is law. Woman’s rights are one of the areas where we see this. There are laws in many countries that say that a woman should be paid the same as a man if she is doing the same work as a man. But there are many businesses where that law is not followed at all. Another example we talked

about is how fast you may drive your car. Most people think that the laws about how fast you can drive are set too low. So, there is constant tension between the road patrol police and the drivers. If people see a highway patrolman they will slow down. They may flash their lights warning other drivers that there are police down the road, and so to slow down.

For me, a very difficult part of 'law' is knowing what is 'acceptable' and what is not 'acceptable' on the social side. In some societies, there are long explanations about what is acceptable behaviour. We call this the rules of etiquette.

Almost everything humans do is guided by etiquette, written or unwritten. I remember visiting in Alberta, Canada when the Province was celebrating its one hundredth anniversary. Queen Elizabeth was coming to help the Province celebrate. My friends invited me to go with them to see the Queen cut the official birthday cake for the province. We received a set of instructions about how to act at this celebration. We were asked to arrive one hour before the Queen would appear. This was a written rule. However, much discussion was had about how to dress. The celebration was held in a football stadium. None of us would meet the Queen in person. We would just watch from the stadium seats. The general idea was that we would not wear the same kind of informal clothes we would wear to a football game. We would not wear shorts or jeans. But we would not wear formal suits or business suits either. We all decided that it would be acceptable to wear comfortable clothes that looked nice. Some men wore ties and jackets, others just jackets and a few wore nice looking sweaters. There were, however, written rules about how to dress if you were to meet the Queen, officially.

Etiquette, shared cultural standards governing individual behaviour, or what is considered proper, is different on different levels of society. The higher one is in society the more rules of etiquette there are. Most newspapers in the West have several columns that are dedicated to answering people's questions about how to act in certain situations. Invitations to weddings or other events may add how you are to dress at the bottom of the invitation. In Canada, if it says it is a black tie event, it will be a very formal occasion and one must dress in certain kinds of clothes.

Some of the ways we behave with people our own age would not be considered acceptable with people who are older than we are. Some people consider that it is okay to be rude to people

who are not as wealthy as they are. Others think that there is one way to treat all people and that the best behaviour should be given to all people. How do we find out these rules of etiquette?

First, we should observe. Watch carefully what people do when they meet each other. Do they bow, do they kiss, do they shake hands, or do they just smile? Do they do the same thing when they meet people who are older than they are or younger than they are? Do men greet men in one way and women in another way? Etiquette between genders is very important in many countries.

Then it is always a good idea to ask a friend what to do. Sometimes a friend may not know or maybe their advice may be incorrect because the friend has not had enough experience. Check with several people and if you get the same answer you are probably okay. Always be ready to apologise. You must find out how to apologise also. I was in a country where I had to get on my knees and put my head to the floor, making my apology three times. In another situation, I had to write a letter and give the person three copies of the letter.

My friends and I were teaching in a school in Japan once. The cook made a special meal just for those of us who were there for the first time. This meal took place at the end of our first year of teaching. The cook spent a long time cutting a raw fish for us to eat. The fish was skinned on one side and the flesh under the skin was cut into long thin strips. Then, the skin was put back over the flesh. It was a beautiful red snapper fish. It looked like a fish just taken from the water. The fish was set on a special plate that had been decorated to make it look as though the fish were swimming through waves in the sea. This fish is used in meals as a sign of congratulations. The cook was congratulating us on finishing our first year of teaching. A problem occurred! No one wanted to be the first to touch the fish. Finally I said I would do it. Just as I reached over to lay the skin back to take a slice, the fish twitched. Of course the fish was dead, but there was a muscle spasm anyway. After that, no one wanted to eat the fish. It was our first time seeing such a thing.

Later, the older teachers told us that the cook was very, very hurt that we had not eaten the fish. He had worked long and hard to make it just right for us. Only special cooks could prepare a fish that way and we had insulted him by not eating the fish. What should we do? The older teachers told us to get a gift, a special gift. I forget what it was. Then we were all to go at a

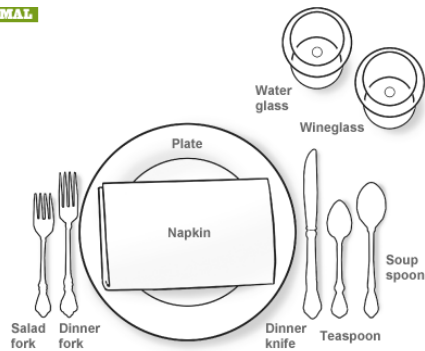
certain time and I was to kneel on the floor while the others bowed behind me. I was to say certain words to the cook and then push the gift toward him on the floor. He would not say anything to us. I was to repeat the apology and push the gift closer. I was to do it a third time. Then we were all to back out of the kitchen. He did not say anything to us. A short time later, the older teachers told us that the cook accepted our apologies. The older teachers also apologised to us because they had forgotten to tell us what would happen. They knew the cook would make that fish for us, but they forgot to tell us what the fish might do and that we should eat just a little anyway.

Sometimes it is very hard to know what is the right thing to do. A friend of mine worked in a tribe that had never seen a foreigner before. The tribal people looked down on him as if he were a devil. He was white and devils were white. They came into his house while he and his family were eating and stole things right off the table in front of them. My friend was very angry but he did not know what to do. One day, a man took my friend's horse. The horse was my friend's only way to travel in that part of the world. The next day the man rode up to my friend's house with the horse and did not appear to be getting off the horse. My friend lost his temper. He went out and hit the man on his jaw with his fist, knocking the man off the horse. Then my friend was very afraid. What had he done? The villagers lived in houses on the opposite side of the valley. Many had seen what he had done. What kind of law was there about this? Would they be very angry with him and force him to leave? He went into his house and shut the door, telling his wife to get ready to leave. Soon there was a cough outside the door. That meant someone wanted to see him. People had not coughed outside the door before, they had just come in. The man went to the door quite fearful of what he might find. He opened the door to a great surprise. There stood a man who had stolen knives and spoons off his table one day while they were eating. The man had the knives and spoons in his hand and gave them back to my friend. Soon others in the village came, returning things that had been stolen. The villagers had not only thought the man was a devil, but they had thought him very weak because he had never protested when they stole from him. Seeing him hit the man who took his horse changed their opinion of him. I don't think you should hit people when they steal things. This might have been the only culture where such an action was considered acceptable.

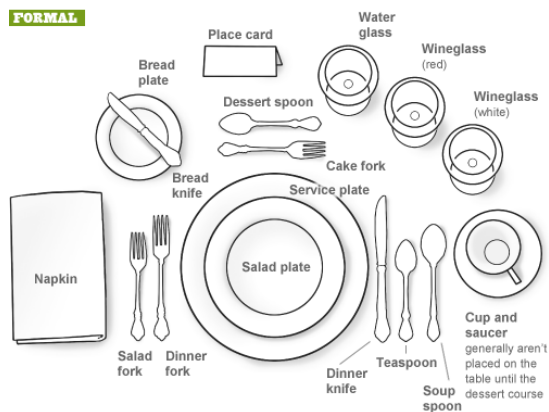
Another time, I witnessed an interesting discussion between a Buddhist company president and a Christian English teacher. The president was going to take a trip to Europe to visit companies there that were making the same kind of goods they were. The president asked the English teacher to show the young men of the company how to handle a formal Western meal. The English teacher brought a full table setting for a formal meal to demonstrate how to handle it.



It took awhile to show the men how and when and why to use each piece in the setting.

INFORMAL

Utensils are placed one inch from the edge of the table

FORMAL

Cup and saucer generally aren't placed on the table until the dessert course

When he was done, one of the youngest company men asked why eating in the West was so complicated. Before the English teacher--who was a Christian--could answer, the company president said it was because they were Christian. The English teacher was surprised. He had never thought about such a thing. He had never thought about western table etiquette as being very different or as being because the West was Christian. So he asked the company president to explain himself. Again the president answered very briefly that eating was the most important thing in Christianity. The Christian English teacher was dumbfounded.

‘Sir, why is that so?’ he asked.

‘Well’, answered the president, ‘the most important gatherings in the Old Testament were feasts and in the New Testament, the most important celebration is taking communion where bread and wine are eaten.’

Then the Christian English teacher began to understand. The company president was Buddhist. In Buddhism, eating is thought of as a necessary evil. Material things are negative. In

that country, people were taught to eat as quickly and as silently as possible. In the homes, there was to be no talking and laughing during a meal. Just sit and get the job done as quickly as possible. The English teacher remembered going to a special restaurant in the city where three foot long noodles were hand made in front of the customer. It was a very busy place with the business men and women on their lunch breaks coming and going. But what amazed the English teacher was that it took each person about 30 seconds to eat their noodles. They did not chew them, they just slurped them down one after another and then drank the broth very quickly and left. The English Teacher was eating slowly, cutting the noodles into bite sized pieces and chewing them. He was talking with the friends with whom he had gone to the restaurant.

The Teacher remembered that in the Old Testament, eating was a sign of fellowship. The Old Testament feasts were a sign of fellowship between God and His people. In the New Testament, communion was often done during a communal meal in the early church. The people were fellowshiping as they ate. Communion was a special time to think of their fellowship with Christ who had died, resurrected and was coming back to be with them. Christians look forward to a marriage supper with Christ when he returns.

In Judaism and Christianity, food and eating are not negative things. Food is a good gift from God. One takes time to eat and enjoy the food with others. One gives thanks to God for good things.

In the process of time, etiquette has grown up to give a sense of dignity and form to this time of fellowship. It really looks complicated but part of the reason is that eating should not be done quickly, without thought, but should be a time to enjoy. The way that the table setting is laid out helps one move through the time of eating smoothly. One can concentrate on the conversation and tastes in a graceful and beautiful way. The outside knives and spoons are used first. The top plates are used first. As the different courses are brought to the table one knows what to use.

By the way, the pictures I showed you are not what is done every day. They are for very special occasions like company dinners, weddings or when very special guests come to a meal.”

“I can understand that knowing and following the laws in another country is important if you want to get your work done,” said Minzhe. “And I think that I am beginning to understand

that I cannot just do things the way I do them at home in my own country if I want to serve my network well. I need to learn the etiquette of the country. How do they do things? I suppose that it is not always possible to know why they do things the way they do them.”

“You are correct, Minzhe.” said the Professor. “The Christian English teacher had never thought about the connection of the etiquette in eating in the West and the teaching in the Bible. Most Westerners would never think about that. It is interesting that a Buddhist saw the difference and understood it. That happens when you go to another country. People are so used to doing things the way they do them that they never think about why they do them. Outsiders often have to think about it much more as they learn to do it. They often come up with the real reasons quicker than the people of the country. That is one of the things I enjoyed about working in other countries. I began to see the relationship between all the layers of the cabbage much more clearly.

I think that is enough for today. Think about the laws that surround you and the etiquette you follow this week. Notice all the things that you do without thinking of it.

Key ideas to discuss from this story

In groups of three, talk about the definition of law

Check up

Did you mention that:

1. Law is a system put in place to help the group maintain a healthy balance in the way things are done by the group and by individuals in the group?
2. Law defines what the rights and duties of a people group or a nation are?
3. Law defines what should be done when a group or an individual do what is not acceptable to the group as a whole?

Key ideas to discuss from this story

Talk about the three things those who are in charge of the law should remember.

Check up

- 1 They must think about what people are supposed to do or what they are not supposed to do. This is either written down or carried in people's minds.
- 2 They must decide what has actually happened. They must gather the facts. What was the dispute about? What did the person really do? How were others hurt, if they were hurt?
- 3 They must decide how the law-breaker will be punished and who will carry out punishment. Sometimes these punishments are already decided and have been written out. Sometimes the punishment is decided on the spot.

Key ideas to discuss from this story

What is the difference between the 'Legal System' and 'Society'?

Check up

The legal system is made up of all those who deal in the law and all the written or unwritten rules to help people live together peacefully

Society is all the people. The people making up the society react to those who do what is acceptable and to those who do what is unacceptable and bring pressure on them to behave.

Key ideas to discuss from this story

How can you learn unwritten laws and the rules of etiquette?

Check up

Did you mention that:

- 1 you should observe? Watch carefully what people do when they meet each other.
- 2 ask a friend what to do? Sometimes a friend may not know, or maybe their advice is incorrect because the friend has not had enough experience. Check with several people and if you get the same answer you are probably okay.
- 3 You should always be ready to apologise when you know you have made a mistake? You must also find out how to apologise.

Chapter 20 - You and Cultural Anthropology

“I have enjoyed talking about cultural anthropology. Comparing the many cultures with one another has been interesting. However, I really do wonder how I fit into it. Do I really have any choices as to what kind of a person I am? Does my culture make me a prisoner?” mused Huizhong as she walked with Minzhe to Teacher’s house.

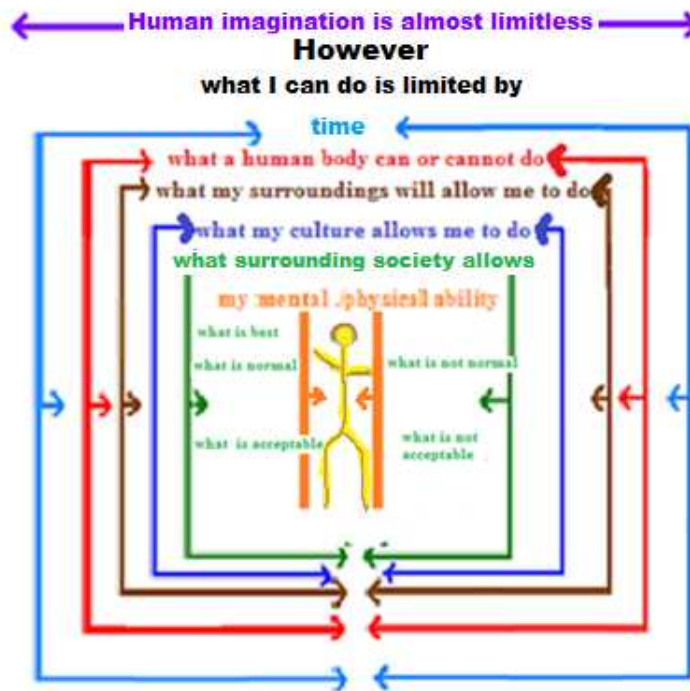
“Yes, I agree,” said Minzhe. “I thought I was a free man. I thought I could make up my own mind about things. But after all these lessons, I too have begun to wonder how free I really am. I am glad that Teacher Rifeng is going to talk about this today.”

They took their seats in Teacher Rifeng’s studio very thoughtfully.

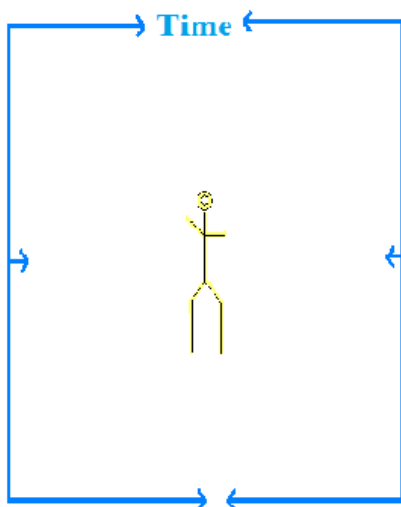
“You are one person, Minzhe. Huizhong, you are one person. I am one person. There will be 7 billion people in the world soon. Each of the 7 billion people is an individual. There are between 10,500 to 27,000 people groups--depending on how a people group is defined--in which these individuals live. Each people group has its own culture. What are the influences on each individual person in those groups? Is a person really free to be what he or she really wants to be? Are the people you are going to talk to really free to do what they want?

Let us talk about this today. What are the things that limit what each of us as individuals can do? This chart shows us some of the things that press in on us, limiting our freedom.

The Limitations that Squeeze in on Me



Humans can imagine almost anything. However, none of us can be and do all that we can think or imagine. There are things that keep us from being and doing some of the things we--or any other person in the world--can think of doing or being. Let's begin talking about some big things that keep any group of people or any individual from doing whatever they want.

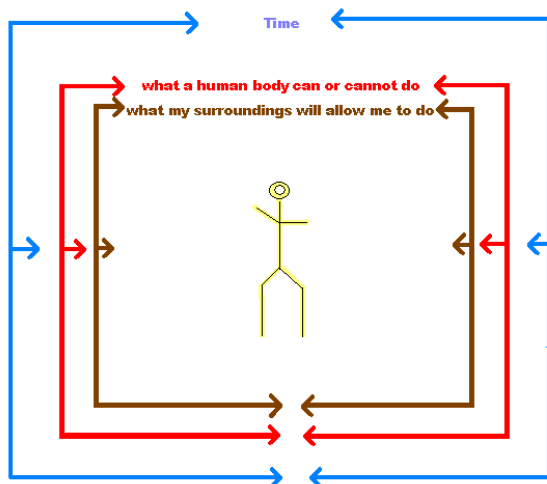


The first limitation is time. Each person in every people group in the world has only 24 hours every day. People groups may think of time differently, as we studied. But however they choose to think of time, they have only the same 24 hours every other people group has. There is not time to do all the things that you or I could imagine doing. A group of individuals working together can accomplish more than one individual working by himself or herself. However, each individual has the same 24 hours everyone else in the world has.

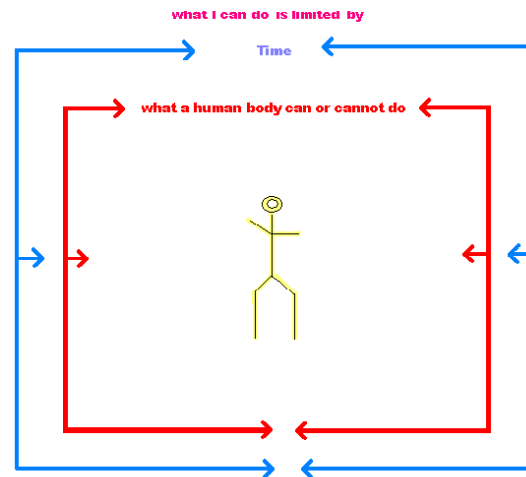
The second limitation every person in every people group faces is that we all have human bodies. There are things a human body can do and there are things a human body cannot do. Human bodies cannot fly like birds. Superman is an imaginary person. No human flies like Superman. Humans need the aid of machines, airplanes. If I jump off a very tall building, my body will be smashed when I hit the ground. Without the help of machines, no one in any people group can swim under the ocean for hours like a whale can.

All people have to eat and all people have to sleep. Our bodies demand these things. We can only stay awake so long. After a period

Where each people group - and therefore where each person - lives, is the next thing that keeps us from doing all the things we can imagine.



of time, our bodies (and minds) must rest or they will become very sick. So there are many things that individuals or people groups can think of that are impossible for them to do because they have a human body.



I have friends who live in the far north. They cannot plant orchards of trees to grow fruit. The trees would freeze every year. You could plant some trees inside buildings but only a very few compared to what could be planted on a large piece of ground outside.





I might want to catch a whale every day, but if I live in the desert that would be impossible unless I go to an ocean where whales live. Even if I lived on the ocean, I probably could not catch a whale everyday because there might be storms at sea which would make it impossible to sail that day.

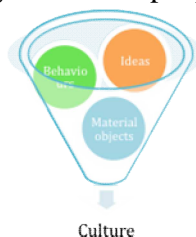
would be very difficult if I tried to get along by only speaking Swahili. I really ought to move to the place where Swahili is spoken if I want to speak only in Swahili.

Within each of our cultures, there are thoughts about what is best. Each culture defines what an ideal man, woman, or child is like. Many people cannot be the best, nor do the best, but the idea of what is best is still there in the culture. People must fit those ideas to be comfortable in the culture.

Each culture has thoughts about what is beautiful and what is not. Each culture sees jobs differently—each one as better or worse--than other cultures see them.

A culture also defines what normal behaviour is. It is okay for men to spit on the sidewalk in some countries. In other countries that is a very bad thing to do. Men can relieve themselves anywhere they want, in some countries. In other countries that is looked at as a terrible thing to do. Our cultures tell us how we should act. It is a guide to what is considered normal and what is considered not normal. In Japan it is normal to go to a public place and bathe with many other people, sometimes even both genders together. In other countries that would not be considered normal. People only bathe at home. Shaking hands is normal

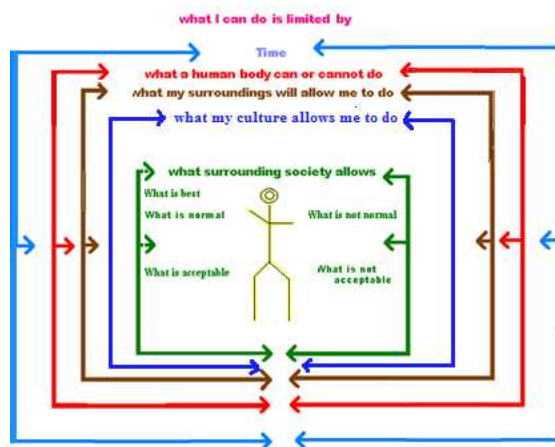
Now we come to what we have been studying, cultural anthropology. Each people group is limited by the culture that that group has made for itself. Remember that culture is made up of the values, behaviours and material objects of that people group.



If I lived in Arabia and wanted to speak only Swahili, I would run into trouble. I could speak Swahili all the time but no one would understand me. People would think I was very odd. They speak Arabic. I would not be able to buy food or greet people. Daily life

in some countries, bowing is normal in some cultures. Rubbing noses is normal in the Inuit culture. Depending on what culture you are in, people may greet other people with a kiss in several different ways.

Each individual within a particular culture is limited by the culture in which he or she has grown up. It is possible for cultures to change. Most cultures are changing. It is also possible for individuals within each culture to change. But it takes work to change a culture or to change within a culture. It is hard to learn another language so that it becomes as easy to use as the first language you learned, when you remain in your own culture. A few people in the world can break cultural barriers almost



The next thing that squeezes us in is the society in which we live. This is the area on which the study of sociology focuses.

Finally, there are limits put on us by what we are like physically, emotionally and mentally. The study of psychology deals with some of this.

completely. Most people in the world remain squeezed in by what their culture demands of them.

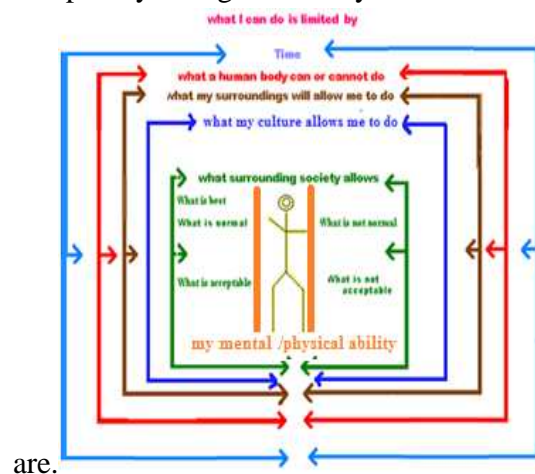
Sometimes other cultures try to limit us in our own culture also. This is happening, as the nations of the world know more about each other. The Inuit of the North hunt seals. They use every part of the seal for something. Countries in Europe think it is very bad to hunt and eat seals. They are trying to stop the Inuit in North America from hunting seals. Some countries eat whale meat. Other countries are trying to stop the whale hunt because they say there are very few whales left in the oceans and they could all die soon.

Remember we talked about the different levels in society that are found in each community in each people group. Each level has its own social behaviour and value systems within the larger cultural system. An individual can change his or her status level in a society. However, sometimes that is very difficult because the society keeps pressing the person. Someone marrying into a higher level of society may always have to deal with others on that level looking down on them and not really accepting them.

Are you big and strong or are you small and weak? Are you fat or are you skinny; tall or short? A very tall person may hit his head going in and out some doors because he is too tall. A short person may not be able to reach things on a high shelf without a stool.

You may have been born without a lot of power to think. Maybe you were born with a lot of imagination. Each person is born with different thinking ability. Each person imagines things differently. Some people are very easily made to cry. Others will never cry. Each individual in each people group has a special emotional makeup. People can change by physical exercise or by study or with discipline but again it takes a lot of work to change these pressures on us. I don't think anyone in the world can

completely change who they



are.

There is one other limitation on each of us. This one is not on the chart. Our experience limits us also. Maybe we tried something and people laughed at us. We became afraid to try that thing again in case people laughed at us again. We let that experience limit us in what we can do. We might give up something before we have practiced it enough. I know many people who were not willing to take the time they needed to learn to play a musical instrument. Later, they were sorry they could not play that instrument. We may not have enough money to do things. Our family may experience poverty and so we miss opportunities wealthier families have. The experience of being poor when we are young often leaves strong limiting pressures on us when we are older.

There are many things that squeeze us in and stop us from doing all the things we could imagine doing. But using the imagination we have can help us to escape some of the squeeze put on us. All through history, men and women have done things that were not normal things that they could do. Genghis Khan imagined - and conquered - the [largest empire](#) in history, of those countries whose borders touched each other.



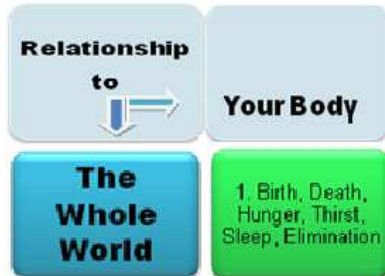
Wilbur and Orville Wright imagined a machine that could fly and made it. The power of man's imagination is wonderful and is often greater than the power of the culture in which people find themselves.

It is important to remember that when we go to a different culture to live with a people group different from ourselves there will be pressures on us there, too. These pressures will produce 'culture shock'. Sometimes culture shock is so bad people have to return to their own cultures. But people who are willing to learn, to laugh at themselves, and to appreciate good things in the new culture will grow to enjoy the new culture. The new pressures will lessen.

The next chart looks at the same things we talked about, but in a little different way.



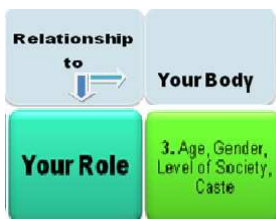
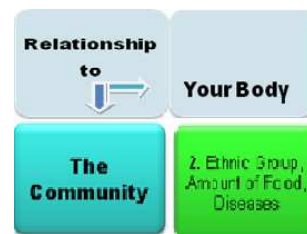
Shall we look at each square in the chart?



Square one reminds us that everyone in the whole world has a body. Every person in the world is born with a body and it will die. All bodies have to be fed and have to drink liquid. Each body must eliminate the waste from the food that has been eaten. Every body needs oxygen. Each people group may take care of these needs differently but each person on earth experiences these things. We are all the same in these things.

Square two square tells us that we will be like the people in our community around us. Most of the time we will be physically like the people around us in our community. Oriental people have black hair. Few men have full beards. Many in the West have brown hair and blue eyes. We will eat the same kinds of food that are available - depending of course on how wealthy we are. Most people in the Orient will eat rice and most people in the West will eat bread, for example. That is what the communities

around them do. People in different communities catch different diseases. Irish people are more likely to feel unwell if they eat wheat products. Jewish people are more likely to have a certain kind of blood disease than other people groups.



The third square tells us that every person's role in their community is different according to how old their body is. Roles differ according to whether the body is male or female. In India and some other countries, life is very different according to the caste into which a body is born. People in higher

castes usually look different than people in lower castes. That is because each caste only marries within that caste. Every person is affected by the level of society his or her parents are from. Every person's education or lack of education affects how they will treat their body. Education has an influence on the wealth a person can accumulate. Very poor people usually suffer physically because they do not have the food they should. How you treat your body is affected by your role in society.

In square four, you and your body are the focus. There is only one person in the whole world that has exactly your height, weight, and body shape. Add in the colour of your eyes and hair, the shape of your nose and mouth, and there is that unique person out of 7 billion people in the world. Tall people are often chosen as leaders. Short people may have a problem influencing other people. Physically strong people are chosen to do

more important tasks. Your body affects a lot about you.



The fifth square tells us that every person in the world is subject to gravity. No people group can float around in the air when they want to, despite fairy tales that tell us some people can. The temperature of the place we live in affects us. People who live in the North must wear clothes. If people at the equator tried to wear what people in the

North wore, they would be too hot. People in the North would freeze if they did not wear heavy clothes. As I said before, every person in the world has only 24 hours in a day. Some people may have more light in a day than others. In the short summer in the far North, the sun never sets. In the winter it never rises. People are more active in the summer there than in the winter. At the equator, day and night are very nearly the same length of time. Seasons at the equator do not change like seasons do in northern areas. Peoples' lives change according to the seasons.

Square six shows that every community has its own natural surroundings. Some people grow up in the grasslands where there are very few trees. Growing up in the mountains is different from growing up on the plains. Each people group usually covers several different kinds of surrounding landscape.

In the Province of Alberta, Canada there are mountains and prairies, frozen tundra and hot grassland, lakes, rivers, and very dry

regions, forests and flat plains. People living in this province enjoy visiting the great



variet

y of their environment. But each Alberta family chooses one of the areas to live in most of the time. People on the prairies do not fish or go boating like people who live

close to the great rivers of Alberta do. Our communities are greatly affected by our surroundings.



Square seven shows us that we can have access to goods depending on our role within each community. Wealthier levels of society are able to buy different kinds of food and clothes than poorer levels of the community are able to buy. Sometimes, only chiefs are allowed to eat certain kinds of food available in the community. In Britain, only people of a certain level of society can

put ermine fur on their cloaks.



What you can have, materially, depends a lot on your role in your community. Remember the caste system which dictates the kinds of jobs each level of society has? The kind of job--and the level--limits what each of those castes can use from the material environment around them.



It is interesting to think about square eight. Every person within each community is affected by what happens in his or her surroundings somehow. Some communities celebrate when they were founded. The next community may have been founded at a

different time and in a different way. So the celebrations will be different. Some people will have the experience of being in a flood, or a tornado. People quite close to them may not be affected by these disasters. Maybe lightning will strike a person. I know an older woman whose father was killed by lightning when she was a small girl. That incident in her private life changed how she lived and thought about things. Others in the community who did not have the same experience could not understand what she understood and felt. A friend working for a company was crippled in an accident. He

could not work in the company anymore. He felt out of place in his community where



Square nine tells us that people everywhere in the world must have certain ways that they look after babies until the babies can look after themselves. We talked about the different kinds of families in the world.

No one in the world grows up without having been born into some kind of group of people, a tribe, a nation, a state. Everyone is



Square ten reminds us that there are a certain number of people in our community. If we are in a hunting/gathering community we may have contact with only twenty people. There may not be anyone else living close to our group. A baby born into a family living

everyone worked in the same company.

affected by the kind of politics there is in the place they are born. Economics affects everyone as does the religion into which they were born.

The systems of the culture we live in leave great impressions on us. Muslims in Canada have a hard time getting used to Canadian law. Muslims want to live under their Sharia law. Honour-killing is murder in Canada but in a Muslim community the law understands the act of honour-killing differently. Each culture has these systems that make up the third layer of culture.

in a huge apartment in Hong Kong will have hundreds of people living in the same building with him or her. People born on ranches in Central United States may not have neighbours any closer than twenty or thirty miles away. Few people live around them. The same would be true for nomads in the deserts. Most places in Japan, China, and India have many people crowded together in the spaces available to live in. There may be places like deserts in each country where few people live. Each community has its own number of people with their own distance apart.

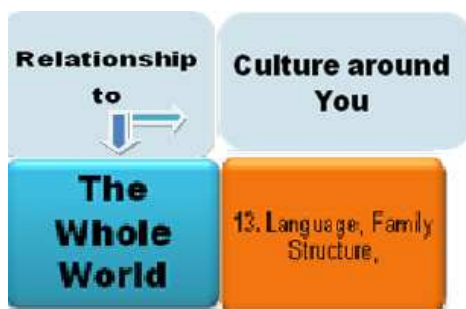


Square eleven. People with the same roles will often stick together within the close community. Mothers will gather at the village well and talk. Old men have their gathering places. In most countries, age groups are very important. The elders and



The twelfth square reminds us that each of us have special things that happen to us.

Not everyone in our community or our role grouping is affected when our father dies, like we are. We are all affected by the people we meet and the people with whom we become friends. Not everyone meets the same people we meet or becomes friends



the warriors will each gather in their own space. Boys, and girls, will have their own spaces. Whether there are few levels in society or whether there are many levels in society affects your role. We talked about the caste system in India and how that determines a person's role in Indian society. Are there people in the society who do not fit with what the majority of the people are like? How do you relate to those people? Do you have to ignore them like the upper castes ignore the Outcastes in India? Do you have to wash if someone from a lower class touches you? How is your role in your society affected by others in your society?

with our friends. Adoption affects each adopted individual in ways like nothing else affects people. If we have many relatives living close to us, we are influenced in special ways that are unique to the family. If we have no relatives around us, we are affected in different ways. It is interesting to talk to young people in America. Few of them live close to uncles and aunts or grandparents. Their view of family, of society, and of themselves is very independent, compared to people who live close to their relatives.

There are a few things that each culture in the world shares. That is what the thirteenth square tells us.

All cultures have a language that they speak, though they may not write that language.

Every culture uses symbols. The symbols may be kinds of writing or they may be

marks that mean ‘here is food’ or ‘here is danger’.

Everyone has a family, however, as we studied there are many forms that families take. One interesting thing is that there are rules about who may marry whom in every culture. We talked about those rules when we talked about marriage.

Another thing almost every culture has in common is that it is wrong to kill members of your own family. People do this in spite



Square fourteen deals with how our cultures affect our roles. Every person in the world is affected by the things that his culture says are good and bad. Each culture has rules about how to greet people of different ages and roles in our communities. The stories of



Our roles are defined by our culture, square fifteen tells us. Each culture has ideas of

of how wrong the culture says it is. King Herod of Bible times killed many of his wives and children. However, people in his culture did not think that was a good thing. In Islamic cultures, ‘honour killing’ is not only accepted but it is expected. This is an exception to the normal procedure.

Many cultures killed infants who were deformed because they thought the child had an evil spirit. This was not an easy thing for mothers to do, but they did it.

the culture, the fourth layer of the cabbage, affect each person in their own cultural way. Hunters and gatherers have knowledge that others do not have about animals. Farmers know things that people raised in the city do not. My cousins from the city were very surprised to watch a cow being milked. They thought milk was made in a big factory and always came in bottles. They were equally surprised to see a chicken lay an egg. Fishing communities have skills that herders do not have. The fisherman in each culture has a special method of catching fish that will be different from other cultures. This is what square fourteen reminds us.

what men, women, and children are allowed to do, and what they are not to do. We talked a bit about that when we talked about gender. Age groups are allowed to do certain things at certain times. This has to do with the circle of life in many cultures. Each stage of life has a different role in most cultures.



The last square reminds us that culture influences how people relate to us and how we relate to them. Many cultures did not accept orphans. Orphans were abused and made to do hard work in many cultures. People who used their left hands were badly treated in many cultures. Some said left handed people were children of the devil. In many cultures crippled children were made to beg. I have a friend who grew up on a farm in Western Canada. This boy liked to go to school and learn things. He loved music and learned to play the piano. The other boys in the community did not think these were the kind of things a 'farm boy' should be doing. The other boys made life hard for my friend. He grew up and moved away from his community to another community where the things he liked to do were accepted.

Other friends moved to a new culture. They took their pet dog with them. When the dog died, their children cried and were very sad. The people of the culture laughed at the children. Dogs did not mean much to people in that culture. They thought it was very odd to be sad when a dog died. The culture around you affects you greatly.

There is one thing that I should talk about that is not on the chart. That topic is how religion affects the individual. Actually, I want to talk about how changing religion affects an individual person. A person's religion affects every square in our chart.

People have to care for babies but how they are cared for is greatly influenced by the beliefs held at the core of the culture the baby is born into. We talked about what happens to girl babies in some cultures because of what is taught in the fourth layer of culture. In some parts of Africa in the past twin babies were left to die or were thrown into rivers because people believed twins were evil. Some cultures will not give a baby a name because they believe that if the baby has a name demons will identify the baby and hurt him or her. Even such things as being born with a mole on your face can be interpreted by religious belief. The person will either be shunned or be given special roles, because of it.

Religion dictates how people live together. Islam says that woman cannot be seen in public. Houses are built so that women cannot be seen inside the house. Some tribes allow only men to live together. Woman and children must live in other places.

People with the same beliefs will stay together in groups even when their roles are different or their levels in society are different. Some religious groups will not allow believers to live outside their communities. In these groups, marriage happens only among families with the same beliefs.

Religion dictates what people eat. It dictates who can do certain jobs, as we saw with the caste system in India - which comes out of Hindu beliefs.

What happens to people when they change their religion? What has to change in their life when they change religion? One of my teachers taught me that about ninety-five percent of how a person lives does not have to change when they become a Christian.

For instance, people do not have to change how they build their houses. There is no Christian way to build a house. They may not have some things in their house after they become Christians that they did before they were Christians. However, the basic house plan would not have to change. In Japan, Christians do not have god shelves in their houses. But they can build houses that look like anyone else's house in Japan. People do not have to change their language

or the way they walk. They may not talk about the same things they did before they changed religion but they will still use the language they used. People may still dress the same way. Indian women who become Christians still wear saris. They may not wear some things that were connected with their old religion--such as charm bracelets or pendants--to ward off evil. Everyday food will be the same and will be prepared in the same way. Japanese who become Christians will not give the first bowl of rice they make to the gods any more, but they will still cook rice.

People must very carefully examine the five percent of culture that needs to change. Big mistakes have been made in the past when Christians demanded major changes in the way people lived their lives. Much of the change they demanded had nothing to do with Christianity. Many of the changes had to do with how the missionaries lived their lives in their own cultures. They thought they had the right way to live. It is the fourth level of culture that must change. Changing the fourth level brings subtle changes to each person's life. But the person will not stop writing his language in the way he has always written it. He will not stop using a computer to write messages, if he uses a computer. People will still get married and still have feasts when they get married. There will be changes in the ceremonies but people need to think very carefully about what needs to be changed, and what does not.

One of the saddest things that happened when many people became Christian was that they gave up some of the celebrations in the circle of life. That was because European missionaries did not see the importance of the celebrations to daily life in the community. Celebrations can be held for the birth of a child. The focus of the celebration may change. The prayers that are prayed may change, but we must not confuse the content with the reason for celebrating.

Buddhist funerals in Japan are very difficult for Japanese Christians. It is especially difficult if a parent dies and the families demand that a Buddhist funeral be held. After long talks with friends, they told me that rather than not going to the funeral, they would go, but they would do some things differently. Instead of praying to the dead person, kneeling before the body, and bowing to it, they would kneel beside the body and pray to God the Heavenly Father, the Christian God, out loud. They would thank God for having had the father or mother they had. They would talk to God about what life was like as a family, giving thanks and praise to God for allowing them the privilege of living in that family. They would honour the person by talking to

God about the person. Most of the meaning of the traditional Buddhist funeral ceremony is understood to be about honouring the person. Instead of offering incense to the dead person, my friends decided to put a live flower in the person's casket as a sign of loving that person and honouring them. Most of the time, relatives were satisfied with such displays of honouring the deceased loved one.

A woman friend who worked in a Muslim country said that she had no problem wearing what Muslim women wore. She felt that the clothes did protect her from men who might otherwise try to talk to her, or worse. She also had her father give her many gold necklaces to show that someone valued her. She would not wear special jewellery to keep 'the evil eye' away, though.

It is hard to think through just what it means that ninety-five percent of a person's culture does not have to change when they become a Christian. But I think it is very important to think that through. If a Christian wants to influence others of his or her friends, that person cannot become so different that they make it hard to be friends with others.

Jesus became a Jewish carpenter. He did things the way every Jewish carpenter did them. He lived with his Jewish family. When he became a teacher, He did so in the way the Jewish men became teachers. He was thirty years old before He started his ministry. That was the age one was to be when they began ministry.

Jesus taught in the synagogues until people did not like what he said. Jesus went to weddings; he ate, and dressed like people around him did. He had disciples like other teachers did. He even was baptized, even though there was no religious reason for him to do so.

Paul made a very significant decision when he decided that men did not have to be circumcised when they became Christians. In Paul's time, circumcision was looked down on by the Greek and Roman culture. Paul understood that non-Jews did not have to follow the dietary laws that Jewish people followed. Paul saw that there were deeper things to change. If those deeper things changed, that would make the changes happen in the outer layers that needed to be changed.

A tribe in Papua New Guinea became Christian. They did not build new houses or invent new ways of eating, walking, sleeping, or planting gardens. Instead, husbands began to treat their wives differently. Men began to help each other do their gardens and build their houses. They understood who their wives were, in a different way, because the heart of how they thought had changed. The only change in the way the village was made was that they kept it clean.

A friend who helped the Dani tribe learn how to be Christian told me a significant story. In the village a woman was washing clothes by a tiny stream flowing into a river. When she was not looking, her baby fell into the stream and was taken away by the river. The stream was so small it was strange that the baby was washed away. People in the village said that the river god was angry because Christians did not worship him anymore, so he took the baby. Next, two young men who were hunting were killed by lightning as they rested under a tree. The villagers who were not Christian said the jungle gods were angry so they killed the men. Finally, a woman whose husband was abusing her climbed a tree over the river. After screaming out her anger at her husband and her brothers for not helping her, she jumped into the river and drowned. In that society, a woman's brothers should protect her from her husband, but hers did not. In order to shame her brothers, the woman committed suicide. The people again blamed the Christians, saying that it was really the river god being angry that caused this incident also--not the husband's abuse. They threatened the Christians that if they did not perform a ceremony to make the gods happy, they would make the Christian leave the village.

The Christians wondered what to do. They did not know of a Christian ceremony to do what the non-Christian wanted done. After much talking about whom the Christian God was, what He was like, and how He wanted them to live, they thought of a plan. They remembered that when Jesus died, he triumphed over Satan. Satan was beaten. The Christians recognized that the gods were not really gods, but were demons. They remembered that the Christian ceremony of Communion is a celebration of what Jesus did when he died. He defeated Satan when He died. So the Christians had a celebration at which they took communion before all the non-Christians. They declared that Jesus was more powerful than the gods of the river or the jungle. After that testimony, there was no more trouble.

These Dani Christians thought of a way to take care of the gods, but to do it in a way that others would understand, while they remained true to their Christian religion. In the tribal

religion there would have been a special ceremony to try to make the gods happy again. The Christians found a Christian ceremony to do what was needed. They changed the fourth layer meanings, but kept the second and first layers much like they always were.”

“We have much to think about after this lesson,” said Minzhe. “Will we meet with you again?”

“Yes,” said Teacher Rifeng. “I want to talk to you about what cultural anthropologists think will happen in the future. Our world is always changing. There are changes happening in the countries to which you are going. It would be good to know what some of those changes are so you can make your message understandable, even in the change.

Chapter 21: The Future as Anthropologists See it.

“I have been wondering a lot about what the world will be like in the future,” commented Minzhe as he and Huizhong walked to Teacher Rifeng’s home for another lesson. “I am glad we are talking about that today.”

“Yes!” said Huizhong. “It seems to me that the world is changing very quickly. Will all the cultures of the world survive the changes? When we go to another country to work, how will these cultural changes affect us? What will happen?”

After the proper greetings, Minzhe and Huizhong noticed that Teacher Rifeng had changed his studio all around. Many of the tiny animals and other models that had peeked out from the shelves were gone. In their place were new looking things. Huizhong had no idea what some of the things were.

“You have changed your studio, Teacher!” she exclaimed. “It is different. I don’t feel so comfortable today. Things I liked are gone.”

“Yes, I have changed it,” replied the Teacher. “I thought it would help us to think about the changes that anthropologists think may be coming in our world. I want to tell you about some of the changes they are thinking about. Some people are very uncomfortable with change. But change will happen no matter what we like or dislike. And change is going to affect every part of the world in new ways. Change in one culture has always affected cultures in other places.

Let me tell you a brief story about change. In 1700, men in London began to wear beaver hats. For seventy years, from 1700 to 1770, 21 million beaver pelts were used to make

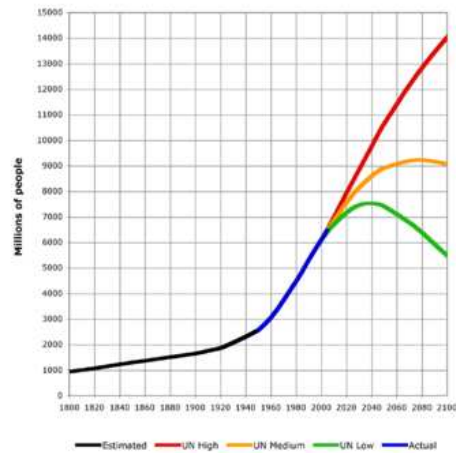


The London fad led to much of the discovery and settlement of Canada because many of the beaver pelts, used to make hats, came from Canada. If beaver hats had never been in fashion in British culture, the history of Canada would have been quite different.”

“What are some of the changes anthropologists talk about?” asked Minzhe. “What will happen to the population of the world?”

“That is a good place to begin,” said the Teacher. “One thousand years after Jesus Christ died there were only 275 million people in the world. That is 1/4 of a billion. It took 800 years to add another 3/4 of a billion people to make the one billion mark in 1800 AD. Part of the reason for taking 800 years was the Black Plague which destroyed up to, or more than, 1/2 of the world population from China to Europe between 1330 and the 1405.

Look at this chart.



No one really knows what will happen to the world's population so there are three 'guesses' here. Some say that by 2100 there could be 14 billion people. That is double the world's population today. Others say there will be only 9 billion, and still others say only 5 ½ billion. The last number is fewer people than are alive in our world now.

World Population Estimates

Population in Billions	1billion	2 billion	3 billion	4 billion	5 billion	6 billion	7 billion	8 billion	9 billion
Year	1804	1927	1960	1974	1987	1999	2011	2025	2045-50
Years Between	123 years	33 years	14 years	13 years	12 years	12 years	14 years	20-25 years	

The population of the world reached one billion in 1804,
two billion in 1927,
three billion in 1960,
four billion in 1974,
five billion in 1987, and
six billion in 1999.
It is projected to reach seven billion by 2012,

and around eight billion by 2025.

By 2045-2050, the world's population is currently projected to reach around nine billion, with alternative scenarios ranging from 5.5 billion to 14 billion as we saw on the previous chart.

One of the reasons for the great variation in guesses about the number of people alive in the future is that there are ideas about plagues that will affect the world. These plagues could be like the Black Death that killed so many people in the Middle 1300's. Some people feel that the Black Death may return, as a growing number of people are dying of it again. Many so called 'Christian' people in Europe came to hate God at that time of the Black Death. They felt God did nothing to stop the plague but allowed them to suffer tremendously. Prayers were not answered. Special offerings were seemingly ignored. People felt God had abandoned them, so they abandoned God. The growth of education, the understanding of the sciences, the growth of the arts, and health measures were greatly damaged because of the Black Death. Could this happen in the world again? Some say there are 10 different new diseases in the world, any of which could be like the Black Death and spread very quickly. We have already had the SAARS scare, the Bird Flu scare and the H1N1 scare. (I myself nearly died with H1N1 last year.)

People in the slums of the cities will probably be the first to die. They cannot move anywhere. They already suffer high disease rates and poor health caused by lack of sanitation and not enough food. Next it is the medium wealthy urbanites who die in world plagues. The very educated of the world also die. The urban medium-wealthy do not have the skills to survive a disaster because they depend on others so much. They pay doctors to keep them well. When their health system falls apart, they have no help. They do not know how to produce their own food or how to live on very little. They cannot eat money. They depend on the systems of the culture to keep them but when many people die, those systems fail to work.

Some think that, as in the days of the Black Plague, it is the rural poor people who will survive. They have learned to survive. They are not dependent on the material things, on which so many in the medium wealthy groups and higher levels of society depend. The rural poor seem to have a greater resistance to disease also. Because these folk are often not highly educated, if they are the ones to survive, much learning is lost. It was this blow to learning and growth that led the 1300's to be called the 'Dark Ages'. Some wonder if such a thing could happen again.

Could the world go into a new 'Dark Age'? Some see the future as very dark. That would change many other predictions about the future.

Today, there are 14% fewer people in Africa than there could have been. That is because of AIDS/HIV. Most people predict that the AIDS crisis will only continue to increase. The effect on some countries has been and will continue to be devastating. Adults, who can work, will continue to die from this plague. Economy and all aspects of the culture will continue to be affected. Africa may lose much importance in the future because it may continue to become poorer, due in part to AIDS.

The birth rates of the developed countries are falling drastically. The average age of people in these countries is increasing. The population is getting older. There are not enough people to fill the jobs needing to be done in these countries. Younger people are usually better educated than the older people were. Younger people do not want lower paying jobs. Many of these developed countries are encouraging people from other people groups to enter the country to do the unfavoured jobs. This leads to clashes in culture. Many Islamic people groups have moved to France. But the French do not like the head coverings that Muslim girls wear. Rules are being made by the government that forbid wearing the head covering. This is leading to tensions between the people groups and the French. The people groups want to keep as much of their culture as possible. This is especially true of the Muslim groups who want to keep their own law based on the Quran.

Developing countries are getting younger. Half of the developing countries have an average population age of 15. That means half the nation is over 15 and half the nation is under 15. This creates a huge challenge especially in the passing on of cultural values. Young people tend to want the same culture as other young people in the world are seeking. Education is a challenge, especially education that passes on the values and beliefs of a culture. As youth respect the wisdom and authority of elders less and less, problems arise in passing on cultural values and the stories of the third and fourth layers of culture.

Fifty percent of the world's population uses contraceptives. We have discussed the tensions in countries where girl babies are routinely left to die or are aborted before birth. Fewer children lead to a more elderly population. The young cannot pay for the upkeep of the elderly. There is

an increasing cry for euthanasia to be practiced when elderly folks become sick. The idea of euthanasia clashes with many of the values and beliefs that were held in people groups. However, the young working people cannot carry the burden of paying for the medical needs of keeping the old alive. Will we face a world with few old people in it?

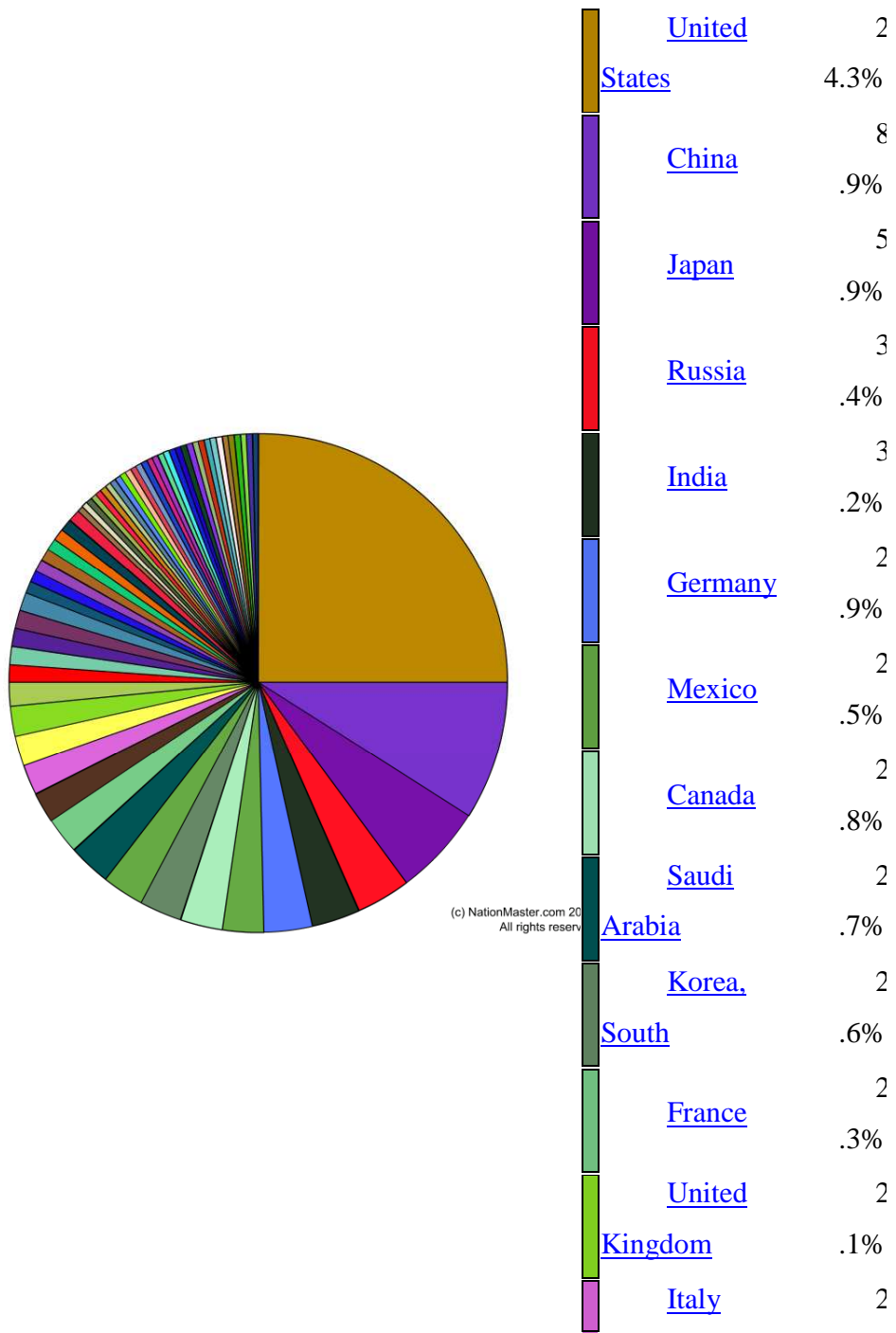
Anthropologists feel that rich people groups will continue to get richer and that poor people groups will continue to get poorer. People groups like the hunter-gatherers will find it harder to live and will become poorer and poorer. Wealthy information-dependent groups will continue to have access to more material things. The feeling is that there will be fewer people in the middle. The rich will have more food than anyone. They will have better education and health care. They will have better clothes. They will access travel and entertainment more. It seems that the more wealth one has the more things one requires to live. Here is a chart showing countries above average income (blue) and countries below average income (yellow). Notice that it is much of what is called the West that at present is prosperous. It is thought the West will get wealthier and wealthier.

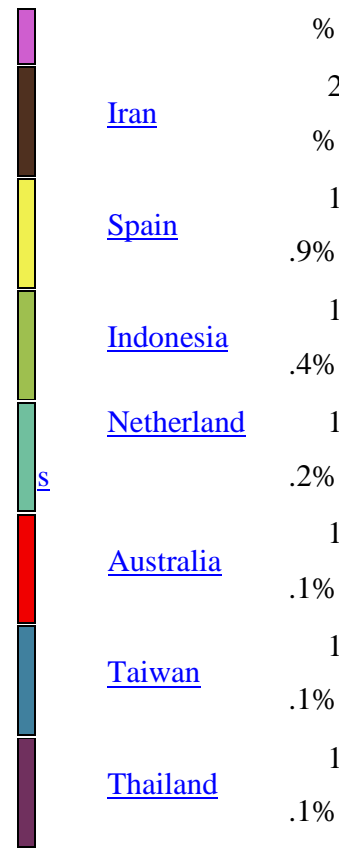


The next chart shows what countries use the most oil. India is on this chart probably because of population alone. India has $\frac{1}{4}$ of the world's population. It is on the 'below average income' level in the chart above. Many people think India will soon become a super power. One of the reasons for this is that India has had a good education system for quite awhile now. If the problem of caste is solved, so that the lower castes have access to better jobs, India will very quickly move to a wealthy status. Indonesia is also on this list of oil users. Again, this is probably because of its large population. Notice that Canada, the Netherlands and other countries

with relatively small populations are listed as top users of oil. These are also wealthy countries. Will they continue to grow wealthier and use more and more resources?

Energy Statistics: Oil Consumption by Country



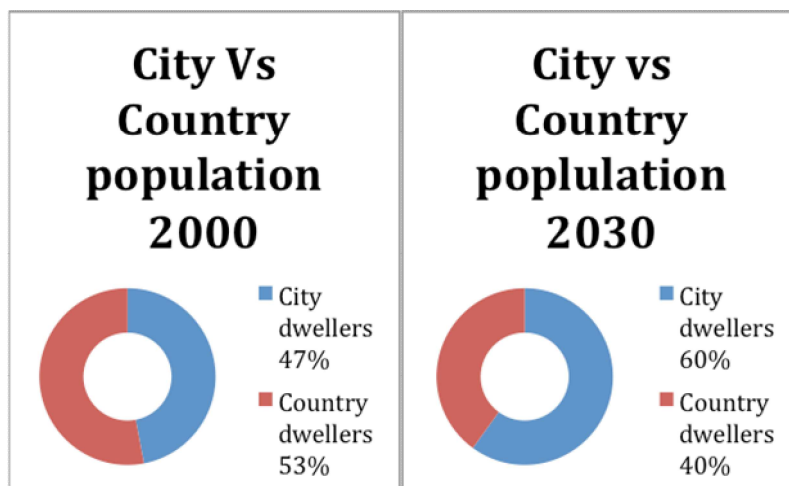
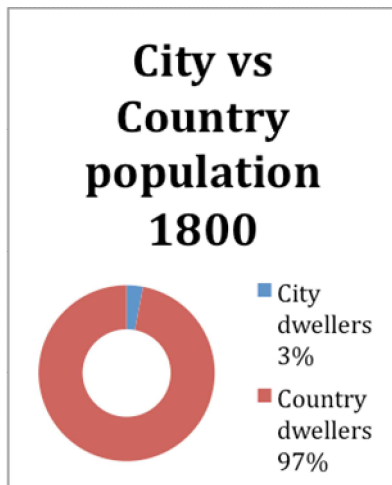


There is great debate about what will happen in a world that is now dependent on fossil fuels. Gasoline, oil, and coal are fossil fuels. Many products come from these fuels. Plastic is one of the most obvious things we depend on now. What changes would happen in all the cultures of the world if the supply of fossil fuels were to be depleted as some say they may be. It seems that wars are being fought now because of the need some nations have for oil. The developing nations will begin to use more and more oil. Will the supply be exhausted? What changes in culture will happen if fossil fuel supplies are depleted?

One thing most people agree on is that hunter/gatherer cultures will disappear. This is because of land use. If there is an increase in world population, hunters and gatherers will find less and less room in which to hunt and gather. Hunters and gatherers need a lot of land in which to move about. The populations of communities around them continue to grow and use their land and resources, squeezing them out. The Pygmy peoples of the jungles of Central Africa are having to learn to settle on farms. More and more of the jungle they depended upon to hunt in disappears as surrounding Bantu tribes cut the jungle down to use for their own farms. As Brazil

builds huge east-west and north-south highways to open the jungle for exploration, tribes are losing their homelands. Simple farmers are not able to find land now. Remember, these people use land for a couple of years and then move to new areas of the jungle. As big farms or big mining operations move into the land and claim it for their own, the simple farmers are forced to stay on the same land. It is poor land and they suffer trying to grow enough food. Herders may also find less room to move their flocks. Depending on the population growth, these three groups, hunters and gathers, herders, and simple farmers may gradually disappear.

More people will live in cities in the future. In 1800 only 3% of the [world's population](#) lived in cities. By 2000, 47% did so. If the trend continues, the world's [urban population](#) will double every 38 years, say researchers. The UN forecasts that today's urban population of 3.2 billion will rise to nearly 5 billion by 2030. Then three out of five people will live in cities. The increase will be most dramatic in the poorest and least-urbanized continents, Asia and Africa. Projections indicate that most urban growth over the next 25 years will be in [developing countries](#).



One billion people, one-sixth of the world's population, or one-third of urban population, now live in [shanty towns](#). These slums are seen as "breeding grounds" for social problems such as [crime](#), [drug addiction](#), [alcoholism](#), [poverty](#), the sex trade, and [unemployment](#). In many poor countries, [slums](#) exhibit high rates of [disease](#) due to unsanitary conditions, malnutrition, and lack of basic healthcare. Will these urban poor areas continue to grow? How will this affect culture?

It is fascinating to study what happens to the culture people bring with them to the city. Cities tend to be places where cultures mix and new things appear. How will the move to the cities impact the culture of nations and people groups?

What would happen if the 8 million people in Beijing all began to use cars instead of bicycles? There would have to be many changes in the streets of the city. Streets would have to be widened. People would lose homes. Communities would change. There would be increasing

problems with pollution. People would begin to live farther away from where they work. Major changes are seen for the cities of the world as wealth and acquisition of goods continues to grow. The cities will be the focus of wealth so they will feel the change of increased use of goods in many ways.

People moving to the developed countries see the wealth of the older people of the country. But the jobs that are available to the new immigrants do not get them wealth very quickly. This leads to more tension. Many young people from the immigrant groups are better educated and do not want the jobs their parents took when they immigrated. But the better paying jobs are filled by older folk of the first culture. This causes great tension with the young. We have seen race riots in Europe and other places increase in the past few years. Many people feel that there will be a great increase in violence between people groups as they continue to move together in the cities of the world.

Some argue that because of internet usage, the cities of the developed world will not grow. I know a business man who lives on a ranch far from the city where his office is. He almost never visits his office. He invites people to his ranch for weekends. They fly a long way to get there, thinking the man is really being nice to them by inviting them there. They do not know that he lives there all the time. He uses the internet to do his business. He seldom goes to the big city. He deals in information that can be handled from his ranch by internet. Maybe people will not need to live so close together in the future. Will cities grow or will they not? Even farmers can now seed and harvest their crops using robotic machinery run by GPS from computers in their offices at home.

Anthropologists worry that the world may become one culture. They think they see the beginnings of this in the youth of today's world. Many young people in the world like to wear jeans and tee shirts. Fashion is dictated by pop culture. Respect for authority has changed. Youth around the world enjoy the same kind of music. As the music is shared, the ideas and values taught in the music are shared.






Television and internet influences the move toward one world culture. People watch plays and movies on television. They see the latest things on internet. They see the objects and things people on television are using. The peoples of the world begin to want those things in their

homes also. It is not just material objects in the first layer of the cultural cabbage that people see on television. New ideas and values are also taught directly or indirectly as people watch these movies and plays. Remember that we said that entertainment has the greatest value in teaching new things. Will the values of cultures around the world withstand the daily intake of new ideas from television, internet and other means of communication?

It is interesting to travel to the large cities of the world now. There are the same hotel chains in many of the world's great cities. If one just visited hotels, one would never know where one was in the world. All the hotels of one chain look the same. Hotels in different chains even look alike. They all have the same shops that carry the latest fashions from Paris or London or Shanghai. Shops in each hotel display the same goods from all around the world.

Methods of transportation are becoming the same. Every nation has its own airline. Apart from the attendant's uniforms and the food that is served, much of what happens in an airplane is the same as it is anywhere in the world. The same things happen in the airports everywhere in the world. Here is a look at the number of people who travel on the busiest airlines in each section of the world. We will talk more about travel when we talk about the growth of leisure time and what people will do with it.

Scheduled passengers carried in 2009

Continent/ region	Airline	Passengers carried
Africa	 EgyptAir	8,400,000
Asia	 China Southern Airlines	66,280,000
Europe	 Lufthansa	76,500,000
North America	 Delta Air Lines	161,049,000
Oceania	 Qantas Group	38,600,000

South
America

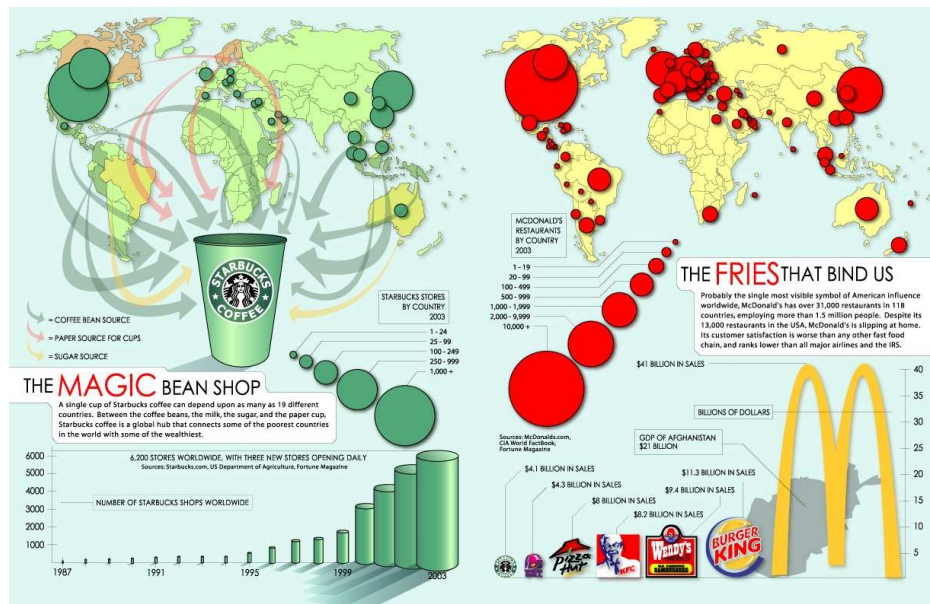


24,005,620

Even food is becoming a one-culture kind of thing. McDonald's and other food chains are springing up almost everywhere in the world. McDonald's operates over 31,000 restaurants worldwide, employing more than 1.5 million people. McDonald's operates in more than 119 countries on six continents. Every day McDonald's serves more than 47 million customers around the world. This chart shows how MacDonal'd's has spread to the world.



Yes, the chicken served in McDonald's in Schezuan, China are much much spicier than the ones served in Alberta, Canada but it is the same kind of food being served.



The chart above illustrates how interconnected the world is now. Notice where the materials come from in order to serve one cup of Starbucks coffee to a customer. 19 different

countries contribute to the serving of one cup of coffee. Notice also that the chart says that it is in that cup of coffee that some of the world's poorest and wealthiest people meet.

Internet and television, satellite telephone, and radio are changing the language of the world. International communication will continue to affect world cultures also. New ways of saying things arrive every minute on the internet. Some nations, like France, try to stop the use of words from other languages, but that is proving to be very difficult. Words often carry meanings that relate to the fourth level of a culture. New words will either change the fourth level or will have their meaning changed to fit the fourth level of the host culture. This is a strong influence toward one culture in the world.

As people groups begin living in each other's territories there is a deep clash rising from the fourth level of culture. Beliefs that underlie behaviours, such as Muslim ladies wearing the veil, the sacrifice of animals, and so on, are being challenged in the places to which people move. What effect will laws--which make some behaviour illegal--have on the beliefs in the fourth level of the cultures involved?

People think that as parts of the world become wealthier, people will have more time for leisure activities. The leisure industry is growing very, very, quickly in most countries of the world. In many countries, the income from leisure industry has increased faster than all other industries together. The World Leisure Organization was founded in 1952. The 2010 World Leisure Congress was held in Chuncheon City, Korea and the 2012 Congress will be in Rimini, Italy."

"What does the Leisure industry mean?" asked Huizhong.

"Leisure industry means the businesses that help people spend their free time," replied the Teacher. "Many things are included. Making movies and movie theatres; sports fields for all kinds of sports such as soccer, golf, or baseball; restaurants, hotels, cultural events, schools for teaching arts and crafts; museums, art galleries, sporting events--like the Olympics or the Pan Asian Games or International soccer; hobbies and crafts stores; libraries; internet games; gymnasiums and health spas; travel agencies; museums; music festivals: all these things and more are part of the leisure industry.

There is a new leisure pastime called geocaching. 1.7 million people in the world take part in this now. Someone hides a small box with a notebook and some trinkets in it. The spot is then marked on the GPS system – a system which helps people find where it is they want to go, by using signals for a satellite. People go on the internet and find the area where these things are hidden. They then travel to that area to see if they can find the hidden boxes. They may be hidden in a forest or jungle or in a skyscraper in a big city. When they find the boxes, they open them. They write their names and date in the notebook. A trinket may be exchanged from the box. Records are posted on the internet. Geocachers gather together for parties in various places of the world. They talk about the places they've gone and the things they've found. Caches are hidden everywhere in the world. In 2010 there are **1,229,562 geocache** sites listed around the world.

Tourism is suggested to become the leading industry in the world in the not too distant future. In many countries, tourism is already the third or fourth largest industry. Restaurants, hotels, theatres, cultural events and museums are all affected by this increase in tourism. The sale of local handmade items or foods has also increased in many places. In some places, 50% of the food used in a country is used in its restaurants.

Another huge part of the leisure industry is the health and fitness industry. As more people live in cities and do less physical work, people spend more time in gyms and spas. 'Curves' is the largest fitness franchise in the world just for women. It has nearly 10,000 locations in over 70 countries. Over 4 million women worldwide use the exercise machines two to four times a week. The first 'Curves' opened in 1992. India is now a major exporter of gym equipment. People travel around the world to enjoy special health spas.

Amusement parks are opening all over the world. There are 11 Disney theme parks within 5 resorts around the world. You can find 2 of the parks in the USA, 1 in Paris, 1 in Hong Kong, and another in Tokyo. People fly from all over the world to these cities to spend time there.

The exploration of space will continue. It may be possible that people will live on the moon or other planets in the future. What will the culture of these colonies in space be like? What behaviours, systems, values and beliefs will become the guidelines to the cultures of these space

colonies? No one knows for sure what such life will be like. What kind of people will be attracted to becoming the space pioneers? These people will set the culture of these colonies.

Another interesting future possibility is the use of robots. Some homes now use robots to clean the house, to serve food, and to do the shopping. If artificial intelligence is ever developed what will be the impact on culture? Will robots develop their own culture? What would the cultural cabbage of artificial intelligence look like? This will have a great impact on religious beliefs. Humanism is suggested to be the religion of the future. Man will seem to control everything.

Some people are wondering about the future of money. Money has been used in the world for a long time. The first recorded accounts of currency date back to 2000 BC when silver or metal tokens were used to represent a stored value of grain. The first paper money was used in China in 806 BC. It was introduced because of a copper shortage. Copper currency had been used before that. Some see that there will be no currencies used in the future. I visited a university in Japan where no currency was allowed on campus. People banked the hours of study or work they did. Each hour of activity was given different value. People would then use the banked hours to buy what they needed at the campus stores, cafeteria and so on. Paper currency was given to them if they had to go off campus. The amount they could use was determined by the hours they had stored in the computer system. Will the world use this system in the future? What will happen to people who are not employed in ways that the banks or governments consider useful?

Because of the issues we have discussed, many anthropologists feel there will be one world government. One reason is that ethnic groups keep fighting each other. Religious groups keep fighting. Muslims and Christians in Nigeria are in constant battle with people being killed every day. Mosques and churches are being burned. Muslims and Hindus fight in India. India faces violence as many in India become Christian, leaving behind the Hindu caste systems. This changes the distribution of wealth and privilege. Many upper class Hindus are fighting to save their way of life. Many see that the only way to stop this kind of fighting is to make laws that apply to everyone in the world. One army would keep peace wherever there is an outbreak of violence. Taxes would be paid by the wealthy nations to help the poorer nations. One religion

would stop the fighting between groups of adherents. Anthropologists wonder at the changes in belief, behaviour and value that a 'one world government' would bring.

Will these changes affect us? How will they affect us in the new places where we will work? We should not spend time worrying about the future. The future will come. I think about the changes that my grandparents have seen in their lifetime. When they were children, could they have imagined the use of the internet or men walking on the moon? People will adapt as things change. We must concentrate on the values we hold. We must concentrate on what our job is in the world, and learn to use the change for good. My grandparents learned to live with all the changes they saw. We will too.

People in the midst of change are often open to new ideas. So if there are great changes in the culture you will be working in, it may be easier to communicate the Gospel with people.

The next two times you come, I will give you some stories to think through. You will tell me what things you would need to do if you were part of that story."

Chapter 22 – Some Cultural Situations

“I wonder what kind of stories Teacher Rifeng will tell us today?” Huizhong said to her husband as they hurried to the teacher’s home.

“I like to hear stories. And I like to think through what they mean, too,” said Minzhe. “It will be good practice to think through what happens in Teacher’s stories. It will be a good review of what we have talked about all these weeks, I hope.”

Teacher Rifeng greeted them as they entered his studio. When they were comfortable, he asked, “Are you ready to do some thinking today? Oh, I know you are always thinking, but today and during the next lesson, you will have to think in a different way. First, I will tell you a story. Then I will give you time to talk about the story between yourselves. I want you to see if you can decide what went wrong in the stories. You will tell me what you think, after you have talked together. Then I will tell you why it happened the way it happened.

Listen carefully and write down details you hear. Then use your notes when you talk to each other about the story. Are you ready for the first story?

A young, American woman, Sally, arrived in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. The city of Kuala Lumpur has over 6 million people in it. Sixty percent of the people are Muslim. All ethnic Malay are Muslim by law. If they change their religion, they lose all their rights as citizens of Malaysia. Many of these Muslim people are Folk-Muslims, especially the poorer people. Folk Islam means that many folk superstitions are included in daily, religious practices. Sally had come to observe how a certain church helped the poor people in its community. The church held medical information clinics for mothers and their young children. There are 40, 000 people of this city classified as extremely poor. Soon after Sally arrived, something happened. A woman came to the clinic with her 5 year old daughter. Sally was immediately attracted to the child. She was a very beautiful little girl. So Sally walked over to her and reached out her hand. She patted the little girl on her head. Sally also commented to the mother how beautiful her daughter was. To Sally’s surprise, the woman immediately gathered up the child in her arms and hurried out of the clinic. She did not come back again as long as Sally was there. Sally had done what is very common in America when meeting a young child who is beautiful. Americans often pat children on the head. To tell the parents that the child is beautiful is a compliment in America. Sally was trying to be friendly.

Can you think of two things that Sally did which were culturally wrong to do in Malaysia? Can you think of why these things were thought to be wrong?

Take a break and talk about this story in groups of three for a few minutes. Then report to the other groups what you think. When you are done, return to the lesson.

The first culturally inappropriate action was that Sally touched the girl's head. In that part of the world, the head is considered to be the most sacred part of the body. No one should touch the head of another person. However, in America, someone older may touch the head of someone younger. Men often hug each other and rub each other's head when they win at a sports game. This is usually a sign of affection for children, a sign of blessing in religious groups, and a sign of friendship among men.

The second wrong act was to call the child beautiful. In Folk-Islam, people do not draw attention to the outstanding qualities of children. In this case, Sally complimented the mother on a beautiful child. The mother was frightened because she believed that such a compliment would draw the attention of demons to the child. The demons could then harm the child. Such a compliment is greatly valued by American parents. But it is seen as a great threat in Malaysia.

Are you ready for a second story?

A Korean man owned a store in Los Angeles, California, in the United States of America. His store was in a community in which many African Americans lived. Mr. Kim was also a church member. His church, a very international church with people from many cultures worshipping together, was interested in having African Americans come to know Jesus Christ. There were many gangs, much breaking into homes, and much crime in this community. Many African Americans came to Mr. Kim's store, but Mr. Kim had a difficult time getting to know them. One man in particular, David, who was 32 years old, came to his store often. David had three children. He lived at home with his wife and children. David's family was somewhat unusual in the community because of the fact that they were all together. One day David came to the store to buy a quart of milk. I was there too and watched this interaction.

David sauntered into the store and greeted Mr. Kim loudly, saying, 'What's happening, bro?' Then he inquired about Mr. Kim's family, telling him details about his own family in very rapid, loud succession. Mr. Kim said a very quiet hello, but not much else. He did not immediately answer David's questions so David just rushed on. David told a slightly off-colour joke to which Mr. Kim did not respond. Instead, he looked very uncomfortable. David was in constant motion, Mr. Kim stood back from the counter, very still. David left the store thinking again that Mr. Kim was unfriendly, impolite, and maybe did not really like African Americans. Mr. Kim felt embarrassed that he was not able to understand how to be friendlier with David. Would he ever get a chance to tell him about Jesus?

Can you tell me what cultural principles are at work here between the two cultures? What could Mr. Kim do so that he could get a chance to talk to David about the Gospel?

Take a break and, in groups of three, talk about this story for a few minutes. Then report to the other groups what you think. When you are done, return to the lesson.

There are two totally different cultures colliding in this story. African Americans, especially in Los Angeles, come from what we call an 'involvement politeness' culture. 'Involvement politeness' means that the best way to show respect for someone is to engage in conversation, ask questions, joke back and forth, and show real interest in the person's family and daily life.

Korean politeness is called a 'restraint politeness'. Koreans feel the best way to show respect is to be rather quiet and still. They feel it is impolite to intrude into another person's family life. Loudness is not seen as polite. Jokes are shared quietly, and, for a Christian, must be clean.

I think if Mr. Kim ever hopes to have a chance to really talk with David, he is going to have to study him and learn to greet him as David greets Mr. Kim. He should not move back from the counter. He should even lean a bit forward towards David. He must wait for the small pauses between what David is saying and quickly jump into the conversation. At times, it is okay to talk at the same time David is talking.

It would take great courage for Mr. Kim to cross these kinds of cultural politeness barriers. However, if he wants to become friends with David and have an opportunity to share the Gospel, he must learn to cross the barriers.

My third story takes place in Jordan. Mr Chin had come from China to introduce a business venture in Jordan. Soon after he arrived, he was to meet Mr. Momani, a man interested in the kind of business proposal Mr. Chin was making. The two men arranged to meet in Mr. Chin's rented office. Mr. Chin sat behind a large desk. When Mr. Momani entered the room, Mr. Chin stood, but stayed behind the desk. He bowed as he reached across the desk to shake hands with Mr. Momani. He indicated that Mr. Momani should sit in a chair a few feet away from the desk. The chair was slightly to the corner of the desk farthest away from Mr. Chin. Mr. Chin turned his chair slightly, behind his desk, to face Mr. Momani. He sat up very straight in his chair. Before Mr. Momani sat down he moved his chair closer to Mr. Chin's desk. When he sat down, he leaned forward toward Mr. Chin. As they talked, Mr. Momani kept inching his chair closer to Mr. Chin's desk. When he reached the corner of the desk, Mr. Chin moved his chair back ever so slightly. Mr. Momani left Mr. Chin's office thinking he did not want to do business with Mr. Chin. Mr. Chin was very cold, he thought. Mr. Chin must not like him, he thought.

Can you tell me what cultural dynamics were happening in this story? What could Mr. Chin have done to make the situation better?

Break into groups of two and act out the story with each other. Talk about this story for a few minutes. Then report to the other groups what you think. When you are done, return to the lesson.

This story is an illustration of the use of space and distance in communication. Most Orientals like to have about three feet between themselves when they talk. This is partly due to the custom of bowing. If you are closer than three feet you may bump your heads when you bow. Americans

like about 22 inches of space between their faces when they are engaged in deep conversation. Canadians like more space than most Americans. Cubans like about 15 inches between people's faces. Many Middle Easterners like from 9 to 10 inches space. In this story, Mr. Momani, a Middle Easterner, felt Mr. Chin, a Chinese man, was very cold toward him because of the space between them. Mr. Chin used his desk as a barrier to keep his space safe for himself. He also set the distance the chair was from the desk to keep a comfortable space for himself. But Mr. Momani felt that these were unfriendly barriers. He felt that Mr. Chin really was not interested in having him as part of the business venture.

Mr. Chin should not have sat behind the desk. He could have chosen to set two chairs in a V shape to each other. One arm of each chair could touch. This would have been a much friendlier situation for Mr. Momani. Mr. Momani would have wanted to touch Mr. Chin's arm as it lay on the arm of his chair as they were talking. Mr. Chin would feel more comfortable also because he would have open space in front of him if the chairs were in the proper V pattern. Mr. Momani would not be directly in front of him.

Here is another short story. Can you tell what the problem is in this story?

John Jenkins, an American professor of anthropology, was visiting Todashi Kobayashi, a Japanese professor of historical anthropology in his office in Waseda University in Tokyo, Japan. John had come to Tokyo to hear about Mr Kobayashi's research into the history of the 'Hidden Christians' of Japan. Four hundred years ago, many Japanese had become Christians when St. Francis Xavier had gone to Southern Japan to preach. Soon, intense persecution of the new Christians broke out. Nearly all the Christians in Japan were killed in terrible ways. Some Christians managed to flee to the northern parts of Japan and hide there.

The 'Hidden Christians' often used a statue of Buddha during gatherings for Worship. They hid Christian symbols inside the statue as they used it in their worship. If any outsider came in while they were worshipping, it would look like they were worshipping Buddha.

Mr. Kobayashi had found some new and interesting information about these people. In fact he had found a group of people who were still worshipping in this manner. He had taken pictures of the statue they were using. He had also seen the Christian carvings on the inside of the statue. However, these people long ago had forgotten what real Christianity was. Now their worship was a huge mixture of many influences from various religions over the centuries. There were still some almost unrecognizable Latin phrases used in prayer. The people themselves had forgotten what these phrases meant.

As Mr. Kobayashi told John of his research and his findings, he kept stopping. He asked John if he understood what he was saying. John became very upset with this constant questioning. He thought that Mr. Kobayashi thought he was either not paying attention or that he was stupid. He left annoyed. He could not clearly remember much of the conversation because of what he thought were interruptions, or worse, put downs.

Take a break and talk about this story, in groups of three, for a few minutes. Then report to the other groups what you think was happening in this story. When you are done, return to the lesson.

Japanese have a custom when they are listening to someone else talk called *aizuchi*. This means that Japanese constantly murmur ‘*hai*’ (yes) or ‘*soooooo*’ or ‘*soo desu nee*’ while listening to someone talk. These comments mean ‘I am hearing you’ or ‘I agree’, or just ‘I am awake to you’. Americans often listen without interrupting the person speaking to them at all. They may occasionally say ‘yes’ or grunt ‘Hmmm’ but not nearly as often as Japanese do. John was being attentive and polite. He was listening quietly. It irritated him when Mr. Kobayashi seemed to constantly quiz him as to whether he understood the conversation or not. Mr. Kobayashi did this because he did not know if John was listening at all. John was not doing *aizuchi*. Mr. Kobayashi could not tell if John was even interested in his research. The cultural cue to let him know was not there. Both men needed to learn the other’s listening style and change a bit when they were working together.

Now for another story. A friend arrived in a rural place in Kenya, East Africa, where he thought he might like to do some work. People in this area were Folk-Muslims. That means they were not strict Muslims, but they believed in many superstitions which are not a real part of Islam. My friend brought his camera and took pictures of the surroundings. He did not intentionally take pictures of people. My friend was not aware whether there were people in the pictures he was taking or not. His only interest was what the place looked like. Therefore he did not notice if people were in the camera lens or not. He wanted to send pictures to people at home so they could see what it was like where he was working. After a few minutes, my friend noticed that men in the village were shaking their fists at him. They were also shouting at him. He soon realized that he was doing something wrong. He left the area immediately. However when he returned the next day, people were still angry. Children and women hid when he came into the area. Finally, the people drove him away. He was never able to work in that area.

Take a break and talk about this story in groups of three for a few minutes. Do you have any ideas as to why the people were angry with my friend? Report to the other groups what you think. When you are done, return to the lesson.

There is a sense in this story that taking pictures of people without their permission is rude. It invades privacy. However, that is not the most important aspect of what went wrong. My friend did not know that many people in that area believed as most Muslims do that the Koran forbids making images of the human form. They did not approve of someone taking pictures of them because they believe it is forbidden in their religion. A photograph is an image of a person.

Probably the most important cultural problem was that many of the people still believed in witchcraft – the folk part of their Folk-Muslim belief system. Witchcraft is an older and deeper part of their fourth layer of culture. They believed in these things before Islam came to Kenya.

Deep down, these men were angry because they believed that my friend trapped their souls in his camera. They were afraid that he would hurt them, their children or their wives, later. They were afraid that whoever's picture was in the camera might eventually die, because he trapped their souls.

My friend should have checked whether it was permissible to take pictures before actually taking pictures in that area. If he had known people were Muslim, he might have realized he should not take pictures. He should have talked to people in the area and assured them that he would not take a picture of any persons. Then he would have had to be very careful not to take a picture of anyone.

My last story for today again comes from Kenya. This story may be a very hard story to figure out the cultural problem. You may not think of the answer soon, but try to see if you can find a reason for what happened in this story.

Friends of mine built a church in the city, in one of the poorer areas of the city of Nairobi, Kenya, West Africa. They built a small kitchen just off the main gathering room. There was an open doorway into the kitchen. There was also a window through which food could be passed from the kitchen to those in the gathering room. This was also open all the time. The kitchen was to be used for making food for people to eat after large gatherings. My friends thought that having the kitchen so close to the place where it would be eaten would be helpful. It would be easy to transport the food from where it was made to where it would be eaten. However, very few people stayed to eat food when my friends prepared it. Not only would they not eat when my friends prepared the food, none of the East Africans would ever use the kitchen. It took a long time before my friends realized what the problem was. Do you have a guess as to what the cultural problem was?

Take a break and, in groups of three, talk about this story for a few minutes. Then report to the other groups what you think. When you are done, return to the lesson.

The preparation of food is considered an unclean activity in East Africa. Having the kitchen in full view of the place where people would eat it was very uncomfortable for the East Africans. Since they could see the food being prepared, to them an unclean act, they would not eat the food. They would not use the kitchen themselves to make the food and impose something unclean on their friends this way.

My friends should have showed their building plans to the people of the congregation before they built the church for them. I do not think that putting doors on the kitchen and covering the window would help either. A place to do the cooking should have been made in a separate building.

We will do some more stories next time we meet. I hope you enjoyed this time together.

Take some time now and, in groups of three, talk about some cultural mistakes you have seen people make. What were the consequences? How could the mistake have been avoided? Then report to the other groups what you think.”

Chapter 23 – Of Wives and Death

Aban sat in a state of total shock. He could not look on the still face of his beloved, only son, Saad. His wife's wailing reached his ears. However he was helpless to respond to her.

There had been great joy in the family eight months ago when Saad was born. He was Aban's parents' first grandchild. Baby Saad brought pleasure to the whole family! How could anyone have guessed that their joy was going to be so short-lived? Three days ago, Saad developed diarrhoea. Uncontrollable bowel movements and vomiting shook the little body. There was nothing anyone could do. Saad died in the early hours of this morning.

Aban roused from his stupor when his father approached him and spoke to him, "We must begin the preparations for burial. We must call the Imam (the local Muslim priest). Saad's body must be washed. Some people must go to dig a grave in the graveyard. Saad should be laid to rest beside his other grandmother."

Now Aban faced a problem he had never anticipated. He and his wife had very recently become followers of *Hazrat Isa* (Jesus Christ). Would it be right for them to bury their son in the old Islamic way? Should they pray the Namaz-e-Janaza (Muslim burial prayer) over his body? Should Saad's body be positioned according to Mecca? If not, what should they do? How do people who follow the path of *Hazrat Isa* -- "peace be upon him" -- bury their dead?

Aban wished he could talk with Maulana (Teacher) Ahmed Ali. But today was Monday, and the Maulana would not come until Friday. The burial must be done today. This was Muslim custom. Aban's father was waiting for a response from him.

"Please be patient with me, father," Aban said. "My grief has overcome me. Give me a few moments to control myself." His father nodded sympathetically and walked slowly to another part of the house.

As Aban watched him go, the weight of the situation almost overwhelmed him. His own parents did not know of his decision to follow the way of *Isa*. He had never told them about the day, four months before, when a teacher named Ahmed Ali had come into his shop. The Maulana (teacher) was passing by. But he stopped to buy some puffed rice and sweets at Aban's shop. He sat down on the bench on the front veranda of the shop and began to eat. It was a hot day, so Aban gave him a glass of water to drink.

Ahmed Ali rested awhile on the veranda. While he rested, he asked Aban if he prayed five times daily. Aban mumbled that some days he did. Then the Maulana asked him if he was interested in learning how to pray so that he would get answers to the prayers. Aban was interested! So Ahmed Ali invited him to come to Moosha Emani's home on the next Friday. They would be discussing the custom of the five-time prayer and how to receive answers.

Whenever Aban prayed, he prayed about making more money in his business. He was a shop keeper and wanted to make more money for his growing family. Like all the other merchants, Aban closed his shop on Fridays. Friday is the Muslim holy day. He decided to go to Moosha

Emani's home to hear the talk about answers to prayer. Once there, Aban found the Maulana had many new things to say. There were other things besides prayer that the teacher talked about. He talked at length about Allah (God) and his love for humankind. Then the teacher began to talk about *Hazrat Isa*. This *Isa* was the Word of Allah, said the teacher. Aban was impressed when the teacher was able to prove this from the *Qur'an*, the Muslim holy book. He explained that *Isa* was the true revelation of Allah. He explained that no one could approach Allah except through *Hazrat Isa*.

The teacher also showed them the *Injil Sharif* (New Testament). It was all quite astonishing to Aban. The Maulana encouraged Aban and Moosha to pray to Allah in the name of *Isa Masih* (Jesus Messiah). Finally Aban and Moosha agreed that after each *namaz* (liturgical prayer) they would use *Isa Masih's* name.

Aban did exactly that for a whole week. He prayed to Allah five times a day in the name of *Hazrat Isa*. To his surprise, his sales gradually increased. More and more people came to his shop. The jealousy of other shop owners sweetened the taste of his new success.

Aban continued to attend the Friday *Jama'at* (assembly) and prayers in the house of Moosha Emani regularly. Aban was amazed at the Maulana's knowledge of various matters of religion. Each Friday, he learned more about *Hazrat Isa*. The teacher explained that *Hazrat Isa* had really died on a Roman cross. That was very hard for Aban to understand. He had always been told that Jesus was never crucified. He had heard that when *Isa* was being held by the Roman and Jewish authorities, Allah had miraculously delivered him. Islam agreed that a crucifixion of someone did take place. However Islam taught that the man who was crucified was not *Isa*. It was another man who happened to look like *Isa*.

Maulana Ahmed Ali insisted that it was *Isa* who was crucified. Not only was *Isa* crucified, he had died so that humanity could be redeemed from sin. Aban was deeply impressed when the teacher showed from the *Qur'an* that Jesus had predicted his own death and resurrection (Maryam, chapter 19). The teacher asked Aban if he believed that *Isa* is the way, the truth, and the sacrifice for sin. Aban thought about the way his prayers had been answered and then said that he did believe.

Aban's wife, Faatin, and Moosha Emani's wife, Hanan, also began listening to the teachings of the Maulana. They sat on the far side of the room where the men sat, behind a bamboo room divider. They were following tradition. They could not be in the presence of the men, especially when a stranger was present.

The families went to ten of these Friday meetings. During the tenth meeting, the two men and their wives decided to become followers of *Hazrat Isa*. They did the ceremonial bath and washing (baptism). Maulana Ahmed Ali baptized the two men. The husbands then baptized their wives.

Then, like a bolt of lightning from heaven, disaster struck Aban and his wife. Their only son, Saad, died. What about the prayers that had gone up to Allah in the name of *Hazrat Isa* for the

well-being of their family? Their teacher, Ahmed Ali, had promised that they would be heard and answered.

Aban thought about these things this morning. As he thought, he remembered another teaching of the Maulana. It was the story of *Hazrat Ayub* (Job). The teacher had explained that in the time of terrible disaster, Allah remains present, through his Spirit. How did these two teachings fit together? Aban was in anguish. He was also very confused. If only the teacher were here to talk with him.

Aban heard his father speaking to someone in another part of the house. Aban had to face the immediate problem: *How should Saad be buried?* If they did a Christian burial, did the Maulana need to be present? If the Islamic Imam did it, the prayers would be to Allah in the name of Mohammed. Aban had promised Maulana that his prayers would always be in the name of *Hazrat Isa*.

Aban became anxious as he thought about the local Islamic leader. What would he say to the Imam? If Aban's new faith were found out, it could bring disastrous results. The Imam would probably refuse to bury Saad. The village might ostracize Aban's whole family. His father, who was very old and weak, might even die of shock. Even the forthcoming marriage of his sisters could be in jeopardy. If people found out that Aban had changed religions, parents might not want their sons to marry Aban's sisters. His friend, Moosha, might also be in danger. Maulana Ahmed Ali would never be able to come to the town again.

Aban sat with his head in his hands. He heard with dread the approaching shuffle of his father. What would he say to him?

Take time now in groups of three to talk about this story. What things do you think were very difficult? What would you do in this situation? (Speaker pause to allow time for the DVD or VCD to be paused while students discuss this situation).

Events like the ones explained in this story happen all over the Muslim world. What should believing Muslims do? The answers are not easy. Even the methods that the teacher used in this story are questioned by some. Some feel that when a person accepts Christ, they should immediately tell their families. They say that even if this immediately leads to death, it is the right thing to do. Missionaries are taking very different ways to answer these questions. Many Christians around the world are now talking seriously about how to handle these questions. There are answers emerging as Christians pray and look to God for help in how to found the Church in Muslim cultures.

I want to tell you how this story ended. The burial was done in the Islamic way. This caused great debate among other followers of *Hazrat Isa* in that country. Some said it was wrong to bury Saad in a Muslim graveyard following Muslim customs. Others said that the Bible does not tell us how burial ceremonies should be done. What happened was all right in that situation, they said. One point you should know is that there is only one graveyard in small villages. The disposal of bodies has to be done following certain rules. Disease must not be allowed to spread.

You cannot just bury someone anywhere. Without embalming, a body must be buried soon after death, especially in a hot country. There was not much time to find answers in Aban's situation.

Aban, his wife and his friends remained in the village. I wonder how the villagers saw them deal with their grief. Many people in their situation would become bitter. Was the teacher able to continue visiting in the town and teaching these new believers to grow in Christ? Were they able to maintain a good outlook? Were they able to receive the comfort Christ can give? Did others see how God undertakes for His people? Did they ask how they maintained a positive outlook? Aban and his wife and friends could not live and witness for Christ if they had been murdered because of their faith.

I think we need to be very careful when we judge whether the events such as these are correct or not. In these kinds of situations, I remember what Naaman in the Old Testament asked Elijah. (2 Kings 5:17-19). Naaman had been healed of his leprosy. He said that he would no longer offer burnt offerings or sacrifices to any god but Jehovah. Then Naaman explained to Elijah that he had to go before the idols when His master went to worship. Naaman had to support this man when he bowed. That meant that Naaman would bow also. Naaman asked pardon for that. I think of Elijah's answer often. Elijah did not get angry. He did not tell him never to do such a thing. He simply said to Naaman, "Go in peace."

Our God is a God of grace who understands that our world is not perfect. Sometimes answers are not clear to us. I am amazed that Jehovah led Daniel to study all the evil magic of Babylon, even allowing him to become the head magician (though his results were through his prayers to Jehovah, not through magic). Most Christians would say this was very wrong. Many Christians would say that what happened to Esther was very wrong also. How could a young girl who believed in God become part of a beauty contest, sleeping with the king just to see if she could become queen? Neither Esther nor Daniel had a choice about going where they went. I am always amazed when I see our God work through culture to achieve His purpose. God has big plans that often involve the events of our small lives in much greater actions. We see the present. God sees the beginning and the end. He takes very difficult things and weaves them into plans for His glory.

I have another story for you to think about.

Marta was a single woman. She had felt God's call to work in Egypt. She could not work with men of course. Single women or even married women cannot work with men in a Muslim country. Marta felt God was calling her to work among the women who were outcasts from their families for various reasons. Some of the woman had been divorced. Some had been widowed. Some were ill and had never been able to marry. Because Muslim laws are not so strict in Egypt, Marta never had to wear a *burka*. Some missionary women have to wear it in order to live in the country in which God calls them to work.



She even very seldom even wore a *hijab*.

Marta did wear long black dresses down to the ground when she went outside. Women's ankles should not be seen in a Muslim country.

Whenever Marta went out to the market or to visit someone, she always had problems with the Egyptian men. Whenever she went out, they would make loud crude remarks about her. Even if she was with other woman, the remarks were terrible. She felt somewhat safe. There was good order where she lived in Egypt. However, she did not like the constant bad talk. It always embarrassed her and at times she really did not feel safe. She finally asked some married Egyptian woman what to do. They said that she needed to wear gold jewellery when she went out. The more jewellery she wore, the more protected she would be. Gold jewellery showed that some man cared very much for her. She would not be touched or treated rudely when the other men saw her wearing her jewellery because the man who gave it to her would cause them trouble if they touched her. Marta did not have a husband. The women she worked with did not have husbands. These women were also treated rudely when they went out to the market or to visit someone else. Should Marta and the women with her buy their own jewellery?

Talk about this problem in groups of three. What do you think Marta could do?

One day when Marta wrote to her father and mother, she mentioned the problem. Marta's father immediately went and bought some very lovely, expensive gold chains for her. He did not buy a lot of jewellery, but bought a few, very fine chains for her. He sent them to her. When she wore them, men on the street were not so rude to her. When someone asked her where she got the jewellery she could tell them that her father had bought it for her. The women she worked with did not have fathers who would buy the gold for them. Marta wrote and asked her supporting churches to send some gold chains for these ladies. When they were asked where they got the chains, they said that 'brothers' had bought the gold for them. No one knew that they meant Christian 'brothers' from overseas. People just accepted that these ladies were cared for by

brothers. They would not bother the ladies because they did not want to get in trouble with the brothers.

Another story.

Changchang met the Shakiba family through her work at a kindergarten. The only son of the family attended her kindergarten. Changchang had become close friends with both the mother and the father. It seemed that they were very interested in becoming Christians. They were very impressed with the Christian love they had seen in the kindergarten. Changchang had especially been drawn to their son and had helped him a lot. One day the family told her they were returning to Iran because Mr. Shakiba's mother was ill. She asked her son to come home. The Shakiba's asked her to go with them. This was a surprise. There did not seem to be a reason for them asking her to go with them. Mrs. Shakiba did say it would be easier for her if Changchang went with her because she did not really have any friends where the Shakiba family lived in Iran. The senior Shakiba family had not wanted their son and his family to leave Iran but they had done so anyway. Was the mother really ill or was this just a trick to get her son to come home? Changchang wondered if this was the Devil's way of interfering with the Shakiba's becoming Christians. When Changchang and the family arrived in Shiraz, the sixth largest city in Iran, they found that Mother Shakiba was indeed very sick. Instead of travelling and seeing the country, the family stayed at home to be with Mother Shakiba. Changchang did not speak the language. She wondered why she had come to this country. Soon she noticed that Mother Shakiba was often left alone in her room. What could she do?

Do you have any ideas about why God took Changchang to Iran? What could she do there?

Changchang decided that she could stay in the room with Mother Shakiba during the long times others could not. Soon every day she spent much time in Mother Shakiba's room. The family were Muslim. She could not read a Bible in the room in case someone came in while she was reading. However, she could sing hymns in her language and she could pray. Gradually Mother Shakiba grew stronger and the son decided to return to his home outside Iran. Not long after the Shakiba's returned home they asked to become Christians. They were very impressed with the love that Changchang had shown to Mother Shakiba whom she had never met before. She could not speak to her in her own language but had been a great comfort to her with the singing she had done. Her quiet prayers had also been soothing, even if Mother Shakiba could not understand them. God had answered her prayers and brought about a gradual healing. Because the Shakiba's did not live in Iran, they decided to tell their family that they had become Christians. At first there was uproar. But the family remembered Mother Shakiba's illness and recovery. They remembered how Changchang had ministered to Mother Shakiba. They had seen an unusual demonstration of love. After a number of years, other members of the family became Christians too, even though that was a hard thing to do in Iran.

In tough situations, there are many ways to preach the Gospel. Each of us needs to hear the leading of the Holy Spirit. He knows how to reach each heart that He leads us to. We must be willing to humble ourselves to doing things in many different ways.

I have thought a lot about story telling as a way to preach the Gospel. Jesus used many, many stories. The Bible is written in about 80% story form. Storytelling is appreciated almost everywhere in the world.

Most women in Muslim countries lead rather sad lives. They love to hear sad stories. They love to have a reason to cry. Sad stories help them find a release in crying. One group of Christians has noticed that many of the stories of women in the Bible are sad stories. Think of Eve's story. Her life is probably one of the saddest in the Bible. She had to endure what resulted from her, and Adam's, wrong choice. She had to watch how the world changed because of her choice. Hannah's story is sad. I wonder how she felt giving up her first born son to a man, Eli, who was not raising his own sons properly. Rachel's story is sad. Naomi's story is sad. Moses' mother must have suffered much as she let Moses go to the palace. Someone has put the stories of the women of the Bible together into special books for Muslim women. They know that even these women with sad stories saw God work in their lives. Even though many of the women of the Bible have sad stories, they each find that God has an answer for them in their sadness and their stories usually end much less sadly than the beginnings. I think that Mary's story is an excellent story to tell Muslim women. Jesus' mother had many sad challenges in her life. Her pregnancy caused problems. Joseph must have died young, leaving her with a family to raise on her own. Her children did not appreciate Jesus, her first born. Finally Mary endured His Crucifixion. All through Mary's story we see that she believed God was doing something great even though she did not immediately understand how.

Muslim women could be encouraged as they hear the stories of the women of the Bible and how God looked after them.

In groups of three, think of stories of women in the Bible. By telling those stories, what things could you teach non-Christian women from any culture about God?

Chapter 24: Christians and Anthropology

“In this last time together, I want to talk to you about how Christians can understand and use Cultural Anthropology. Some people wonder why Christians study Cultural Anthropology. What does all this information about other cultures have to do with proclaiming the Gospel?

Some think that all that is needed is to proclaim the truth of the Gospel loudly. ‘If it is proclaimed loudly and fervently, people will accept it’, they say. Jesus said that if He is lifted up He will draw all men to Himself. (John 12:32) So some say all we need to know is Jesus. I do believe that anyone going to work in another culture, trying to influence people to become Christians, must have a close relationship with the Lord Jesus. They must know the leading of the Holy Spirit. They must know the Gospel message well and must announce it clearly. So the question remains; why should Christians study Cultural Anthropology? Will a good understanding of culture gained through the study of Cultural Anthropology help in proclaiming the Gospel?

My short quick answer is ‘Yes, definitely!’ However before I talk more about what Christians can gain from studying Cultural Anthropology, I want to think with you about how God spoke through people who faced crossing cultural barriers. I want to think with you about biblical characters who crossed cultural barriers.

Let me begin right at the beginning with the first couple, Adam and Eve. Adam and Eve made a choice. As a result of that choice, they experienced great cultural change. Remember culture is behavior, belief, and ideas. Also think about the cabbage layers of culture. The choice Adam and Eve made resulted in deep changes in each layer of culture.

What was the culture of the Garden of Eden like? All Adam and Eve's needs were taken care of there in the garden. Their system of economics was perfect. They had responsibility to look after the Garden. Their behaviors, the material objects they used and their thoughts (ideas) were shaped by the Garden. Looking after the garden also impacted the systems of their lives. I wonder what tools they used. That would be the first level of culture, the material objects. Adam must have had tremendous skill in language as he named the animals. This act would have involved his view of the world and how it was created – the fourth level of culture. It would also have touched his values, the third level of culture. They worshipped face to face with their Creator every evening. The innermost level of their culture was based on this. I wonder what behaviors they had as they walked with God. They had one commandment to follow. This is government, one of the systems of culture. There is much more I could say. However I think you can understand that all the basic elements of culture existed in the Garden.

When Adam and Eve sinned there was a sudden and tremendous change in human culture. Immediately, they had to wear clothes: material objects, the first layer of the cultural cabbage changed. They had to work hard to make a living; behaviour and system, the first and second layer of the cultural cabbage changed. Work became very difficult. Birth became painful. They could no longer walk together with God in the Garden. Worship was no longer face to face. It had to be carried on through sacrifice and ritual. Fear of God crept in; the fourth layer of culture

changed. Relationships between brothers changed. Murder became part of their existence. In fact all that we know of culture today had its beginning in the Fall of Adam and Eve. They went through a tremendous and cruel culture change. But they remained true to what they knew about their God. That is the good side of their experience.

Probably the most dramatic cultural change ever to happen took place at the Tower of Babel. A sudden change from only one language to many languages resulted in great confusion. People scattered all over the world. New environments were encountered. This demanded changes in clothing, in the building of houses, in food supplies, and all that is wrapped up in culture. New ways of doing things, new tools, and new ideas resulted from the change in language and the moves that were made.

Think of the culture change Abraham and Sarah went through to follow God. They left the very best of city dwelling of their time to become wanderers living in tents. When Abraham lived in Ur about 2100 B.C, the population was at least two hundred and fifty thousand, maybe even five hundred thousand. Ur was a large industrial and commercial metropolis.



came to Ur from faraway places. The greatest concern of the city's population was to earn the maximum amount of wealth and to enjoy the highest degree of comfort and luxury they could. Collecting high interest on money lent out was rampant among them. Their devotion to money-making seemed all-absorbing. Their prayers to their gods were for longer life, prosperity and greater commercial success. Spiritual growth or pardon for sin was not mentioned.

This is the temple in Ur, as it looks today.

This gives us an idea of the largeness of the city.

Traders and craftsmen were the great majority of the population. Merchandise

Imagine leaving a city like that to live in tents. It was probably Sarah who felt the shock of culture change the most. Her home life became very different from what she had enjoyed in the city. But Abraham and Sarah remained faithful to God in all the change they went through.

Another Bible character who went through much culture change was Joseph. Joseph's trip was the reverse of Abraham's. Joseph was a shepherd, a part of a rather large family of herders who followed their flocks and lived in tents. Imagine the shock of being sold as a slave by your brothers and finding yourself in Egypt. Joseph suddenly found himself in the very wealthy and important home of a high Egyptian official in a huge, important city. A very different culture from a tent! He had been his father's favourite, and now he was a slave. There must not have been much love there. Potiphar's wife was not faithful to her husband. Joseph had come from a rather dysfunctional family but I think at least his mother and father were faithful to each other. It must have been hard for Joseph to be confined in jail after having lived a life of freedom, wandering around after sheep and goats. Next, Joseph is thrust into the highest position of the most outstanding kingdom on earth of his time. From talking to sheep, he goes to talking to heads of state. From feeding sheep he goes to feeding millions of people. In spite of all the change, Joseph clung to the fact that God had a purpose for him. He understood that he could carry out God's plan even in a culture very different from that in which he had grown.

Moses is another person who experienced great cross-cultural upheaval. He was brought up by his mother in slave quarters until he was a young child. There he was taught about Jehovah and His ways. Then he was sent to the most powerful court in the world as the child of a princess. There he was taught all the wisdom of Egypt, its science, politics, economic, and religious systems. When he fled to Midian, he learned a shepherd's culture. He had to fit into a new family situation. He probably had to learn several languages during these changes. Finally, he became a spokesman for God, leading millions of people in a desert setting. He became the head man. In all of this, Moses also kept a clear sense of purpose that helped him remain strong in all the change he faced.

The people of Israel went through many cultural changes. Upon arriving in Egypt, they were given the best of the land. They became employees of Pharaoh, looking after Pharaoh's flocks and herds. They knew how to do this because they were herders. From a family of seventy people, they had become several million with tribes and clans and families. They became a threat to Egypt. Somewhere toward the end of their four hundred year stay in Egypt, they became slaves. They were forced to become builders of Pharaohs' cities. They were no longer herders. Overnight, they left slavery to wander in the wilderness for forty years. The change in food

patterns really hit them. They remembered the vegetables and meat they had in Egypt when they grew tired of the daily supply of manna. At the end of the forty years, they became soldiers, battling for the Promised Land. As they settled the land, they were ruled by the judges. Their political system was different from any country around them. Soon they desired to be like surrounding nations who had kings. They became a kingdom. Their last Judge and Prophet, Samuel, warned them of the changes that would happen in their culture when they took a king. The king would build an army using their sons as soldiers. He would demand that their daughters serve his court as bakers and domestic servants. The king would demand taxes. They would become subjects of the king, instead of free men. (I Samuel 8: 11 – 17)

Finally, Israel became a great kingdom under Solomon. Each step involved great changes in their culture. Not all of the people made the changes well. They often took too much of the culture around them to themselves. That was especially true on the fourth level of their culture. They forsook Jehovah by accepting the stories of the gods of the people around them, trying to worship and follow the other gods as well as Jehovah. Finally, God sent them away to Babylon. When He sent them there, He gave them an interesting command. They were very discouraged and felt there was no purpose in their lives in Babylon. They felt they could not function there. (See Psalm 137:1 – 4) But through the prophet Jeremiah, God told them to ‘Build houses and settle down; plant gardens and eat what they (the gardens) produce. Marry and have sons and daughters; find wives for your sons and give your daughters in marriage, so that they too may have sons and daughters. Increase in numbers there; do not decrease. Also seek the peace and prosperity of the city to which I carried you into exile.’ (Jeremiah 29:5 – 7) In other words, Jeremiah told them that God’s desire for them was, not only to care of themselves in the new culture, but to help build the economy, and to work for the good of the city. They were to function in the culture where they could, and take part where they could, helping the culture to be the best it could be.

Before Christ was born, Greek culture and Roman culture were imposed on the people of Israel. There were still many Jewish people living all over the world. We read that on the day of Pentecost there were many languages among the men who had come back to Jerusalem for the festival. These Jewish people impacted the local population of Jerusalem as they often stayed in the City for some time. It was a situation much like today where cities are impacted by travelers

from around the world. There were great changes in the people's culture during this time. Thinking back over Israel's history, some remained faithful during great change. Some did not survive the changes. It would be a good study for you to read the Old Testament and make note of all the cultural events and changes recorded there.

I think one of the most amazing men in Scripture is Daniel. He grew up in a wealthy family, probably as a prince. He was captured and his manhood was taken away. He was forced to study all the magic and superstition of that nation. He did so but still clung to his fourth layer beliefs in Jehovah. He served in three very different cultures in the highest positions available to him. In all the cultural change he went through, he knew that he had a duty to serve Jehovah in each situation. He did so even when it might have cost him his life.

Esther is an example of a woman who dealt with great cultural change. We do not know what she did before she became the star of an enforced beauty pageant. Whatever she did before, imagine being thrust into the position of Queen of the strongest nation on earth. There would be huge changes in culture for her! She learned the politics and customs of the kingdom of which she had become a part. She learned it so well that Jehovah chose to use her to save His people from destruction. She fulfilled God's plan in a culture foreign to her and her people.

Another woman who made great cultural leaps was Ruth. She left her Moabite family to become part of the Jewish culture. She learned to function according to Jewish customs. The whole process of her engagement to Boaz was a brand new experience for her. But she had a good guide in her mother-in-law, Naomi. Her trust that Naomi knew the culture well enough to help her in the situation she was in is a great example for us. We need to find those in the new culture in which we serve whom we can trust to help us through cultural situations that arise for us.

Please think with me about our Lord Jesus Christ and His involvement in culture. What did He experience when He came into our world? I think He had one of the most incredible cross-cultural experiences anyone could have.

I have spent much time trying to imagine what one particular aspect of heaven is like. That aspect is, 'What is a place with no sin like?' Can you imagine it? How would the absence of sin change aspects of our own cultures?

What would literature be like with no conflict in it? Most stories involve someone doing something wrong to someone and that person overcoming the wrong. What would a world with no war be like? A world where all songs are songs of praise and adoration. A place where even the tiniest things are perfectly made. A world with no famine? A place where each person has adequate clothes to wear? A culture where no little children are mistreated in work places or homes? Where they are not used as sex objects or as child soldiers? A world where all fathers love their children and care for them properly? A place with no strained family relationships? A community where all brothers and sisters and friends love and respect each other fully? A society where no one cheats or lies? A place where government is always just and truly cares for all its citizens? A culture that knows no poverty? An environment where work is always rewarding? A kingdom where joy and peace reign? I have tried to imagine our world like this, but I cannot. However, I know that is the world that Jesus came from when He came to earth.

There is no wrong of any kind in heaven. There is not even a shadow of wrong in heaven. The relationship between the members of the Trinity was and is one of perfect love and respect. Only what is true exists in heaven. Only life exists in heaven. The angelic hosts serve with perfection, joyfully giving praise and adoration to God.

However, the cultures of the world into which Jesus came were extremely opposite to that culture of heaven. He came to a world suffering because of unjust taxes. To a kingdom whose king immediately threatened His life. To a situation requiring that His parents take Him to another country shortly after His birth in order to keep Him safe. He became a refugee. When He grew up, He was misunderstood by family members. He was hated by religious leaders. There were blind, maimed beggars, horrible diseases, and demonically inhabited persons constantly surrounding Him. His kindnesses were not received well. His truth was questioned. Cruelty abounded. Death reigned.

Of greater impact than His cultural environment, there were things that affected Jesus, personally--Jesus, the Word, was born a child. The One without limits took on a tiny body (Hebrews 10:5) which began as one cell in His mother's womb and grew until birth. 'Eternity' became twenty one inches long. He who created human feet and legs had to learn to walk. The All-Powerful One became totally dependent on a very young woman and her husband for everything He needed. He then grew from babyhood to childhood to young manhood. (Luke

2:52) He had to learn to speak. Hebrew, Egyptian, Greek, Amharic, and Latin were part of the world in which He grew up. As He worked as a carpenter, He would need to understand these languages. The One who created the whole universe had to learn a trade, carpentry. (Mark 6:3). He, who built the world and the universe beyond, had to learn from his father, Joseph, how to build things. The One who will wipe away all our tears (Revelation 21:4) wept. (John 11:35) The One who is present with everyone all the time was left alone in His greatest hour of need. (Mark 14:50) A most amazing thing to me is that the One called Life died. He who was perfection incarnate not only died, but died as the lowest of criminals. (Philippians 2:8)

There is something even greater that I will never understand. This is the ultimate step in crossing culture, if I may say it that way. He who had never experienced sin took on the sin of every human being as He died. He became sin. (2 Corinthians 5:21)

The Lord Jesus knows what it is like to leave family and friends and go on a long journey. The love and fellowship that existed between the members of the Trinity was perfect. They understood one another, respected one another and worked together in perfect harmony. Christ, who enjoyed the ministry and praise of the angels, had to leave that community. He could not even call on their protection in the last hours of His life. There is that moment on the cross when Christ cries, 'My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?' He knew a depth of separation which none of us will ever begin to understand.

When a Christian crosses cultural barriers to proclaim the Gospel, that Christian should never forget that His Lord crossed huge cultural barriers to reach him or her. Jesus knows and understands all the frustrations, yes, even the persecutions that come with crossing into another culture to proclaim a message that may not be welcome there. He knows the frustrations of learning a language. He knows the loneliness. He knows the misunderstanding. He knows about being laughed at. He knows about having His life threatened. He knows how those who become friends will not fully support or comprehend you. They may even betray you. The Christian will always find understanding from His Lord as that Christian crosses into other cultures to proclaim the Gospel.

I love the verse in Philippians 2:6 that tells us that Christ laid aside His rights and privileges as Deity to be able to reach humankind in the way mankind needed. He became one of us. That

is the greatest lesson we need to learn as we try to cross barriers, we must be like Jesus. We must try to become like one of those to whom we seek to proclaim the Gospel. We must try to think like them, speak like them, like the good things they like. We must cross the cultural barriers if they are to understand the Gospel. Remember that Jesus became Jewish. He dressed as Jewish carpenters would. He ate Jewish food, following the rules laid down in the Old Testament for the kinds of food to be eaten. He celebrated as a Jew would celebrate. He went to a Jewish wedding which followed Jewish tradition. He understood the tax system. The systems of government, both Roman and Jewish, were very present in His thinking. He understood Jewish and Roman customs at the time of death. He did this in order to have His message understood. Jesus can help the Christian as they wrestle with understanding another culture. He crossed great cultural divides to reach us.

One of the great aspects of the Gospel is that in Christ, the cultural barriers between ethnic groups are broken down. The barriers between men and women are broken down. The barriers between employers and employees are broken down. (Galatians 3:28) Christ, through us, seeks to break the effect of these cultural barriers in our lives as we seek to bring others to Him.

We are not all-knowing as Christ was. However, He has given us His Spirit to guide us and quicken our understanding. We still, however, need to equip our minds and hearts with an understanding of what it means to cross those cultural barriers. Anthropology helps us work under the Spirit to understand how to move into new situations. The Lord gave us minds with which to learn, and we must use them.

It is interesting to see who it was God chose to build the foundations of the Church and write much of the New Testament. God chose a man, Paul, who was uniquely prepared to break the needed barriers that stood in the way of the growth of the Church. He was a child of two cultures. His father was Roman and his mother was Jewish, of the tribe of Benjamin. We know very little about his father. We do know that his father had a high enough rank in Roman culture to provide Paul with Roman citizenship and the rights and privileges that that gave him. (Acts 22:24 – 29) Paul studied under the greatest teacher of his time in the Jewish faith. He lived in an age when there was much travel. Knowledge was valued and spread. Israel was greatly influenced by Roman and Greek culture in Paul's time. Roman law and Jewish law existed side by side, often clashing. Roman, Greek, and Jewish cultures were all visible in Jerusalem and

other cities of Judea, which caused great tension. There was great confusion in Israel as some people became more Greek, while others clung to Judaism. Jews had been scattered around the world for 400 years. As they came back to Jerusalem every year for the feasts, they brought glimpses of the cultures in which they lived with them. They spoke the languages of where they lived. These languages were heard on that day in Jerusalem when the Holy Spirit gifted the disciples with the ability to speak in other languages. (Acts 2:8 – 11) It was a fascinating time period of the world in which to live. Paul grew and began his work in this cultural setting.

We can learn some helpful things by looking at what Paul said and did as he crossed cultural barriers. He used very good methods. Paul knew Greek poetry and used it when speaking to the Greeks in Athens. (Acts 17:16 – 34) He also knew Cretan culture and quoted a Cretan writer when he wrote to Titus who was working in Crete. (Titus 1:12) He gave Timothy cultural tips on how to help the church grow in Crete. To the Corinthians Paul writes, ‘Though I am free and belong to no man, I make myself a slave to everyone to win as many as possible. To the Jews I became like a Jew to win Jews. To those under the law I became like one under the law (though I myself am not under the law), so as to win those under the law. To those having no law I became like one having not the law (though I am under Christ’s law), so as to win those having no law. To the weak, I became weak. I have become all things to all men so that by all possible means I might save some. I do all this for the sake of the Gospel, that I may share in its blessings.’ (I Corinthians 9: 19 – 23) Most of us do not grow up learning to live in several cultures and understand them as Paul did. He ‘lived’ Cultural Anthropology. A careful study of Cultural Anthropology can help us understand some of the things that Paul had learned, naturally, as he grew up in that multi-cultural world. God chose a man, Paul, to serve Him because that man was uniquely prepared, culturally, to do what God chose him to do. I think we can also prepare ourselves to better serve by careful studying cultural things.

Paul understood Roman law and the privileges of his citizenship. He also understood Hebrew law and the intricacies of the differences between the Pharisees and the Sadducees. He understood the changes believers in Christ would have to make after Christ died on the cross. It was Paul who understood best that the feasts and sacrifices had been fulfilled in Christ and did not need to be kept any longer. All of the legalities that had kept the Jewish people separate from others around them suddenly were no longer appropriate, as they were to go into the whole world

with the message of salvation. Paul understood this and helped the Church truly become the Church--not remaining tied to Judaism. (Acts 15:1 – 29) Again, Paul--as he grew up--learned things that helped him understand the Spirit's leading. Those of us who have not grown up in multi-cultural settings need to study other cultures. We need to help others learn how to become the best Christians they can in their own culture. They need to be freed from the five percent of their culture that is harmful. They need to learn to use the rest of their culture to glorify God. As we teach them Scripture and they interact with it, we can also help them discern what needs to be changed, culturally.

Christianity is not embedded in any one culture. It is not like Islam, which carries much of the culture of its birthplace, Arabia, with it wherever it goes. Followers of Christ may follow Christ while still being a part of any culture in the world. Christianity is not Western. Christianity is not Chinese. A person from any ethnic group may follow Christ while remaining a member of that ethnic group. As we said in the lessons before, probably 95% of what is cultural does not have to change when one becomes a Christian. Anthropology helps us to understand that culture is not evil in itself. There are beliefs in the culture, buried in the fourth layer of culture, that have to change because they are evil. There are practices that have to change because they are tied to beliefs that are unacceptable in Christianity. However there are beautiful rituals that can continue to be practiced if they are loosened from the fourth layer of their cultural roots and grafted into the fourth layer of biblical thinking. But most of what people do in daily life is not part of what must change. Anthropology helps us to see what is acceptable in culture. Scripture helps us to see what must change in the fourth layer of a culture.

Anthropology also helps us to understand that there are many methods which can be used to express the same truths. Chinese phrasing of the Gospel has unique aspects to it. However the same truth can be expressed in any other language used in the world. The content of meaning in some words in other languages may have to change. The fourth layer connections that some Greek words carried were changed when the writers of Scripture used them. What Greeks thought when they heard the word '*Logos*' was different from how the Apostle John used that word. Greek-speaking believers had to learn new aspects of what the word '*Logos*' meant. Now we hardly know what *logos* originally meant to pagan Greeks. An example of how the content of the meaning of a word must change is the word '*tsumi*' in Japanese. To the average Japanese

person, *tsumi* means murder or some very terrible thing that someone does to another person. Almost every Japanese person is shocked when a Christian tells them that they are *tsumibito*, sinners. They do not think of lying as '*tsumi*'. They do not think of envy as *tsumi*. Men do not think of going out with the geisha prostitutes as *tsumi*. Someone taking the Gospel to the Japanese must spend a great deal of time teaching someone they are talking to what he or she means when using the word *tsumi*.

When I went to preach the Gospel in another culture, I went with the best of Bible training. Our teachers had taught us the Word of God in detail. But I had no training in Cultural Anthropology or any of the other studies that help us understand each other as human beings. Because I did not understand the things that you have learned in this course, I made many mistakes. I was committed to helping people come to know God. I knew the Gospel message very well. I learned the people's language. But I did not know how to take things from their culture and use them to present the Gospel as Paul did. I did not really know how to become 'like the people' as Christ became 'like' us. After a long time of making mistakes and trying again, I began to learn some of these things. I had some helpers in the culture who were not afraid to tell me what I needed to know in order to help the people understand more clearly. May God help you to take what you have learned in this course and allow the Holy Spirit to use it to help you to present the Gospel so that it becomes the fourth layer of people's lives.

I trust that the twenty four lessons you have studied have helped you understand the importance of speaking the Gospel into the culture of a people group. We do not need to call the people out of their culture before they can accept Christ. We need to reach them where they are. Then we need to trust that the Holy Spirit will lead and guide them as they become new creatures within their surrounding culture. We must know Scripture very well so that we can point these new converts back to Scripture and to prayer as they wrestle with what must change in their lives, in order to obey all that Christ taught. (Matthew 28 20) Many of them need to stay in their own culture in order to reach others in that culture.

May God richly bless you as you cross cultures to speak of our Lord, giving wisdom and guidance in leading people to Christ and seeing the church established in many places where the glorious Gospel of Christ has never been heard!

Reflection time:

In groups of three, share with each other the ideas that made the deepest impact on your thinking as you took this course. Discuss how these ideas can help you preach the Gospel more clearly to others, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.