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BACHELOR THESIS

AMERICAN CULTURAL STANDARDS FROM CHINESES PERSPECTIVE

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Declaration:

I hereby declare that I am the sole author of the thesis entitled “American cultural standards from Chinese perspective”. I duly marked out all quotations. The used literature and sources are stated in the attached list of references.

In Prague on

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Table of contents:

Introduction	7
Chapter 1	9
1. Culture	9
1.1 Definition of culture	9
1.2 Models of culture	10
1.2.1 Onion diagram	11
1.2.2 Iceberg model	13
1.3 Cultural dimensions	14
1.3.2 Hofstede's cultural dimensions theory	15
1.3.3 Application of Hofstede's cultural dimensions theory: Americans vs Chinese	20
1.3.4 Trompenaars' cultural dimensions theory	22
1.4 Cultural standards according to Alexander Thomas	30
Chapter 2	32
The USA	32
2.1 Geography	32
2.2 American History	32
2.3 Language	34
2.4 Economic situation	35
2.5 Systems of America-legal, education, healthcare systems, the role of family and religion	37
2.6 American identity, key values, traditions	46
Chapter 3	48
China	48
3.1 Geography	48
3.2 History	49
3.3 Language	50
3.4 Economic situation	50
3.5 Systems of China- legal, education, healthcare systems, the role of family and religion	52
3.6 Chinese Identity, Key Values and Traditions	56

Chapter 4	60
Practical part	60
Research	60
4.1 Methodology of cultural standards research	60
4.2 The research and analysis	61
4.3 American cultural standards from Chinese perspective	64
4.4 Comparison of research results with Americans identity and values	73
4.5 Recommendations for Chinese who are going to work with Americans	76
Conclusion	77
Bibliography	79

Lists of figures and tables

List of figures

Figure 1	Three levels of uniqueness in Mental Programming	10
Figure 1.2	Hofstede's Onion Diagram: Manifestations of culture at different levels of depth	11
Figure 1.3	The Learning of Values and Practices	13
Figure 2.1	E.T. Hall's Iceberg Model	14
Figure 3.1	Power distance	16
Figure 3.2	Individualism vs. collectivism	17
Figure 3.3	Masculine vs feminine	18
Figure 3.4	Uncertainty avoidance	19
Figure 3.5	Short-term vs long-term orientation	19
Figure 3.6	Indulgence vs restraint	20
Figure 3.7	US vs China	21
Figure 4.1	Universalism vs particularism	23
Figure 4.2	Individualism vs communitarianism	24
Figure 4.3	Affective vs neutral	25
Figure 4.4	Specific vs diffuse	26
Figure 4.5	Ascription vs achievement	28
Figure 4.6	Sequential vs synchronic	29
Figure 4.6	Inner direct vs outer direct	30
Figure 5.1	Age of the respondents	61
Figure 5.2	Gender of the respondents	62
Figure 5.3	Origins of the respondents	62
Figure 5.4	Reasons to come to the US	63
Figure 5.5	Job sphere of the respondents	63
Figure 5.6	Change of the opinion of the respondents	64

List of tables

Table 1:	American cultural standards at work environment	64
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Introduction

From a very young age, I was very interested in seeing different countries with various cultures and people. For this reason, I started to travel with my parent from the age of 11. My number one destiny was always the USA. Two years ago I had a chance to visit this incredible country. I was participating in a program- Work and travel in the US, and arrived there taking a job as a lifeguard. What really shocked me is the amount of Asians there, especially Chinese community. I was curious why so many Chinese are coming to the US, what does attract them? I started to ask Chinese about the reasons in order to understand the culture and people. I realized how different these two cultures are, but how similar are human wishes and hopes. From that moment I already knew the topic of my thesis.

The aim of this thesis is to define American cultural standards at work environment from the Chinese point of view.

Other aims:

- 1) To analyze the historical impact on the culture, traditions, and behavior of people from both countries.
- 2) To analyze the most known theories of cultural dimensions (Hofstede, Trompenaars, and Alexander Thomas), in order to understand the explanation of those processes.
- 3) Define how to prevent cultural misunderstanding, problems and how to improve the working relationship.

In my thesis I have three research questions:

- 1) What is the Chinese perception towards Americans in the working area?
- 2) Which aspects of working environment do the Chinese perceive as the most different?
- 3) Do the determined Chinese-American cultural standards correspond with American national identity and values?

In my research I am going to:

- 1) Analyze the perceptions of Chinese towards Americans
- 2) Identify the biggest cultural misunderstanding for Chinese towards the business and working environment with Americans
- 3) Provide the suggestions for solving the cultural problems and misunderstanding in the working area

My thesis consists of 4 main chapters, which include subchapters. The first chapter describes the term culture, models of culture, such as Edward T. Hall's Iceberg model, Geert Hofstede's and Fons Trompenaars' Onion diagram. One of the subchapters will include the definition and explanation of Hofstede's and Trompenaars' cultural dimensions theories. Next subchapter will describe the concept of cultural standards published by Alexander Thomas, which is one of the most important parts of this thesis. The second chapter is dedicated to the USA. I will describe the history, basic facts (geography, economy, and language), systems of the US (legal, educational, healthcare, family and religion), also traditions and customs. The third chapter is dedicated to China. The same aspects are going to be explained as for the US in chapter 2. I am going to be more focused on the second chapter and give a just brief explanation for the third as the name of my topic is American cultural standard. The fourth chapter is devoted to the practical part.

Practical part includes the research and the methodology of the research, which describes the approach of A. Thomas. I will define the American cultural standards from Chinese perspective through the interviews which are based on the A. Thomas approach. Then I will compare my research results with the theoretical part about American identity and values. At the end of the practical part, I will give some recommendation and comments, which are based on the research analysis.

Chapter 1

1. Culture

1.1 Definition of culture

What is the culture? This term has a significant quantity of values and meanings. *Cultura* is a Latin word derived from “colere”. The meaning of *colere* is to inhabit, cultivate, patronize. Romans used the word culture with other objects in word combination such as "culture juries" - development of rules of behavior, "culture lingual"- language improvement and etc.

The philosophical view of the culture would be the opinion of the historiography and German philosopher- Oswald Spengler, according to his thoughts: “*Culture is the essence of the organism. The history of culture is their biography. Culture is born at a time when a great soul awakens and stands out from the primitive-spiritual state of ever-human humanity.*” Culture is people. We are creating culture and culture makes us different from others. The history of culture is our history, history of our ancestors, who has been forming the culture for centuries.

In the continuation of philosophic view, the explanation of the culture from the Dutch doctor of philosophy in social psychology- Geert Hofstede is following: “*Culture is always a collective phenomenon, because it is at least partly shared with people who live or lived the same social environment, which is where it was learned. Culture consists of the unwritten rule of the social game. It is the collective programming of the mind distinguishing the members of one group or category of people from others*”.¹

Saying of an American anthropologist- Edward T. Hall, who was famous for books about cross-cultural research, such as “*Beyond the culture*” and “*The Silent language*” is following: “*Culture is not made up but something that evolved which is human*”.² In his book “*Beyond the culture*” he said: “*Touch a culture in one place and everything else will be influenced*”.³

¹ HOFSTEDE, G. – HOFSTEDE, G. J. – MINKOV, M. *Cultures and organizations: software of the mind: intercultural cooperation and its importance for survival*. New York: McGraw-Hill, 2010. ISBN 978- 0-07-166418-9., p. 6.

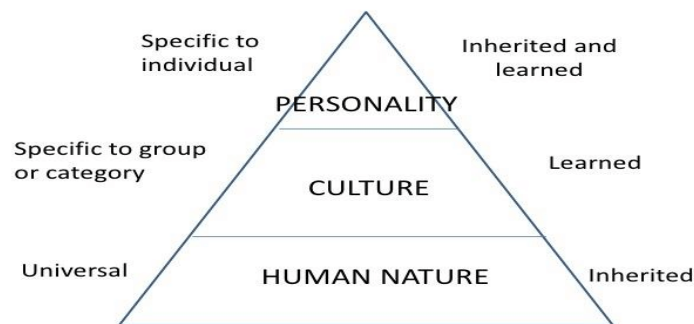
² Hall, Edward T. *Beyond Culture*. Garden City, N.Y: Anchor Press, 1976.

³ HALL, Edward. T. *The Silent Language*. Garden City, NY: Anchor Press/Doubleday, 1959.

1.2 Models of culture

For the description of the culture professor Hofstede also used another definition as “*mental programming*”. Mental programming is a three-level pyramid of uniqueness in mental programming, which describes human nature, culture, and personality. The sources of one’s mental programming lie within the social environments in which one grew up and collected one’s life experience. The programming starts with the family; it continues within the neighborhood, at school, in youth groups, at the workplace, and in the living community. The culture was distinguished from human nature on one side and from an individual’s personality on the other, although knowing where exactly the borders lie between nature and culture, and between culture and personality, is a matter of discussion among social scientists.

Figure 1.1 Three levels of uniqueness in Mental Programming



Source: HOFSTEDE, G. – HOFSTEDE, G J. – MINKOV, M. Cultures and organizations: software of the mind: intercultural cooperation and its importance for survival. New York: McGraw-Hill, 2010. ISBN 978- 0-07-166418-9. Page 6.

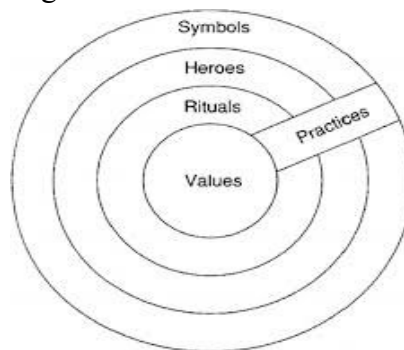
Human nature is what all human beings have in common: it represents the universal level in one’s mental software. It is inherited within our genes: within the computer analogy, it is the “*operating system*”, that determines our physical and basic psychological functioning. The ability of a human to love, feel fear, anger, joy, sadness, and shame; the need to communicate with others and to play and express oneself; facility to observe the environment and talk with others is belonging to this level of mental programming. However, how do the human beings behave, react and make actions modify culture.

Personality is a personal set of mental programs that do not need to be shared with any other human being. It is based on traits that are partly inherited within the specific to an individual set of genes and partly learned, which means the influence of culture as well as unique personal experiences.⁴

1.2.1 Onion diagram

The total concept to understand so many terms of culture is explained by the onion diagram. The diagram was established by professor Hofstede in 1991. It has four levels of depth: symbols, heroes, rituals, and values. These have been pictured as the skins of an onion, indicating that symbols represent the most superficial and values the deepest manifestation of the culture, with heroes and rituals in between.⁵ The graphical demonstration of the Onion diagram can be seen below in Figure 2.

Figure 1.2 Hofstede's Onion Diagram: Manifestations of culture at different levels of depth



Source: HOFSTEDE, G. – HOFSTEDE, G J. – MINKOV, M. Cultures and organizations: software of the mind: intercultural cooperation and its importance for survival. New York: McGraw-Hill, 2010. ISBN 978- 0-07-166418-9. Part 1. Concept of culture; page 8.

The outer level of the onion is *symbols*. Symbols represent words, pictures, gestures, or objects, clothes, flags, hairstyles, and status symbols. New symbols are easily developed, old one disappears; symbols of one cultural group are copied by others. This is why symbols have been put into the outer, the most superficial layer of figure 2.

⁴ HOFSTEDE, G. – HOFSTEDE, G J. – MINKOV, M. Cultures and organizations: software of the mind: intercultural cooperation and its importance for survival. New York: McGraw-Hill, 2010. ISBN 978- 0-07-166418-9. Page 5-7.

⁵ HOFSTEDE, G. – HOFSTEDE, G J. – MINKOV, M. Cultures and organizations: software of the mind: intercultural cooperation and its importance for survival. New York: McGraw-Hill, 2010. ISBN 978- 0-07-166418-9., p. 7.

Next level of the diagram is *heroes*. Heroes are persons, alive or dead, real or imaginary that possesses characteristics that are highly prized in a culture and thus serve as the model for behavior. Hofstede provides an example of cultural heroes. There are American heroes, such as Barbie, Batman or Snoopy. Chinese heroes, such as Monkey King, Su Wu Kong, Guan Yu (author assumption).

The third level is *rituals*, which consists of activities that are considered socially essential. They include greeting and paying respect to others, as well as social and religious ceremonies. Rituals also include how language is used in text and talk.

The term *practices* absorb *symbols*, *heroes*, and *rituals*. For the observers, it is a visible part, but for the cultural meaning it is unseen and can be interpreted by the fraternal society.

The core of the “onion diagram” is determined by value. The meaning of value is feelings and tendencies, which make people different. They deal with antonyms such as:

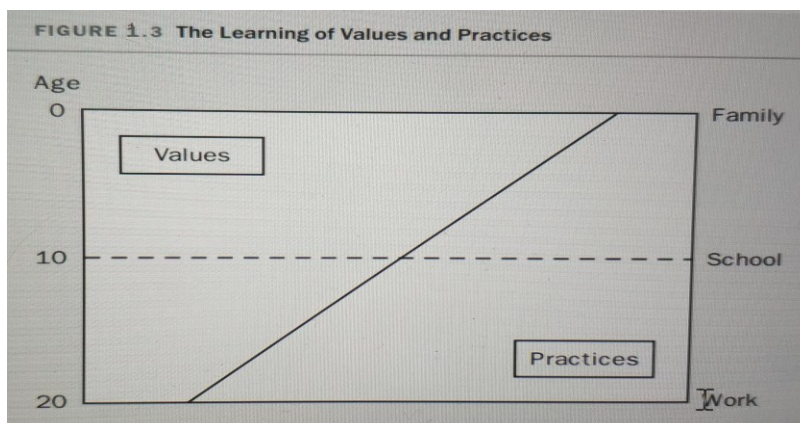
- evil vs. good,
- dirty vs. clean,
- dangerous vs. safe,
- forbidden vs. permitted,
- decent vs. indecent,
- moral vs. immoral,
- ugly vs. beautiful,
- unnatural vs. natural,
- abnormal vs. normal,
- paradoxical vs. logical,
- irrational vs. rational.⁶

Figure 1.3 illustrates when and where we acquire our values and practices. The values start to acquire early in lives of individuals. They all start with family. Then it is coming a receptive period of some ten to twelve years, in which practice has appeared. This includes symbols (such as language), heroes (such as our parents and other individuals), and rituals (such as

⁶ HOFSTEDE, G. – HOFSTEDE, G J. – MINKOV, M. Cultures and organizations: software of the mind: intercultural cooperation and its importance for survival. New York: McGraw-Hill, 2010. ISBN 978- 0-07-166418-9., p. 8-9.

toilet training), and, most important, it includes our basic values. At the end of this period, we gradually switch to a different, conscious way of learning, focusing primarily on new practices.⁷

Figure 1.3 The Learning of Values and Practices



Source: HOFSTEDE, G. – HOFSTEDE, G J. – MINKOV, M. *Cultures and organizations: software of the mind: intercultural cooperation and its importance for survival*. New York: McGraw-Hill, 2010. ISBN 978- 0-07-166418-9. Part 1. Concept of culture; page 10.

All cultures are so different and unlike, with very different values, such as family, work, religious, money, etc., which make each culture special, diversified and distinct.

1.2.2 Iceberg model

The invention of iceberg model was by Edward T. Hall in 1976. I have already mentioned in the first chapter about him and his books. Iceberg model is the model that describes the analogy of cultural aspects from two sides: hidden or less visible, which are underwater and visible, which are above the water and the biggest part of the iceberg.⁸

The visible part of the model is external conscious. The characteristics of the first level are easy to understand and observe. It includes behavior and beliefs, language and numbers... According to the characteristics it is easy to recognize, which culture it is, that is why it is

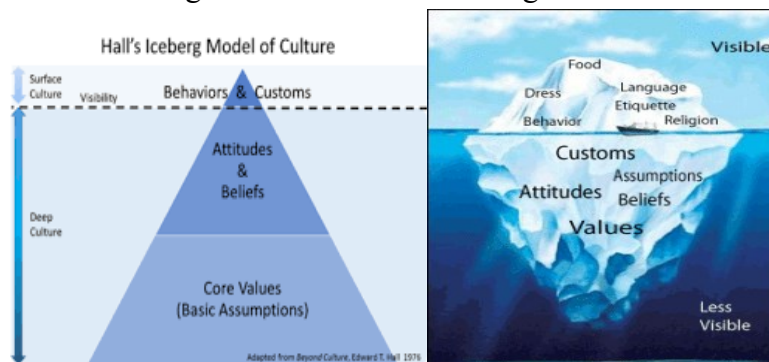
⁷ HOFSTEDE, G. – HOFSTEDE, G J. – MINKOV, M. *Cultures and organizations: software of the mind: intercultural cooperation and its importance for survival*. New York: McGraw-Hill, 2010. ISBN 978- 0-07-166418-9., p. 9-10.

⁸ Hall, Edward T. *Beyond Culture*. Garden City, N.Y: Anchor Press, 1976. p. 44

called visible part. This is what makes a big difference in the second part- hidden. The hidden part of the model is internal subconscious. It is hard to study, difficult to observe. Examples of this part are non-verbal communication, size of distance, the perception of time, etc. These features a human cannot see and recognize straight. To understand those people should participate in the culture very actively. As much time a person spends with other culture as more he or she learns about it, better understand the hidden values, traditions and customs. The model teaches us that the first impression is very tricky and deceptive. What we see first about a new culture does not say anything about it. The truth and reality are hidden, and we have to make a deep research to understand it correctly. People cannot judge from their first impression, they must figure it out and learn, try to be a part of this culture. Only then people can open a new culture, hidden values and attitude, customs and traditions.

The graphical demonstration of the Iceberg model can be seen below in Figure 2 and the difference between internal and external futures in figure 2.1

Figure 2.1 E.T. Hall's Iceberg Model



Sources: SMITH, Jonathan. 5 Steps To Avoiding Culture Shock. International TEFL Academy [online]. Nicaragua, 2014, 2014-8-26. Available from: <http://nicaraguatefl.com/5-steps-to-avoiding-culture-shock/>, Nature Networks, *Engaging Culture in the Global Workplace*. Retrieved 23---12---2017. Available from: <www.nature.co.jp/archives/globalage/globalage-172>.

1.3 Cultural dimensions

As there is no common opinion what cultural dimension is, I would like to describe two, on the one hand, very similar definitions of dimensions, but, on the other hand, so different. It is

the definition of famous anthropologist Geert Hofstede, which I will be focused on during my thesis work- *The cultural dimensions represent independent preferences for one state of affairs over another that distinguish countries (rather than individuals) from each other.*⁹ The other definition is from famous Dutch management consultant- Fons Trompenaars: the cultural dimensions is a framework for cross-culture communication applied to general business and management, where human beings deal with each other, one which deals with time, and one which deals with the environment.¹⁰

1.3.2 Hofstede's cultural dimensions theory

Between 1967 and 1973 professor Geert Hofstede made an analysis within the corporation called International Business Machines (IBM). The analysis is about the value of employees of the IBM Corporation. Professor created the questionnaire for the employees of more than 70 countries. The data was analyzed and showed the result of four main cultural dimensions, such as *power distance, individualism vs. collectivism, masculinity vs. femininity* and *uncertainty avoidance*. The fifth dimension- *long-term vs. short-term orientation* was created in 1991 during the cooperation between Geert Hofstede and Michael Harris Bond- psychologist from Canada, working on the research at The Chinese University of Hong Kong. The book *Cultures and Organizations: Software of the Mind* was published in 2010. Part of this book represents the research of Bulgarian information specialist Michael Minkov, who was cooperating with Hofstede, what served to the creation of the last cultural dimension called *indulgence vs. restraint*.¹¹

According to Hofstede, a dimension is an aspect of a culture that can be measured relative to other cultures.¹² Each dimension ranged from 0 to 100, which allows understanding the concept better. In the following part of the chapter, each dimension will be explained.

⁹ The Hofstede center [online]. Available from: <https://www.hofstede-insights.com/models/national-culture/>.

¹⁰ TROMPENAARS, Fons - HAMPDEN-TURNER Charles. *Riding the waves of culture: understanding diversity in global business*. Rev and updated 3rd ed. New York: McGraw-Hill, c2012, ix, ISBN 0071773088, p 8.

¹¹ National Culture. The Hofstede Center [online]. Arabiankatu 12 00560 Helsinki, Finland [cit. 2018-01-05]. Available from: <http://geert-hofstede.com/national-culture.html>

¹² HOFSTEDE, G. – HOFSTEDE, G J. – MINKOV, M. *Cultures and organizations: software of the mind: intercultural cooperation and its importance for survival*. New York: McGraw-Hill, 2010. ISBN 978- 0-07-166418-9., p 31.

Power distance

The first cultural dimension is power distance. According to Hofstede power distance is *“the extent to which the less powerful members of institutions and organizations within a country expect and accept that power is distributed unequally. Institutions are the basic element of society, such as the family, the school, and the community; organizations are the places where people work. Power distance is thus described based on the value system of the less powerful members. The way power is distributed is usually explained by the behavior of the more powerful members, the leaders rather than those led. The popular management literature on leadership often forgets that leadership can exist only as a complement to “subordinate ship.”*¹³

The typical features of small and large power distance are following:

Figure 3.1

SMALL POWER DISTANCE VS LARGE POWER DISTANCE

Inequalities among people should be minimized.
Parents treat children as equals.
Students treat teachers as equals.
Educational policy focuses on secondary schools.

Inequalities among people are expected and desired.
Parents teach children obedience.
Students give teachers respect, even outside class.
Educational policy focuses on universities.

Source: HOFSTEDE, G. – HOFSTEDE, G J. – MINKOV, M. Cultures and organizations: software of the mind: intercultural cooperation and its importance for survival. New York: McGraw-Hill, 2010. ISBN 978- 0-07-166418-9., p 72.

The Individual and the Collective in Society

“The vast majority of people in our world live in societies in which the interest of the group prevails over the interest of the individual. We will call these societies collectivist, using a word that to some readers may have political connotations, but the word is not meant here in any political sense. It does not refer to the power of the state over the individual; it refers to

¹³ HOFSTEDE, G. – HOFSTEDE, G J. – MINKOV, M. Cultures and organizations: software of the mind: intercultural cooperation and its importance for survival. New York: McGraw-Hill, 2010. ISBN 978- 0-07-166418-9., p 61.

the power of the group. The first group in our lives is always the family into which we are born. When children grow up, they learn to think of themselves as part of a “we” group, a relationship that is not voluntary but is instead given by nature. The “we” group (or in-group) is the major source of one’s identity and the only secure protection one has against the hardships of life.”¹⁴

“A minority of people in our world live in societies in which the interests of the individual prevail over the interests of the group, societies that we will call individualist. In these, most children are born into families consisting of two parents and, possibly, other children; in some societies there is an increasing share of one-parent families.”¹⁵

The typical features of collectivist and individualist are following:

Figure 3.2

COLLECTIVIST VS INDIVIDUALIST	
People are born into extended families or other in-groups that continue protecting them in exchange for loyalty. Children learn to think in terms of “we.” Friendships are predetermined.	Everyone grows up to look after him or herself and his or her immediate (nuclear) family only. Children learn to think in terms of “I.” Friendships are voluntary and should be fostered.
Low-context communication prevails.	High-context communication prevails.

Source: HOFSTEDE, G. – HOFSTEDE, G J. – MINKOV, M. Cultures and organizations: software of the mind: intercultural cooperation and its importance for survival. New York: McGraw-Hill, 2010. ISBN 978- 0-07-166418-9., p 113.

Masculinity and femininity

“A society is called masculine when emotional gender roles are clearly distinct: men are supposed to be assertive, tough, and focused on material success, whereas women are supposed to be more modest, tender, and concerned with the quality of life. A society is called

¹⁴ HOFSTEDE, G. – HOFSTEDE, G J. – MINKOV, M. Cultures and organizations: software of the mind: intercultural cooperation and its importance for survival. New York: McGraw-Hill, 2010. ISBN 978- 0-07-166418-9., p 91.

¹⁵ HOFSTEDE, G. – HOFSTEDE, G J. – MINKOV, M. Cultures and organizations: software of the mind: intercultural cooperation and its importance for survival. New York: McGraw-Hill, 2010. ISBN 978- 0-07-166418-9., p 91.

feminine when emotional gender roles overlap: both men and women are supposed to be modest, tender, and concerned with the quality of life.”¹⁶

The typical features of feminine and masculine are following:

Figure 3.3

FEMININE VS MASCULINE	
Relationships and quality of life are important. Both men and women should be modest. Job choice is based on intrinsic Interest. Children are socialized to be non-aggressive.	Challenge, earnings, recognition, and advancement are important. Men should be assertive, ambitious, and tough. Job choice is based on career opportunities. Aggression by children is accepted.

Source: HOFSTEDE, G. – HOFSTEDE, G J. – MINKOV, M. Cultures and organizations: software of the mind: intercultural cooperation and its importance for survival. New York: McGraw-Hill, 2010. ISBN 978- 0-07-166418-9. ,p 155.

Uncertainty avoidance

*“The term uncertainty avoidance has been borrowed from American organization sociology, in particular from the work of James G. March.3 March and his colleagues recognized it in American organizations. Ways of handling uncertainty, of course, are part and parcel of any human institution in any country. All human beings have to face the fact that we do not know what will happen tomorrow: the future is uncertain, but we have to live with it anyway.”*¹⁷

The typical features of uncertainty avoidance are following:

¹⁶ HOFSTEDE, G. – HOFSTEDE, G J. – MINKOV, M. Cultures and organizations: software of the mind: intercultural cooperation and its importance for survival. New York: McGraw-Hill, 2010. ISBN 978- 0-07-166418-9., p 140.

¹⁷ HOFSTEDE, G. – HOFSTEDE, G J. – MINKOV, M. Cultures and organizations: software of the mind: intercultural cooperation and its importance for survival. New York: McGraw-Hill, 2010. ISBN 978- 0-07-166418-9., p 189.

Figure 3.4

WEAK UNCERTAINTY	VS	STRONG UNCERTAINTY
Uncertainty is a normal feature of life, and each day is accepted as it comes. Low stress and low anxiety. Aggression and emotions should		The uncertainty inherent in life is a continuous threat that must be fought. High stress and high anxiety. Aggression and emotions may at proper

Source: HOFSTEDE, G. – HOFSTEDE, G J. – MINKOV, M. Cultures and organizations: software of the mind: intercultural cooperation and its importance for survival. New York: McGraw-Hill, 2010. ISBN 978- 0-07-166418-9., p 203.

Long term vs. short term orientation

“The fifth dimension was defined as follows: long-term orientation stands for the fostering of virtues oriented toward future rewards—in particular, perseverance and thrift. Its opposite pole, short-term orientation, stands for the fostering of virtues related to the past and present—in particular, respect for tradition, preservation of “face,” and fulfilling social obligations.”¹⁸

The typical features of short and long- term orientation are following:

Figure 3.5

SHORT-TERM ORIENTATION	VS	LONG-TERM ORIENTATION
Marriage is a moral arrangement. Living with in-laws is a source of trouble. Children get gifts for fun and love. Analytical thinking.		Marriage is a pragmatic arrangement. Living with in-laws is normal. Children get gifts for education and development. Synthetic thinking.

Source: HOFSTEDE, G. – HOFSTEDE, G J. – MINKOV, M. Cultures and organizations: software of the mind: intercultural cooperation and its importance for survival. New York: McGraw-Hill, 2010. ISBN 978- 0-07-166418-9., p 243.

¹⁸ HOFSTEDE, G. – HOFSTEDE, G J. – MINKOV, M. Cultures and organizations: software of the mind: intercultural cooperation and its importance for survival. New York: McGraw-Hill, 2010. ISBN 978- 0-07-166418-9., p 239.

Indulgence vs. restraint

“Indulgence stands for a tendency to allow relatively free gratification of basic and natural human desires related to enjoying life and having fun. Its opposite pole, restraint, reflects a conviction that such gratification needs to be curbed and regulated by strict social norms. As a cultural dimension, indulgence versus restraint rests on clearly defined research items that measure very specific phenomena. Note that the gratification of desires on the indulgence side refers to enjoying life and having fun, not to gratifying human desires in general.”¹⁹

The typical features of indulgent and restrained are following:

Figure 3.6

INDULGENT	VS	RESTRAINED
Higher percentages of very happy people. Less moral discipline. Smiling as a norm. Freedom of speech is viewed as relatively important.		Lower percentages of very happy people. Moral discipline. Smiling as suspect . Freedom of speech is not a primary concern.

Source: HOFSTEDE, G. – HOFSTEDE, G J. – MINKOV, M. Cultures and organizations: software of the mind: intercultural cooperation and its importance for survival. New York: McGraw-Hill, 2010. ISBN 978- 0-07-166418-9., p 243.

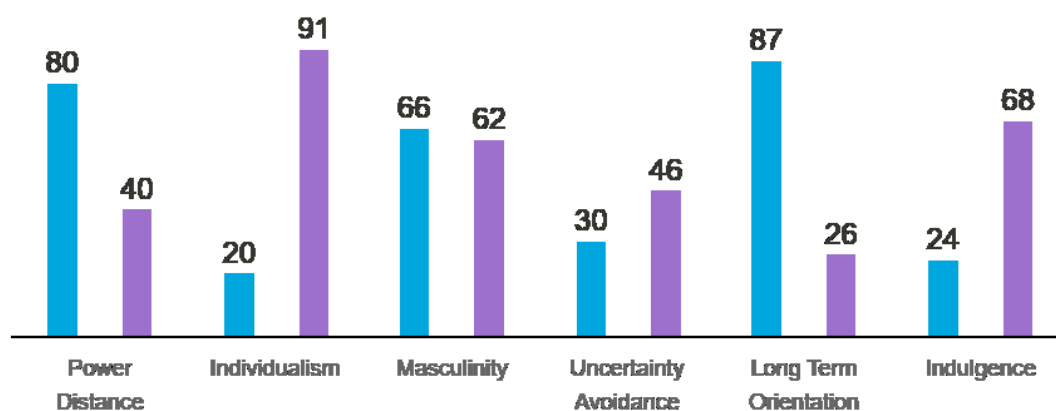
1.3.3 Application of Hofstede’s cultural dimensions theory: Americans vs Chinese

Figure 3.7 shows the difference between Hofstede’s cultural dimensions of China and the US. Both countries are unique and various. China has a very high power distance, twice bigger than the US (80), which indicates that wealth and power distributed unequal in society. When in the US power distance is low and society is quite equal. With regard to collectivism, China is ranked 80. For China relationship is very important, teamwork, trust. The US is ranked 91 as an individualistic society. Self-care is the most important thing. There should be no care about others, tasks are more important than the relationship. Both countries are masculine China even more masculine than the US, which means these two economical leaders are very

¹⁹ HOFSTEDE, G. – HOFSTEDE, G J. – MINKOV, M. Cultures and organizations: software of the mind: intercultural cooperation and its importance for survival. New York: McGraw-Hill, 2010. ISBN 978- 0-07-166418-9., p 281.

tough in business. Gender differences appear in both countries. Uncertainty avoidance is relatively low for US and China. They accept uncertainty as a normal thing. They are low-stress, the changing job is not a big deal, no big worries about health and wealth. The highest rank in China is long-term orientation. People there think about future. They try to save money for the future, in the economy they have 5 years economic plan, in which Politburo sets the goals that must be achieved within 5 years. The US is opposite. It is short-term oriented country. They are more past and present-oriented. American are patriotic, very proud of their country, which is also part of short-term orientation. At the last dimension, America is an indulgence country, with a requirement of leisure. They consider themselves as a happy nation, free speech is very important, when China is absolutely opposite. Chinese do not require free time, free speech, not a lot of people consider themselves as happy.^{20 21}

Figure 3.7
America vs China



Source: The Hofstede center [online]. Available from: <<https://www.hofstede-insights.com/country-comparison/china,the-usa/>>.

²⁰ Bočánková, Milena. *Intercultural Communication: Typical Features of the Czech, British, American, Japanese, Chinese and Arab Cultures*. Oeconomica, 2010, p 111.

²¹ The Hofstede center [online]. Available from: <<https://www.hofstede-insights.com/country-comparison/china,the-usa/>>.

1.3.4 Trompenaars' cultural dimensions theory

Alfonsus Trompenaars was born in Amsterdam in 1953. Trompenaars has a MA degree in economics. He is also a management consultant. He became famous for his cross-cultural research, which took him 15 years. The research is about the difference between cultures, values, and beliefs, customs and traditions, how they affect the process of doing business and managing. The research is very similar to Hofstede's research, but more specific and detailed, in terms of relationship towards people, time and nature. 30,000 participants took part in the research from 30 different companies which are situated in more than 50 countries.²² In his book about cross-cultural differences: “*Riding the Waves of Culture: Understanding Diversity in Global Business*”, Trompenaars classified the culture according to 7 dimensions, such as *Universalism versus particularism; Individualism versus communitarianism; Specific versus diffuse; Neutral versus emotional; Achievement versus ascription; Sequential time versus synchronous time; Internal direction versus outer direction.*

Universalism vs. particularism

In the book- *Riding the wave of culture*, Trompenaars says: “*Here the dilemma is whether it is more important to focus upon the enhancement of individuals, their rights, motivations, rewards, capacities, attitudes, or should more attention be paid to the advancement of the whole communities which all its members²³ are pledged to serve?*”

This first dimension defines how we judge other people's behavior, obligation to adhere to standards which are universally agreed to by the culture in which we live. The first standard is so called the Golden Rule: “Do not lie. Do not steal. Do unto others as you would have them do unto you”.²⁴ The second standard is we encounter particular obligations to people we know, which means I will never lie or steal from my friend as we both are going to be sad.

²² TROMPENAARS, Alfons - HAMPDEN-TURNER Charles. *Riding the waves of culture: understanding diversity in global business*. Rev and updated 3rd ed. New York: McGraw-Hill, c2012, ix, ISBN 0071773088, p 1-2.

²³ TROMPENAARS, Alfons - HAMPDEN-TURNER Charles. *Riding the waves of culture: understanding diversity in global business*. Rev and updated 3rd ed. New York: McGraw-Hill, c2012, ix, ISBN 0071773088, p 31.

²⁴ TROMPENAARS, Alfons - HAMPDEN-TURNER Charles. *Riding the waves of culture: understanding diversity in global business*. Rev and updated 3rd ed. New York: McGraw-Hill, c2012, ix, ISBN 0071773088, p 31.

Universalism is rule-based. You must obey the rules and rules are the same for everyone. Even the slightest disobedience is considered as a very bad sign of behavior or even crime. Universalism is afraid if there is a small exception which requires breaking the rule the whole system is going to be destroyed.

Particularism is more about breaking the rules. The rule does not matter if I have to help, protect my friend or family or someone very important to me.

Trompenaars says, based on his own research:

“In a Universal society such as the U.S., rules, and contracts are developed which can apply in any situation. There is a belief that what is good or true can be discovered, defined, and applied to every situation. China is a Particularistic culture where people look at relationships and circumstances in a specific situation to decide what is right. For the Chinese, the legal contract communicates a starting point for an agreement. For the Chinese, the situation and the particular individuals involved are what define the relationship.”

The difference between two dimensions is illustrated in the following figure:

Figure 4.1

Universalist	vs	Particularistic
Focus is more on rules than relationships. Legal contracts are readily drawn up. There is only one truth or reality, that which has been agreed to.		Focus is more on relationships than on rules. Legal contracts are readily modified. There are several perspectives on reality.

Source: TROMPENAARS, Alfons - HAMPDEN-TURNER Charles. *Riding the waves of culture: understanding diversity in global business*. Rev and updated 3rd ed. New York: McGraw-Hill, c2012, ix, ISBN 0071773088, p 48.

Individualism versus communitarianism

The second dimension is very similar to Hofstede's individualism vs. collectivism. Individualism has been described as “a prime orientation to the self”. Individualists take responsibilities for themselves. They try to achieve everything by themselves.

Communitarianism can be described as “a prime orientation to common goals and objectives”. Communitarian oriented on teamwork, sharing success and failure, being a part of a group.²⁵

Trompenaars in his book “*Riding the waves of culture*” created a questionnaire through which it is easy to understand which dimension belongs to which country.

“A defect is discovered in one of the installations. It was caused by the negligence of one of the members of a team. Responsibility for this mistake can be carried in various ways.

1) The person causing the defect by negligence is the one responsible.

2) Because he or she happens to work in a team the responsibility should be carried by the group.”²⁶

Just 37% of Chinese agreed with the first statement, which means that through the communist influence and a common teamwork, China is a part of communitarianism. 54% of Americans pointed the fault of the person, which says that Americans are part of individualism.²⁷

The difference between two dimensions is illustrated in the following figure:

Figure 4.2

Individualism	versus	Communitarianism
More frequent use of “I” form. Decisions made on the spot by representatives. People ideally achieve alone and assume personal responsibility.		More frequent use of “We” form. Decisions made on the spot by representatives. People ideally achieve in groups which assume joint responsibility.

Source: TROMPENAARS, Alfons - HAMPDEN-TURNER Charles. *Riding the waves of culture:*

understanding diversity in global business. Rev and updated 3rd ed. New York: McGraw-Hill, c2012, ix, ISBN 0071773088, p 67.

²⁵ TROMPENAARS, Alfons - HAMPDEN-TURNER Charles. *Riding the waves of culture: understanding diversity in global business.* Rev and updated 3rd ed. New York: McGraw-Hill, c2012, ix, ISBN 0071773088, p 50-52.

²⁶ TROMPENAARS, Alfons - HAMPDEN-TURNER Charles. *Riding the waves of culture: understanding diversity in global business.* Rev and updated 3rd ed. New York: McGraw-Hill, c2012, ix, ISBN 0071773088, p 54.

²⁷ TROMPENAARS, Alfons - HAMPDEN-TURNER Charles. *Riding the waves of culture: understanding diversity in global business.* Rev and updated 3rd ed. New York: McGraw-Hill, c2012, ix, ISBN 0071773088, p 54-59.

Affective versus neutral cultures

In the book- *Riding the wave of culture*, Trompenaars says: “Here is dilemma whether we should communicate the full extent of personal feeling to other (affective) in course of engaging them, or whether we should behave “professionally” on air of detachment and dispassion (neutral), so as to focus on the tasks to be completed.”

Neutral culture stands for the holding emotions, control them. People are very restrained and think that by showing emotions without controlling it by the brain you might confuse the situation and yourself. Showing emotions are unprofessional. Americans tend to exhibit emotion, yet separate it from “objective” and “rational” decisions,²⁸ when affective culture is opposite. People show their emotions, smile, and speak loudly if they are excited. The Chinese usually showing their emotions very naturally. It is recognizable through the gestures and mimics- body language.²⁹

The difference between two dimensions is illustrated in the following figure:

Figure 4.3

Neutral	vs.	Affective
Do not reveal what they are thinking or feeling. Emotions often dammed up will occasionally explode. Cool and self-possessed conduct is admired.		Reveal thoughts and feelings verbally and non-verbally. Emotions flow easily, effusively, vehemently and without inhibition. Heated, vital, animated expressions admired.

Source: TROMPENAARS, Alfons - HAMPDEN-TURNER Charles. *Riding the waves of culture: understanding diversity in global business*. Rev and updated 3rd ed. New York: McGraw-Hill, c2012, ix, ISBN 0071773088, p 79.

²⁸ TROMPENAARS, Alfons - HAMPDEN-TURNER Charles. *Riding the waves of culture: understanding diversity in global business*. Rev and updated 3rd ed. New York: McGraw-Hill, c2012, ix, ISBN 0071773088, p 73.

²⁹ Oliver Hofmann. *Differences In International Business Cultures*. 17 Dec. 1999, p 14. Available from: <citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?doi=10.1.1.199.4248&rep=rep1&type=pdf.>

Specificity vs. Diffusion

Trompenaars says: “*Are we more effective as managers when we analyze phenomena, reducing this to specifics, i.e., facts, tasks, items, numbers, units, or bullet points, or when we integrate and configure these into diffuse patterns, relationship, understanding, and contexts.*”

Specific cultures have a very big public zone in which they led people in fast. On the other hand, a private zone is open just for very close friends and family. Diffuse cultures have an easy access to both zones for everyone. But they are for caring about the entry into the public zone as soon as a person in a public zone he or she automatically has an entry to the private zone.

The Trompenaars’ test for cultural diffuseness is the following:

- 1) *Some people think a company is usually responsible for the housing of its employees. Therefore, a company has to assist an employee in finding housing.*
- 2) *Other people think the responsibility for housing should be carried by the employee alone. It is so much to the good if the company helps.*³⁰

Americans extremely disagree about the first statement, as it is a clear entry to the private zone, which is open just for family and family friends, which means that Americans are specific culture when China is opposite. Most Chinese agreed with the first statement as their company is already into their public zone. The communism has also played a big role in the way to which dimension China belongs to.³¹

The difference between two dimensions is illustrated in the following figure:

Figure 4.4

Specificity	versus	diffuseness
Direct, to the point, purposeful in relating.		Indirect, circuitous, seemingly “aimless” forms of relating.
Precise, blunt, definitive and transparent.		Evasive, tactful, ambiguous, even opaque.
Principles and consistent moral stands independent of the person being addressed.		Highly situational morality depending upon the person and context encountered.

³⁰ TROMPENAARS, Alfons - HAMPDEN-TURNER Charles. *Riding the waves of culture: understanding diversity in global business*. Rev and updated 3rd ed. New York: McGraw-Hill, c2012, ix, ISBN 0071773088, p 92.

³¹ TROMPENAARS, Alfons - HAMPDEN-TURNER Charles. *Riding the waves of culture: understanding diversity in global business*. Rev and updated 3rd ed. New York: McGraw-Hill, c2012, ix, ISBN 0071773088, p 92-93.

Source: TROMPENAARS, Alfons - HAMPDEN-TURNER Charles. *Riding the waves of culture: understanding diversity in global business*. Rev and updated 3rd ed. New York: McGraw-Hill, c2012, ix, ISBN 0071773088, p 100.

Ascription and achievement

Trompenaars' question about the 5th dimension is following: *"Should we reward what employees have done and how they have performed exclusively, or are other characteristics important, such as employees potentials, rights, seniority, ethnicity, gender, and so on?"*

Ascription cultures are focused on high status, which is achieved through a lot of hard work, self-achievement, when ascription cultures focused on status that is achieved through the social connections. The status also focused on age and gender more than self-achievement, matters who do you know rather than who are you.

Another statement, which was developed by Trompenaars with an eye to understanding two dimensions are following:

- 1) *The most important thing in life is to think and act in the ways that best suit the way you really are, even if you do not get things done.*
- 2) *The respect a person gets is highly dependent on their family background.*

The USA is clearly a culture in which status is mainly achieved, as most respondents replied that family background does not influence self-status. When in China, most people agreed with the first statement. China is more ascription culture. The causes are the religions, such as Buddhism and Confucianism, gender is important as well. In China it is important who do you know!³²

The difference between two dimensions is illustrated in the following figure:

³² TROMPENAARS, Alfons - HAMPDEN-TURNER Charles. *Riding the waves of culture: understanding diversity in global business*. Rev and updated 3rd ed. New York: McGraw-Hill, c2012, ix, ISBN 0071773088, p 104-107.

Figure 4.5

Achievement-oriented	vs	ascription-oriented
Use of titles only when relevant to the competence you bring to the task.		Extensive use of titles, especially when these clarify your status in the organization.
Respect for superior in hierarchy is based on how effectively his or her job is performed and how adequate their knowledge.		Respect for superior in hierarchy is seen as a measure of your commitment to the organization and its mission.
Most senior managers are of varying age and gender and have shown proficiency in specific jobs.		Most senior managers are male, middle-aged and qualified by their background.

Source: TROMPENAARS, Alfons - HAMPDEN-TURNER Charles. *Riding the waves of culture: understanding diversity in global business*. Rev and updated 3rd ed. New York: McGraw-Hill, c2012, ix, ISBN 0071773088, p 118.

Sequential vs. synchronic perception of time

Next question of Trompenaars is: *“Is it more important to do things fast, in the shortest sequence of passing time or to synchronize efforts so that activities are coordinated?”*

Each culture perceives time differently. Sequential cultures, such as the USA, perceive time as a straight line, in which everything goes consistently. In those cultures, people focused on one task at a time. There is a strict deadline for each task. They always follow the schedule and plans.

The synchronic cultures, as China, perceive time as a circle. People focused on many tasks at a time, they can ignore the deadlines, and plans can be always changed.³³

The difference between two dimensions is illustrated in the following figure:

³³ TROMPENAARS, Alfons - HAMPDEN-TURNER Charles. *Riding the waves of culture: understanding diversity in global business*. Rev and updated 3rd ed. New York: McGraw-Hill, c2012, ix, ISBN 0071773088, p 133-137.

Figure 4.6

Sequential	vs.	Synchronic
Only do one activity at a time. Time is sizable and measurable.		Do more than one activity at a time. Appointments are approximate and subject to "giving time" to significant others.
Keep appointments strictly; schedule in advance and do not run late.		Schedules are generally subordinate to relationships.
Relationships are generally subordinate to schedule.		Strong preference for following where relationships lead.
Strong preference for following initial plans.		

Source: TROMPENAARS, Alfons - HAMPDEN-TURNER Charles. *Riding the waves of culture: understanding diversity in global business*. Rev and updated 3rd ed. New York: McGraw-Hill, c2012, ix, ISBN 0071773088, p 139.

Inner direction vs. outer direction

Another question of the author of the book "*Riding the wave of culture*" is: "*Should we be guided by our inner convictions, our conscience, and moral compass, or by signals from the wider social and physical environment into which we must fit?*"

In order to understand the attitude to the environment better, Trompenaars made a questionnaire to understand inner and outer direction:

- 1) *What happens to me is my own doing.*
- 2) *Sometimes I feel that I do not have enough control over the directions my life is taking.*

The answers are following:

The USA is internalized country. 82% of managers, which chose the answer number 1, believe they control their own destinies.³⁴ When in China, people have outer direction. Just 39% of managers, who chose the answer number 1, believe they control their own destinies. The influence of communism is the reason, why people in China think that environment controls them and there is nothing they can do about it.³⁵

The difference between two dimensions is illustrated in the following figure:

³⁴ TROMPENAARS, Alfons - HAMPDEN-TURNER Charles. *Riding the waves of culture: understanding diversity in global business*. Rev and updated 3rd ed. New York: McGraw-Hill, c2012, ix, ISBN 0071773088, p 142.

³⁵ TROMPENAARS, Alfons - HAMPDEN-TURNER Charles. *Riding the waves of culture: understanding diversity in global business*. Rev and updated 3rd ed. New York: McGraw-Hill, c2012, ix, ISBN 0071773088, p 142,144.

Figure 4.6

Internal control	vs.	External control
Often dominating attitude bordering on aggressiveness towards environment. Conflict and resistance means that you have convictions. Focus is on self, function, own group and own organization. Discomfort when environment seems "out of control" or changeable.		Often flexible attitude, willing to compromise and keep the peace. Harmony and responsiveness, that is, sensibility. Focus is on "other", that is customer, partner, colleague. Comfort with waves, shifts, cycles if these are "natural".

Source: TROMPENAARS, Alfons - HAMPDEN-TURNER Charles. *Riding the waves of culture: understanding diversity in global business*. Rev and updated 3rd ed. New York: McGraw-Hill, c2012, ix, ISBN 0071773088, p 155.

1.4 Cultural standards according to Alexander Thomas

Culture is a universal phenomenon.³⁶ Cultural standards are a part of a phenomenon, which is very complicated and difficult to understand, but so important to learn. A big research about cultural standards was made by a German psychologist in his book: *Handbook of Intercultural Communication and Cooperation*. According to Alexander Thomas: "*Cultural standards are processes of perception, thought, evaluation and action that for the majority of the members of a particular culture are regarded, for themselves and for others, as normal, typical and obligatory.*"³⁷ In his book a German psychologist defines cultural standards on the basis of the following five indicators:

- *Cultural standards are forms of perception, thought patterns, judgment, and interaction that are shared by a majority of the members of a specific culture who regard their behavior as normal, typical and binding.*
- *Own and other unfamiliar behavior is directed, regulated and judged on the basis of this cultural standard.*

³⁶ THOMAS, Alexander, KINAST, Eva-Ulrike, SCHROLL-MACHL, Sylvia. *Handbook of intercultural Communication and Cooperation*. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht GmbH & Co KG, 2010, p 19.

³⁷ THOMAS, Alexander. *Intercultural Training: Conditions-Process-Results-Preparation - ImplementationEvaluation*. Universität Regensburg [online]. Regensburg, Germany [cit. 2018-01-12]. Available from: <http://www.uni-regensburg.de/Fakultaeten/phil_Fak_II/Psychologie/Thomas/publikationen/Training.PDF>

- *Cultural standards provide a regulatory function for mastering a given situation and dealing with people.*
- *The individual and group-specific way of applying cultural standards to adjust behavior can fluctuate within a range of tolerance.*
- *Forms of behavior that exceed this specific range are not accepted or sanctioned by the respective collective.*³⁸

In short, cultural standards are the way how people from one culture behave, what are their norms of behavior and manners, how do they think... Cultural standards can be opened up from the comparison with our own culture. That is why to identify cultural standards it requires two different cultures to meet in one specific situation and analyze behavior. As more concrete and narrow the situation (an example is work or study environment) as easier to understand, analyze and compare the standards. During the comparison, cultures can reveal the real truth, individuality, difference, problems.³⁹

³⁸ THOMAS, Alexander, KINAST, Eva-Ulrike, SCHROLL-MACHL, Sylvia. *Handbook of intercultural Communication and Cooperation*. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht GmbH & Co KG, 2010, p 22.

³⁹ THOMAS, Alexander, KINAST, Eva-Ulrike, SCHROLL-MACHL, Sylvia. *Handbook of intercultural Communication and Cooperation*. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht GmbH & Co KG, 2010, p 21-25.

Chapter 2

The USA

2.1 Geography

The USA is the third largest nation in the world in the land area. The landscape varies significantly: mangrove forests in Florida, temperate forest land on the East coast, the Mississippi- Missouri river system, the Rocky Mountains west of the plains, deserts and temperate coastal zones west of the Rocky Mountains, Alaska region and the volcanic island of Hawaii. It shares borders with Canada, Mexico and maritime boundary with Russia and Hawaii.

The climate varies along with the landscape from subtropical in Florida to tundra in Alaska. Larger parts of the country have a continental climate, with warm summer and cold winter.⁴⁰ The population is 325 millions of people.⁴¹ The population mostly consists of European immigrants that have arrived since the establishment of the first colonies. Majority of immigrants are from Germany, England, Scotland, Ireland, and Italy. There are also a lot of immigrants from Scandinavian and Slavic countries and other population from eastern and southern Europe and French Canada. Hispanics from Mexico and South and Central America are considered the largest minority group in the US. The second largest minority is African-American-Baha largely descend from the African slaves that were brought to the US. A third significant minority is Asians, which is especially present the west-coast. Native Americans, such as American Indians and Inuit are less than 1%.⁴²

2.2 American History

America began as a set of colonies that exported goods back to England. Over the passage of time, the colonies became more productive and autonomous. After the French and Indian War of 1763, the British had consolidated control over the area, and the concern of colonists

⁴⁰ Bočánková, Milena. *Intercultural Communication: Typical Features of the Czech, British, American, Japanese, Chinese and Arab Cultures*. Oeconomica, 2010, p 71.

⁴¹ Worldometers. Available from:

<www.worldometers.info/world-population/us-population/>

⁴² Bočánková, Milena. *Intercultural Communication: Typical Features of the Czech, British, American, Japanese, Chinese and Arab Cultures*. Oeconomica, 2010, p 75-76.

shifted to the poor way in which they were treated by the crown of England.⁴³ The chants of “no taxation without representation” began to take over the rhetoric of unhappy colonists. The status quo was much too difficult for the colonists to endure, and eventually, peaceful protests became violent.⁴⁴ On December 16th 1773, a group of protestors disguised themselves and climbed onto ships stationed at the Boston Harbor. They then proceeded to throw crates of tea off of the ships, destroying the property the famous East India Company from England.⁴⁵ The British Parliament responded with major sanctions as punishment, and tensions rose between the Thirteen Colonies and the crown of England. Eventually, the Continental Congress was created, and the Colonists began arming themselves and creating a militia. Eventually, tensions led to the American revolutionary war with early battles at Concord, and Bunker Hill. On July 4th 1776, the Continental Congress issued the Declaration of Independence, which celebrated today as the birth of America all over the United States.⁴⁶ Under the leadership of George Washington, the Colonists were able to resist the advance of British troops long enough to benefit from France and Spain joining the war, in alignment against England. The American Revolutionary War ended with the Peace of Paris on September 3rd of 1783, and America was now her own country.⁴⁷

⁴³ World Health Organization, website: <<http://www.who.int/en/>>.

⁴⁴ Pestana, Carla Gardina (2004). *The English Atlantic in an Age of Revolution: 1640–1661*. Cambridge, Massachusetts and London, England: Harvard University Press; Holmes, David L. (May 1, 2006). "The Faiths of the Founding Fathers". Oxford University Press; *The Journal of Economic History*. Website: <https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/journal-of-economic-history>.

⁴⁵ Pestana, Carla Gardina (2004). *The English Atlantic in an Age of Revolution: 1640–1661*. Cambridge, Massachusetts and London, England: Harvard University Press; Holmes, David L. (May 1, 2006). "The Faiths of the Founding Fathers". Oxford University Press; *The Journal of Economic History*. Website: <https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/journal-of-economic-history>.

⁴⁶ Pestana, Carla Gardina (2004). *The English Atlantic in an Age of Revolution: 1640–1661*. Cambridge, Massachusetts and London, England: Harvard University Press; Holmes, David L. (May 1, 2006). "The Faiths of the Founding Fathers". Oxford University Press; *The Journal of Economic History*. Website: <https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/journal-of-economic-history>.

⁴⁷ Pestana, Carla Gardina (2004). *The English Atlantic in an Age of Revolution: 1640–1661*. Cambridge, Massachusetts and London, England: Harvard University Press; Holmes, David L. (May 1, 2006). "The Faiths of the Founding Fathers". Oxford University Press; *The Journal of Economic History*. Website: <https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/journal-of-economic-history>.

2.3 Language

A diverse country, United States comprises a nation of many peoples. It leads one to wonder not only about the languages that are in use in modern America but also about the languages that were spoken before European colonization. Native American languages were researched at length by many linguists, including highly respected scholars such as Edward Sapir. Oxford University Press, referencing the works of Sapir, spoke of the challenge in tracing the roots of all Native American linguistics to a common beginning:

The methods developed by the Indo-Europeanists have been applied with marked success to other groups of languages. It is abundantly clear that they apply just as rigorously to the unwritten primitive languages of Africa and America as to the better-known forms of speech of the more sophisticated languages... The more we devote ourselves to the comparative study of the languages of a primitive linguistic stock, the more we clearly realize that phonetic law and analogical leveling are the only satisfactory key to the unraveling of the development of dialects and languages from a common base.... It is not merely theoretically possible to predict the correctness of specific forms among unlettered peoples on the basis of such phonetic laws as having been worked out for them – such predictions are already on record in considerable number. There can be no doubt that the methods first developed in the field of Indo-European linguistics are destined to play a consistently important role in the study of all other groups of languages, and that it is through them and through their gradual extension that we can hope to arrive at significant historical inferences as to the remoter relations between groups of languages that show few superficial signs of a common origin.⁴⁸

Indeed, it seems that finding a common root even amongst the language of Native Americans proved challenging for scholars. It helps one understand the fluidity of language, and marvel at the breadth of languages in the United States, which has 231 individual languages listed according to the Ethnologue: Languages of the World⁴⁹ (Afrikaans, Arabic, Catalan, Japanese...). Of the 231 languages, 220 of them are living and actively used, while

⁴⁸ Campbell, Lyle. *American Indian languages: The historical linguistics of Native America*. New York: Oxford University Press.(1997).

⁴⁹ Grimes, Barbara F, Joseph E. Grimes, and Richard S. Pittman. *Ethnologue: Languages of the World*. Dallas, Tex: Summer Institute of Linguistics, 1999. Available from: <updated at: www.ethnologue.com>.

11 of them are considered extinct. The Ethnologue remarks that “Of the living languages, 196 are indigenous and 24 are non-indigenous. Furthermore, 3 are institutional, 12 are developing, 2 are vigorous, 58 are in trouble, and 145 are dying.”⁵⁰ The Ethnologue treats all of the above-mentioned languages as non-native immigrant languages, as opposed to a native or widespread language. The only two languages that the Ethnologue considers widespread in the United States are English, spoken by 280.6 million people in the United States, and Spanish, which is spoken by 56.5 million individuals in the USA.⁵¹

2.4 Economic situation

In a recent report from Goldman Sachs, Jan Hatzius, chief economist expects above 2.5% growth for the US GDP in 2018⁵² citing strong employment numbers and the new US Republican Party proposed Tax Bill as reasons for optimism. A similarly bullish projection of 2.7% growth in the US Real GDP is also predicted by the IMF⁵³. The positive outlook is good news for investors all over the world due to the sheer size of the US economy, and how much both investors and trade partners are affected by the American economy. The US economy is the largest in the world, with a Gross Domestic Product (based on purchasing power parity) of 19.36 Trillion according to the IMF⁵⁴, 18.57 Trillion according to the World Bank⁵⁵, and 18.62 Trillion according to the CIA World Factbook⁵⁶. If the US economy were to grow 2.7% then that would be a significant improvement over 2017, when it grew 2.3% annually according to

⁵⁰ Grimes, Barbara F, Joseph E. Grimes, and Richard S. Pittman. *Ethnologue: Languages of the World*. Dallas, Tex: Summer Institute of Linguistics, 1999. Available from: <www.ethnologue.com>.

⁵¹ Grimes, Barbara F, Joseph E. Grimes, and Richard S. Pittman. *Ethnologue: Languages of the World*. Dallas, Tex: Summer Institute of Linguistics, 1999. Available from: <www.ethnologue.com>.

⁵² 2018 Macroeconomic Outlook. Goldman Sachs, Available from: <www.goldmansachs.com/our-thinking/pages/outlook-2018/index.html?videoId=154422>.

⁵³ “IMF -- International Monetary Fund Home Page.” IMF -- International Monetary Fund Home Page, www.imf.org/.

⁵⁴ “IMF -- International Monetary Fund Home Page.” IMF -- International Monetary Fund Home Page, www.imf.org/.

⁵⁵ World bank organization. Available from: <<http://www.worldbank.org>>.

⁵⁶ The World Factbook: UNITED STATES.” Central Intelligence Agency, Central Intelligence Agency, 3 Jan. 2018, Available from: <www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/us.html>.

the World Bank⁵⁷. The United States is also a leading economy with the Gross National Income (“GNI”) per capita metric, defined by the World Bank as follows:

GNI is the sum of value added by all resident producers plus any product taxes (fewer subsidies) not included in the valuation of output plus net receipts of primary income (compensation of employees and property income) from abroad. GNI, calculated in national currency, is usually converted to U.S. dollars at official exchange rates for comparisons across economies, although an alternative rate is used when the official exchange rate is judged to diverge by an exceptionally large margin from the rate actually applied in international transactions.

As of the most recent data available (2016), the USA ranks 5th in the world with a GNI per capita of 56,810, which is behind only Norway (82,90), Switzerland (81,240), Luxembourg (71,590), Macau (65,310), and Denmark (57,020). The World Bank generally uses GNI as a measure of both wealth and standard of living⁵⁸. Therefore, by being a leader in both nominal total GDP and GNI per capita, the US economy is in a position of strength today, and with strong growth projected for 2018, it looks like the position of the US economy will continue to be strong going forward. Other statistics of note include the most recent US inflation numbers according to the World Bank, which floats at 1.3% annually. The US Agricultural industry adds only 1% towards GDP, while Industry contributes 20% to the US Economy and its growth⁵⁹. These numbers are the mark of a highly advanced economy with the vast majority of its value being generated by services, according to the World Bank, services add 79% to the US GDP in total value.⁶⁰ The US economy is also less dependent on exports than other countries, with the export of goods and services comprising only 12% of the countries GDP⁶¹, meanwhile, imports represent a slightly larger portion of GDP, at 15%⁶². Gross capital formation comes in at 20% while net borrowing according to the World Bank, sits at 4% as of 2016. According to a comprehensive report by United States Treasury in late 2014⁶³, the total

⁵⁷ World bank organization. Available from: <<http://www.worldbank.org>>.

⁵⁸ World bank organization. Available from: <<http://www.worldbank.org>>.

⁵⁹ World bank organization. Available from: <<http://www.worldbank.org>>.

⁶⁰ World bank organization. Available from: <<http://www.worldbank.org>>.

⁶¹ World bank organization. Available from: <<http://www.worldbank.org>>.

⁶² World bank organization. Available from: <<http://www.worldbank.org>>.

⁶³ United States Treasury and Bureau of Fiscal Service; Statement of Public Debt Report. Available from:

<<https://www.treasurydirect.gov>>.

public debt outstanding for the US sits at 17.824 trillion USD, of which 5.04 trillion USD of debt is held by governments and some 12.8 trillion USD in debt are held by the Public⁶⁴. Of the 12.8 trillion USD that's held by the public, some 6.06 trillion USD is held by foreigners, with the share of debt being held by foreign governments growing over time, according to the World Bank⁶⁵. However, although U.S. debt is substantial, the \$17.82 trillion USD national debt is still measurably lower than the countries massive \$19.36 trillion USD total GDP⁶⁶. Furthermore, the \$6.06 trillion USD in foreign debt makes up less than half of the total public debt at \$12.8 trillion USD, and just over one-third of US total debt valued at \$17.8 trillion USD according to the World Bank.⁶⁷

2.5 Systems of America - legal, education, healthcare systems, the role of family and religion

Legal System

The United States Court System at its core is similar to the British and Canadian systems that stem from English common law in its history⁶⁸. This means that although legislators in Congress determine the laws, it is up to the discretion of the justices in the courtroom to decide on the meaning of the legislation passed at the federal level⁶⁹. The structure of the American Court system breaks down into two separate sections, the U.S. Federal Court System and the U.S. State Court System. The courts under the U.S. State Court system are

⁶⁴ United States Treasury and Bureau of Fiscal Service; Statement of Public Debt Report. Available from: <https://www.treasurydirect.gov>.

⁶⁵ United States Treasury and Bureau of Fiscal Service; Statement of Public Debt Report. Available from: <https://www.treasurydirect.gov>.

⁶⁶ "IMF -- International Monetary Fund Home Page." IMF -- International Monetary Fund Home Page, www.imf.org/.

⁶⁷ United States Treasury and Bureau of Fiscal Service; Statement of Public Debt Report. Available from: <https://www.treasurydirect.gov>.

⁶⁸ William Burnham, Introduction to the Law and Legal System of the United States, 4th ed. St. Paul, MN: Thomson West, 2006.

⁶⁹ William Burnham, Introduction to the Law and Legal System of the United States, 4th ed. St. Paul, MN: Thomson West, 2006.

subject to the laws of each state, which can be very different from each others.⁷⁰ Generally speaking, unless federal laws and federal courts have jurisdiction over a matter, it is likely that the legal case will be decided by State Courts, and in accordance with State law⁷¹. But whereas US State Court systems may differ from each other and use different laws, the U.S. Federal Court system has a uniform set of standards and covers a wide range of topics in law ranging from Tax, to Bankruptcy, to all Federal Civil and Criminal legal issues.⁷² The Federal court system “operates separately from the executive and legislative branches, but often works with them as the Constitution requires”.⁷³ The power of the Federal Court System stems from the U.S. Constitution.⁷⁴ Generally, American Federal Courts have jurisdiction to “hear cases involving the constitutionality of a law, cases involving the laws and treaties of the U.S. ambassadors and public ministers, disputes between two or more states, admiralty law, also known as maritime law, and bankruptcy cases.” Federal Courts are separated into different tiers and sections. At highest court in the United States is the U.S. Supreme Court, created by Article III of the U.S. Constitution, which also “authorized Congress to pass laws establishing a system of lower courts”.⁷⁵ These lower courts include “94 district level trial courts and 13 courts of appeals”.⁷⁶ The 13 appellate courts are referred together as the U.S. Court of Appeals. These courts are established to hear appeals cases from the 94 district courts which are spread out across the 50 states of the USA.⁷⁷ These district courts are further split up into 12 regional legal circuits, which each have their own appellate court for cases which are on appeal from the lower courts. Each court amongst the Court of Appeals consists of three judges, and do not have a jury, this is because the Court of Appeals only focus on questions of law and do not consider questions of fact, which are considered by the Jury⁷⁸. The court “hears

⁷⁰ William Burnham, Introduction to the Law and Legal System of the United States, 4th ed. St. Paul, MN: Thomson West, 2006.

⁷¹ William Burnham, Introduction to the Law and Legal System of the United States, 4th ed. St. Paul, MN: Thomson West, 2006.

⁷² United States Federal Court system website: <www.uscourts.gov>.

⁷³ United States Federal Court system website: <www.uscourts.gov>.

⁷⁴ William Burnham, Introduction to the Law and Legal System of the United States, 4th ed. St. Paul, MN: Thomson West, 2006.

⁷⁵ United States Federal Court system website: <www.uscourts.gov>.

⁷⁶ United States Federal Court system website: <www.uscourts.gov> and

William Burnham, Introduction to the Law and Legal System of the United States, 4th ed. St. Paul, MN: Thomson West, 2006.

⁷⁷ United States Federal Court system website: <www.uscourts.gov>.

⁷⁸ United States Federal Court system website: <www.uscourts.gov> and William Burnham, Introduction to the Law and Legal System of the United States, 4th ed. St. Paul, MN: Thomson West, 2006.

challenges to district court decisions from courts located within its circuit, as well as appeals from decisions of federal administrative agencies... In addition, the Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit has nationwide jurisdiction to hear appeals in specialized cases, such as those involving patent laws, and cases decided by the U.S. Court of International Trade and the U.S. Court of Federal Claims”.⁷⁹ When it comes to matters that are determined by fact, the 94 district courts below the appellate court are able to resolve disputes with the aid of a jury (for fact-finding).⁸⁰ There is a minimum of one district court in each of the 50 States, furthermore, “each district includes a U.S. bankruptcy court as a unit of the district court”.⁸¹ Not only do the States have district courts, but some of the US territories are equipped with their own courts for federal matters, “Four territories of the United States have U.S. district courts that hear federal cases, including bankruptcy cases: Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, Guam, and the Northern Mariana Islands”.⁸²

There are also several specialty courts in the United States: The Court of International Trade “addresses cases involving international trade and customs laws”⁸³, and the U.S. Court of Federal Claims “deals with most claims for money damages against the U.S. government”.⁸⁴ Furthermore, US Federal courts “have exclusive jurisdiction over bankruptcy cases involving personal, business, or farm bankruptcy. This means a bankruptcy case cannot be filed in state court”.⁸⁵ When there are appeals to the decisions of the Bankruptcy Courts, the Bankruptcy Appellate Panels are called upon. They are “3-judge panels authorized to hear appeals of bankruptcy court decisions. These panels are a unit of the federal courts of appeals and must be established by that circuit”.⁸⁶ In addition to the specialty courts so far listed, there are article one courts, which are considered “legislative courts, that do not have full judicial power”⁸⁷ and do not have the judicial power to be “the final decider in all questions of

⁷⁹ United States Federal Court system website: <www.uscourts.gov>.

⁸⁰ United States Federal Court system website: <www.uscourts.gov>.

⁸¹ United States Federal Court system website: <www.uscourts.gov> and William Burnham, Introduction to the Law and Legal System of the United States, 4th ed. St. Paul, MN: Thomson West, 2006.

⁸² United States Federal Court system website: <www.uscourts.gov>.

⁸³ United States Federal Court system website: <www.uscourts.gov>.

⁸⁴ United States Federal Court system website: <www.uscourts.gov>.

⁸⁵ United States Federal Court system website: <www.uscourts.gov> and William Burnham, Introduction to the Law and Legal System of the United States, 4th ed. St. Paul, MN: Thomson West, 2006.

⁸⁶ United States Federal Court system website: <www.uscourts.gov>.

⁸⁷ United States Federal Court system website: <www.uscourts.gov>.

Constitutional law, all questions of federal law and to hear claims at the core of habeas corpus issues”.⁸⁸ And yet, these courts are empowered by Congress under Article 1 to make decisions on how certain cases are treated under federal statute. These courts include: the U.S. Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Armed Forces, and the U.S. Tax Court. The U.S. Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims was created by President Reagan, who “signed into law the Veterans' Judicial Review Act (Pub. L. No. 100-687), which established as a court of record the United States Court of Veterans Appeals”.⁸⁹ The court primarily reviews appeals of U.S. Military Veterans who believe that there was an error in the treatment of their claims. The United States Court of Appeals for the Armed Forces deals specifically with cases involving military personnel, describing itself as a court that “exercises worldwide appellate jurisdiction over members of the armed forces on active duty and other persons subject to the Uniform Code of Military Justice”.⁹⁰ Finally, the United States Court of International Trade was created with the Customs Courts Act of 1980, from which Congress “equipped the federal judicial system to deal effectively and efficiently with the complex problems arising from international trade litigation”.⁹¹

Education System

The United States education system is both the largest and wealthiest in the world, with an estimated budget of \$634 billion USD spent among public elementary and secondary schools between 2013 and 2014 according to the National Center for Educational Statistics. Divided across the student population of the US, this means that America spends as \$11,222 USD per student at the elementary and secondary school level, which is well above the \$9,313 USD spending per person that represents the average of nations measured by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). These numbers reference the public education system up until grade twelve, commonly referred to as “K through 12” or “K-12” education in the United States. K-12 education represents the grades between Kindergarten –

⁸⁸ United States Federal Court system website: <www.uscourts.gov>.

⁸⁹ United States Federal Court system website: <www.uscourts.gov>, and <<http://www.uscourts.cavc.gov/>>.

⁹⁰ United States Federal Court system website: <www.uscourts.gov>, and <<http://www.armfor.uscourts.gov/newcaaf/home.htm>>.

⁹¹ United States Federal Court system website: <www.uscourts.gov>, and <<https://www.cit.uscourts.gov/>>.

which is the first year that children attend school up until the last year of American high school, which ends at the 12th grade. After Kindergarten, students attend elementary school (grades 1-4), followed by middle school (grades 5-8), before they finally arrive at high school (grades 9-12). Graduating high school represents the end of American public education at the primary and secondary levels. Research by the OECD has suggested that once the public and private sector education spending is combined, total US spending on education exceeds \$1 trillion USD and ranks number one in the world. However, despite spending so much money on education, the United States routinely ranks behind less wealthy nations in global education quality studies and reports. According to studies done by the Economist and Pearson's Economic Intelligence Unit, the United States is rated outside the top 10 in education quality, below nations that spend significantly less on education such as Russia and Poland.⁹² The OECD ranks the United States even lower according to their most recent study on the subject entitled the "Program for International Student Assessment".⁹³ In the study, the OECD ranked the American students 40th in math, and 24th in Science and Reading. The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) ranks the United States mathematics literacy score (amongst 15-year-old students in the USA) below the global average of 15-year-old students for OECD countries.⁹⁴ The Slovak Republic, which is amongst the lowest spenders on education (in both total spending and spending per student), ranks higher than the United States in mathematics literacy according to the OECD and NCES, despite the astronomical spending of America on its education system.⁹⁵

⁹² Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), website: <<http://www.oecd.org/unitedstates/>>, United States department of education, website: <<https://www.ed.gov/>>, and <<http://thelearningcurve.pearson.com/index/index-ranking/overall-score-highest>>.

⁹³ National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) Home Page, a Part of the U.S. Department of Education. Available from: <nces.ed.gov/>, and Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), website: <<http://www.oecd.org/unitedstates/>>.

⁹⁴ National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) Home Page, a Part of the U.S. Department of Education. Available from: <nces.ed.gov/>, and Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), website: <<http://www.oecd.org/unitedstates/>>.

⁹⁵ National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) Home Page, a Part of the U.S. Department of Education. Available from: <nces.ed.gov/>, and Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), website: <<http://www.oecd.org/unitedstates/>>.

Healthcare

Similar to the US Education system, the US healthcare system is also one that spends the most money, without necessarily getting the best results. The World Health Organization finds that the United States spends more on healthcare than any other country in the world. Generally, the US leads or is amongst the highest spenders when evaluated in total, per capita, and spending as a percentage of GDP. In a study published in the American Journal of Public Health⁹⁶, US government spending accounts for roughly 64% of total healthcare spending in the country. These government programs that represent the majority of the spending include Medicare⁹⁷ (for people aged 65 or older), Medicaid (for individuals who qualify based on disability, family status, and low income), the Children's Health Insurance Program (available as low-cost health coverage for children from families that cannot afford proper healthcare), and the Veterans Health Administration (medical coverage for retired US soldiers). Despite such significant spending from both the public and private sectors for healthcare, the United States life expectancy numbers ranks 43rd in the world, according to the CIA world factbook.⁹⁸ Obesity is a major concern in the United States, especially amongst US children. As of 2005, the "prevalence of obesity among adolescents aged 12-17 was more than twice the OECD mean (Viner, 2012). By 2011, 35.9 percent of girls and 35.0 percent of boys aged 5-17 were overweight or obese in the United States, the highest rate among the 17 peer countries (OECD, 2011b)".⁹⁹ The prevalence of obesity has caused a major rise in illnesses. For example, "The rise in childhood diabetes has mirrored the increase in obesity". When compared to other peer countries amongst the OECD developed nations, the United States "had the fifth highest prevalence of diabetes among children ages 0-14, led only by Finland, Norway, Sweden, and the United Kingdom (OECD, 2011b). U.S. children also appear to be experiencing higher

⁹⁶ The American Public Health Association, website: <www.apha.org>, and <<http://ajph.aphapublications.org/doi/abs/10.2105/AJPH.2015.302997>>.

⁹⁷ The American Public Health Association, website: <www.apha.org>, and <<http://ajph.aphapublications.org/doi/abs/10.2105/AJPH.2015.302997>>.

⁹⁸ The World Factbook: United States Central Intelligence Agency, Central Intelligence Agency, 4 Jan. 2018, Available from: <<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/us.html>>.

⁹⁹ National Academic Press, website: <<https://www.nap.edu>>; U.S. Health in International Perspective, Shorter Lives, Poorer Health, Steven H. Woolf and Laudon Aaron, website: <<https://www.nap.edu/read/13497/chapter/1>>.

rates of other chronic illnesses”.¹⁰⁰ These issues show up for a number of diseases, including health concerns such as asthma, where “children and adolescents was significantly higher in the United States than in England”.¹⁰¹ This issue continues onto adulthood as unhealthy diets and obesity begin to manifest major concerns for the cardiovascular health of older adults. According to the NAP study, “Research also shows that U.S. adults aged 50 and older have a higher prevalence of cardiovascular and other chronic diseases. Comparing the results of national population surveys in the United States and England, one of the first studies of this issue found that U.S. adults aged 55-64 reported higher rates of diabetes, hypertension, heart disease, myocardial infarction, stroke, lung disease, and cancer”.¹⁰² But these concerns are not just limited to cardiovascular issues. It spills over to health issues in many other areas as well.¹⁰³ According to the national academic press, numerous studies have all come to the conclusion that “older Americans have higher rates of disease than Europeans. In one study that compared U.S. adults age 50 and older with those in 10 European countries, the United States had a higher prevalence of heart disease, hypertension, high cholesterol, cerebrovascular disease, diabetes, chronic lung disease, asthma, arthritis, and cancer”.¹⁰⁴ All these concerns with obesity and chronic diseases have not been fixed despite the enormous amount of money that the United States has spent on healthcare. According to the World Health Organization, the US spends \$7,146 per capita in healthcare, and its total healthcare expenditures (public and private sectors combined) has reached as high as 17.1% of total GDP, with personal healthcare expenditures amounting to \$2.6 trillion USD.¹⁰⁵ These numbers

¹⁰⁰ National Academic Press, website: <<https://www.nap.edu>>; U.S. Health in International Perspective, Shorter Lives, Poorer Health, Steven H. Woolf and Laudon Aaron, website: <<https://www.nap.edu/read/13497/chapter/1>>.

¹⁰¹ National Academic Press, website: <<https://www.nap.edu>>; U.S. Health in International Perspective, Shorter Lives, Poorer Health, Steven H. Woolf and Laudon Aaron, website: <<https://www.nap.edu/read/13497/chapter/1>>.

¹⁰² National Academic Press, website: <<https://www.nap.edu>>; U.S. Health in International Perspective, Shorter Lives, Poorer Health, Steven H. Woolf and Laudon Aaron, website: <<https://www.nap.edu/read/13497/chapter/1>>.

¹⁰³ National Academic Press, website: <<https://www.nap.edu>>; U.S. Health in International Perspective, Shorter Lives, Poorer Health, Steven H. Woolf and Laudon Aaron, website: <<https://www.nap.edu/read/13497/chapter/1>>.

¹⁰⁴ National Academic Press, website: <<https://www.nap.edu>>; U.S. Health in International Perspective, Shorter Lives, Poorer Health, Steven H. Woolf and Laudon Aaron, website: <<https://www.nap.edu/read/13497/chapter/1>>.

¹⁰⁵ World Health Organization, website: <<http://www.who.int/en/>>.

are far and away the highest in the world, dwarfing the next highest spender as a percentage of GDP – France at only 11.6%.¹⁰⁶

Religion

American immigrants have brought many other religions to the US, the nation had a Christian majority for much of its history.¹⁰⁷ Therefore, American traditions are heavily tied to the practices that were popular amongst Puritans from the earliest periods of American history. Even today, according to the Pew Research Center, 70.6% of Americans still identify as Christians. Protestant Christians are the largest segment of Christians in the US and they self-identify as part of three main sets of believers (according to surveys) – Evangelical Protestants, Mainline Protestants, and Black Protestants. The largest the three groups are the Evangelical Protestants, which make up 25.4% of the population, while Mainline Protestants represent 14.7% of the population, and Black Protestants make up 6.5% of the US population. Catholic Americans represent 20.8% of the total population, with the remaining Christians making up a very small amount of Americans, including Mormons (1.6%), Orthodox Christians (0.5%), and Jehovah's Witness Christians (0.8%). Non-Christian faiths in the United States make up a total of only 5.9% of the population, with the largest groups being Jews (1.9%) and Muslims (0.9%). Hindus and Buddhists each make up 0.7% of the population, and the rest of the world faiths combined make up only 0.3% of the population. Finally, individuals who don't identify as religious make up 22.8% of the population, with atheists making up 3.1% of the population, agnostics making up 4% of the population, and individuals who simply don't identify as believing in anything, in particular, are making up 15.8% of the US population.¹⁰⁸ Although the United States has been predominantly Christian through its history, it has been a secular nation, separating the Church and State in its

¹⁰⁶ World Health Organization, website: <<http://www.who.int/en/>>.

¹⁰⁷ PEW Research Center, website: <http://www.pewforum.org/>, including America's Changing religious landscape: <<http://www.pewforum.org/2015/05/12/americas-changing-religious-landscape/>>; social trends linked at: <<http://www.pewsocialtrends.org/2015/12/17/1-the-american-family-today/>>; The Journal of Economic History. Website: <<https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/journal-of-economic-history>>.

¹⁰⁸ PEW Research Center, website: <<http://www.pewforum.org/>>, including America's Changing religious landscape: <<http://www.pewforum.org/2015/05/12/americas-changing-religious-landscape/>>; social trends linked at: <<http://www.pewsocialtrends.org/2015/12/17/1-the-american-family-today/>>.

constitution. Furthermore, as time has passed, one of the fastest growing segments of the American population is the atheists and agnostics.¹⁰⁹

Role of family

Over time, people are getting married later, and children are being raised in different environments than they were many years ago. The US Census Bureau has shown that the median age of women getting married has increased by 4.3 years from 25.1 years in 1970 to 29.4 years today, the increase for men was 3.6 years in the same time span.¹¹⁰ American children are being raised in a very different environment than years ago as well. In 1960, 73% of American children grew up with two parents in their first marriage, whereas that number declined to 61% by 1980 and 46% by 2014.¹¹¹ The amount of single-parent families has gone up from 9% in 1960 to 19% in 1980 and up to 26% today. Another change has been the number of interracial marriages, as Americans have begun to cross the color barrier with more frequency, and as a result, Interracial marriages have gone up from 3% in 1967 to 17% in 2015.¹¹² While on the topic of interracial marriages it is important to briefly consider the racial history of the US.

¹⁰⁹ PEW Research Center, website: <<http://www.pewforum.org/>>, including America's Changing religious landscape: <<http://www.pewforum.org/2015/05/12/americas-changing-religious-landscape/>>; social trends linked at: <<http://www.pewsocialtrends.org/2015/12/17/1-the-american-family-today/>>; The Journal of Economic History. Website: <<https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/journal-of-economic-history>>.

¹¹⁰ US Census Bureau, website: <<https://www.census.gov/topics/families/marriage-and-divorce.html>>.

¹¹¹ US Census Bureau, website: <<https://www.census.gov/topics/families/marriage-and-divorce.html>>; PEW Research Center, website: <<http://www.pewforum.org/>>, including America's Changing religious landscape: <<http://www.pewforum.org/2015/05/12/americas-changing-religious-landscape/>>; social trends linked at: <<http://www.pewsocialtrends.org/2015/12/17/1-the-american-family-today/>>.

¹¹² US Census Bureau, website: <<https://www.census.gov/topics/families/marriage-and-divorce.html>>; PEW Research Center, website: <<http://www.pewforum.org/>>, including America's Changing religious landscape: <<http://www.pewforum.org/2015/05/12/americas-changing-religious-landscape/>>; social trends linked at: <<http://www.pewsocialtrends.org/2015/12/17/1-the-american-family-today/>>.

2.6 American identity, key values, traditions

America's modern traditions are heavily rooted in its history, with the Independence Day marking a celebration of America's independence as outlined above.¹¹³ Thanksgiving, one of the largest holidays on the American calendar also comes from American history, where it began as the day to give thanks for the agricultural harvest of farmers. Today, Thanksgiving is a day for Americans to return to their families and give thanks. Thanksgiving was celebrated and adopted as a major part of the American tradition by the early colonists along with Christmas and Easter to form the core American celebrations that would last to this day.¹¹⁴ One of that these holidays have held as core American staples throughout the country's history is because of their early adoption by the English Puritans and Reformed Protestant Christians that first came to the New World.¹¹⁵

Some would argue that this trend is one of the causes of the changes in traditional family structure and values in America.

Although the US is ethnically diverse, with Black Americans making up 13.3% of the US population, Hispanics making up 17.8% of the population, and Asians making up 5.6% of the population; the predominantly white population (over 70% today) has historically had major racial tensions with minorities – especially with Black Americans.¹¹⁶ Major tensions that relate back to the history of slave trade in the United States which ranged between the 1790s to the 1850s, culminating in the divisive American Civil War, which was the bloodiest war in American History. Northern and Southern states aligned against each other in a fight related both states rights and slavery. But even after slaves were liberated by the emancipation

¹¹³ Pestana, Carla Gardina (2004). *The English Atlantic in an Age of Revolution: 1640–1661*. Cambridge, Massachusetts and London, England: Harvard University Press; Holmes, David L. (May 1, 2006). "The Faiths of the Founding Fathers". Oxford University Press; *The Journal of Economic History*. Website: <<https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/journal-of-economic-history>>.

¹¹⁴ "The first Thanksgiving". The Virginia Historical Society. Virginia Museum of History & Culture, available at: www.vahistorical.org/read-watch-listen/video-and-audio/first-thanksgiving.

¹¹⁵ Holmes, David L. (May 1, 2006). "The Faiths of the Founding Fathers". Oxford University Press; *The Journal of Economic History*. Website: <<https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/journal-of-economic-history>>.

¹¹⁶ US Census Bureau, website: <<https://www.census.gov/topics/families/marriage-and-divorce.html>>;

PEW Research Center, website: <<http://www.pewforum.org/>>, including America's Changing religious landscape:

<<http://www.pewforum.org/2015/05/12/americas-changing-religious-landscape/>>; social trends linked at:

<<http://www.pewsocialtrends.org/2015/12/17/1-the-american-family-today/>>.

proclamation of 1863, African Americans were still treated unequally.¹¹⁷ Segregation separated black and white schools and was upheld as constitutional under the controversial court case Plessy v. Ferguson, by the United States Supreme Court in 1896.¹¹⁸ It wasn't until 1954 that the United States Supreme Court finally struck down the older decision by declaring the famous words "separate educational facilities are inherently unequal".¹¹⁹ After the hard work of many great historical figures throughout the Civil Rights Era, including Martin Luther King and Rosa Parks, the US is more welcoming of different races than it was in its troubled past. However, there is still much racial tension today and often times in the United States, government policies are designed to segment off Black Americans and minorities towards less desirable areas in a practice called "gentrification". Nicer parts of American suburbs and cities are constantly using city ordinances and local laws to keep areas free of minorities that some Americans still consider undesirable, and thus, much work remains to be done as America tries to build a better tomorrow.¹²⁰

¹¹⁷ Walton Jr, Hanes; Puckett, Sherman C.; Deskins, Donald R., eds. *The African American Electorate: A Statistical History*. I Chap. 4. CQ Press. 2012.

¹¹⁸ Federal Writers Project, *Florida. A Guide to the Southernmost State*, New York: Oxford University Press. 1939.

¹¹⁹ Keppel, Ben. *Brown v. Board and the Transformation of American Culture*. LSU Press, 2016.

¹²⁰ Organization of American historians, website: <<http://www.jstor.org/stable/2567750>>; Robert F. Williams, "Black Power," and the Roots of the African American Freedom Struggle. Available from: <<http://history.msu.edu/files/2010/04/Timothy-Tyson.pdf>>.

Chapter 3

China

3.1 Geography

China is one of the largest countries in the world, bordering 14 different countries including Afghanistan, Bhutan, Burma, India, Kazakhstan, North Korea, Kyrgyzstan, Laos, Mongolia, Nepal, Pakistan, Russia, Russia, Tajikistan, and Vietnam. According to the CIA Factbook, China's total area encompasses 9,596,960 square kilometers, with a land area of 9,326,410 square kilometers, and water territory of 270,550 square kilometers. China's terrain is extremely diverse with vast swaths of forested areas, tropical areas, plains, river deltas, plateaus, hills, and extremely mountainous areas as well.¹²¹ Over half (54.7%) of China's land is used for Agriculture, while forests make up 22.3% of the total land area. The vast majority of the population in China is "found in the eastern half of the country; the west, with its vast mountainous and desert areas, remains sparsely populated; though ranked first in the world in total population, overall density is less than that of many other countries in Asia and Europe; high population density is found along the Yangtze and Yellow River valleys, the Xi Jiang River delta, the Sichuan Basin (around Chengdu), in and around Beijing, and the industrial area around Shenyang".¹²² Due to the vast amounts of production coming out of China, there have been major environmental issues including "air pollution (greenhouse gases, sulfur dioxide particulates) from reliance on coal produces acid rain; China is the world's largest single emitter of carbon dioxide from the burning of fossil fuels; water shortages, particularly in the north; water pollution from untreated wastes; coastal destruction due to land reclamation, industrial development, and aquaculture; deforestation and habitat destruction; poor land management leads to soil erosion, landslides, floods, droughts, dust storms, and desertification".¹²³

¹²¹ The World Factbook: CHINA." Central Intelligence Agency, Central Intelligence Agency, 4 Jan. 2018. Available from: www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ch.html.

¹²² The World Factbook: CHINA." Central Intelligence Agency, Central Intelligence Agency, 4 Jan. 2018. Available from: www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ch.html.

¹²³ The World Factbook: CHINA." Central Intelligence Agency, Central Intelligence Agency, 4 Jan. 2018. Available from: www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ch.html.

3.2 History

Chinese history is one of the oldest histories in the world. Thus it is impossible to cover all the important historical events in the short version. I will try to highlight just the most important events. Chinese history starts with **Xia dynasty** (2200- 1700 BCE), founded by Emperor Yu.¹²⁴ Xia dynasty was defeated by **Shang dynasty** (1600-1046 BCE), during which was founded first divination record on the bones or shells of animals- the so-called oracle bones.¹²⁵ A new concept of the Mandate of Heaven to legitimize the rules was invoked by the king of Zhou during the **Zhou dynasty** (1122-256 BCE).¹²⁶ Qin Shi Huangdi, well-known for the tomb complex in Xian, which houses the army of terracotta warriors, was a founder of the **Qin Dynasty** in 221 BCE. After the conquest of neighboring city-states and unification of China, he ascended the throne.¹²⁷ Opening trade between China and West, so-called Silk Road, was during the **Han Dynasty** in 202 BCE. Next era was called “Three Kingdoms”- **Wei, Shu, and Wu**. Wei kings united China once more. Wei general Yang Jian founded The Sui Dynasty, during which was founded the governmental, legal, and social framework.¹²⁸ The following **Dynasty of Tang** was ruled from 618 to 907 CE. It was prosperity of Chinese art and culture, establishment and adoption of Buddhism during this dynasty.¹²⁹

The Yuan Dynasty(1271-1368) was established by the Mongolian ruler Kublai Khan. Marco Polo went to China and for the first time introduces Chinese marvels to Europe.¹³⁰ The Mongols conquered different ethnic groups including Han Chinese. Ultimately, the ethnic-Han Ming dethroned Mongols.¹³¹

¹²⁴ Szczepanski, Kallie. "People's Republic of China | Facts and History." ThoughtCo, Jun. 13, 2017. Available from: <thoughtco.com/peoples-republic-of-china-facts-history-195233>.

¹²⁵ Bočánková, Milena. *Intercultural Communication: Typical Features of the Czech, British, American, Japanese, Chinese and Arab Cultures*. Oeconomica, 2010,p 126.

¹²⁶ Bočánková, Milena. *Intercultural Communication: Typical Features of the Czech, British, American, Japanese, Chinese and Arab Cultures*. Oeconomica, 2010,p 126.

¹²⁷ Szczepanski, Kallie. "People's Republic of China | Facts and History." ThoughtCo, Jun. 13, 2017. Available from: <thoughtco.com/peoples-republic-of-china-facts-history-195233>.

¹²⁸ Szczepanski, Kallie. "People's Republic of China | Facts and History." ThoughtCo, Jun. 13, 2017. Available from: <thoughtco.com/peoples-republic-of-china-facts-history-195233>.

¹²⁹ Bočánková, Milena. *Intercultural Communication: Typical Features of the Czech, British, American, Japanese, Chinese and Arab Cultures*. Oeconomica, 2010,p 126.

¹³⁰ Bočánková, Milena. *Intercultural Communication: Typical Features of the Czech, British, American, Japanese, Chinese and Arab Cultures*. Oeconomica, 2010,p 127.

¹³¹ Szczepanski, Kallie. "People's Republic of China | Facts and History." ThoughtCo, Jun. 13, 2017. Available from: <thoughtco.com/peoples-republic-of-china-facts-history-195233>.

Chinese prosperity appears again during **the Ming Dynasty** (1368-1644), as well as the creation of art and exploration as far as Africa.¹³² The last Chinese Dynasty- **Qing** was ruled from 1644 to 1911. The Chinese Civil War broke out and was interrupted by Japanese invasion and World War Two. Civil war continued after defeating of Japan. The winners of Chinese Civil War were Mao Zedong and the Communist Peoples Liberation Army. In 1949 China received a new name- The People's Republic of China. Chiang Kai Shek, leader of the losing Nationalist forces, fled to Taiwan.¹³³

3.3 Language

For a country of such size, China is fairly homogenous in language, with the principal official language of China being Mandarin Chinese.¹³⁴ Although there are technically immigrant languages in China, they are minor in the count with only 5000 speakers of Parsi, and 5000 speakers of Spanish. The total number of individual languages in China is 299, with all of them being living languages that have not yet died off. There are 275 indigenous languages and 24 nonindigenous, 23 developing languages, 104 that are “vigorous”, 125 that are “in trouble”, and 32 languages that are dying. The 275 indigenous languages ranging from Achang to Zaiwa, are too many to list, with their numerous dialectic variations.¹³⁵

3.4 Economic situation

China today uses mostly a centrally planned economy under the ruling CCP, however, they are flexible in using a more market-oriented approach as the country's economy plays a major part of global trade. The country has “implemented reforms in a gradualist fashion, resulting in efficiency gains that have contributed to a more than tenfold increase in GDP since 1978”.

¹³² Szczepanski, Kallie. "People's Republic of China | Facts and History." ThoughtCo, Jun. 13, 2017. Available from: <thoughtco.com/peoples-republic-of-china-facts-history-195233>.

¹³³ Szczepanski, Kallie. "People's Republic of China | Facts and History." ThoughtCo, Jun. 13, 2017. Available from: <thoughtco.com/peoples-republic-of-china-facts-history-195233>.

¹³⁴ Grimes, Barbara F, Joseph E. Grimes, and Richard S. Pittman. Ethnologue: Languages of the World. Dallas, Tex: Summer Institute of Linguistics, 1999. Available from: <www.ethnologue.com>.

¹³⁵ Grimes, Barbara F, Joseph E. Grimes, and Richard S. Pittman. Ethnologue: Languages of the World. Dallas, Tex: Summer Institute of Linguistics, 1999. Available from: <www.ethnologue.com>.

These “major reforms” came in the form of phasing out agriculture and taking efforts that “expanded to include the gradual liberalization of prices, fiscal decentralization, increased autonomy for state enterprises, growth of the private sector, development of stock markets and a modern banking system, and opening to foreign trade and investment”.¹³⁶ All these changes have resulted in China stands as the largest economy in the world based on purchasing power parity, having surpassed the United States for the first time in 2014, which had dominated for nearly all of modern history. China is also the world’s largest exporter and trading nation, having taken over those titles in 2010 and 2013, respectively. And yet, with all these changes and improvements, due to its vast population, “Still, China's per capita income is below the world average”. Truly, due to having the largest population in the world, China has many challenges moving forward, including¹³⁷:

- “(a) reducing it is high domestic savings rate and correspondingly low domestic household consumption;
- (b) managing its high corporate debt burden to maintain financial stability;
- (c) controlling off-balance sheet local government debt used to finance infrastructure stimulus;
- (d) facilitating higher-wage job opportunities for the aspiring middle class, including rural migrants and college graduates, while maintaining competitiveness;
- (e) dampening speculative investment in the real estate sector without sharply slowing the economy;
- (f) reducing industrial overcapacity;
- (g) raising productivity growth rates through the more efficient allocation of capital and state-support for innovation.”¹³⁸

These challenges are difficult, but not impossible for a country that has already overcome so much to reach a GDP of \$23.12 trillion (PPP based in 2017, GDP through official exchange rate was \$11.94 trillion in 2016¹³⁹). Going forward, the CCP has announced their “13th Five-Year Plan, unveiled in March 2016”, which “emphasizes the need to increase innovation and

¹³⁶ The World Factbook: CHINA.” Central Intelligence Agency, Central Intelligence Agency, 4 Jan. 2018. Available from: www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ch.html.

¹³⁷ The World Factbook: CHINA.” Central Intelligence Agency, Central Intelligence Agency, 4 Jan. 2018. Available from: www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ch.html.

¹³⁸ The World Factbook: CHINA.” Central Intelligence Agency, Central Intelligence Agency, 4 Jan. 2018. Available from: www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ch.html.

¹³⁹ The World Factbook: CHINA.” Central Intelligence Agency, Central Intelligence Agency, 4 Jan. 2018. Available from: www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ch.html.

boost domestic consumption to make the economy less dependent on government investment, exports, and heavy industry”¹⁴⁰. However, whether or not China can achieve all these goals and more remains to be seen.

3.5 Systems of China - legal, education, healthcare systems, the role of family and religion

The Legal System in China

Laws in China are adjudicated by the People’s Court System of China¹⁴¹. At the very top of the People’s Court System of China is the Supreme People’s Court. The Supreme People’s court has the final decision on all questions regarding the law in China¹⁴². Underneath the Supreme People’s court, are the Local People’s Courts and the Special People’s Courts. General disputes are governed by the Local’s People’s Court system which has four levels including “the grassroots, intermediate, higher and supreme people’s courts”¹⁴³. The Special People’s Courts include “military, maritime, railway and forestry courts”¹⁴⁴. Together, these courts form China’s “socialist legal system”, which was first adopted in 1982 and adjudicates cases that are governed by the nation’s laws including its constitution, the statutory law, and international treaties¹⁴⁵. According to briefs on the Harvard Legal Research Center¹⁴⁶, China’s constitution provides that all the legal power is in the National People’s Congress, which supervises the Supreme People’s Court, the State Council (the executive branch of the government), and the Supreme People’s Procuratorate. Although the socialist legal system is different from many western systems (such as the English common law system)¹⁴⁷, the Supreme People’s Court has the power to issue judicial interpretations, which grants interpretive power to the judicial branch in a similar fashion to what is allowed by western

¹⁴⁰ The World Factbook: CHINA.” Central Intelligence Agency, Central Intelligence Agency, 4 Jan. 2018. Available from: <www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ch.html>.

¹⁴¹ Website of People’s Republic of China: <<http://english.gov.cn>>.

¹⁴² Website of People’s Republic of China: <<http://english.gov.cn>>.

¹⁴³ Law Library of Congress, website: <<http://www.loc.gov/law/help/legal-research-guide/china.php>>.

¹⁴⁴ Law Library of Congress, website: <<http://www.loc.gov/law/help/legal-research-guide/china.php>>.

¹⁴⁵ Law Library of Congress, website: <<http://www.loc.gov/law/help/legal-research-guide/china.php>>.

¹⁴⁶ Harvard legal Research Center: Guide to China’s Judicial System, website: <https://guides.library.harvard.edu/chineselegalresearch>

¹⁴⁷ Harvard legal Research Center: Guide to China’s Judicial System, website: <https://guides.library.harvard.edu/chineselegalresearch>

governments. However, unlike the powerful judicial branch of a western country such as the US, China's Supreme People's Court doesn't have the power to declare a law invalid due to a violation of China's constitution¹⁴⁸. Instead, courts only have the jurisdiction to interpret the law and evaluate the legality of administrative conduct in accordance with the nation's legislation. Furthermore, China's court system is managed by the Political-Legal Committee of the Communist Party, which is subordinate to the Central Leading Group for Comprehensively Deepening reforms – a group led by China's president, Xi Jinping¹⁴⁹. This means that China's court system, however powerful, is not separated from the influence of its executive branch, in contrast to the separation of powers which is seen in the west. In other words, the structure of China's legal system and the government allows its current president Xi Jinping control over not just the communist party and executive branch, but also of China's court system¹⁵⁰.

Healthcare and Education in China

Healthcare and Education in China are primarily paid for and controlled by the central government. China's adult literacy rate sits at a very high 90.9%. The high literacy rate is due in part to its education system with an enrollment rate of 69.1% for primary, tertiary, and secondary education institutions.¹⁵¹

When it comes to China's health care, the life expectancy at birth as of 2005 is 72.5 years old for a life expectancy index of .792, according to the Human Development Report. HIV prevalence is very low, with only .1% of the population reporting having the disease amongst individuals aged 15 to 49 years old. The 5-year mortality rate per 1000 births is also very low

¹⁴⁸ Harvard legal Research Center: Guide to China's Judicial System, website: <https://guides.library.harvard.edu/chineselegalresearch>

¹⁴⁹ A Brief Introduction to the Chinese Judicial System and Court Hierarchy, Asian Law Centre, Yifan Wang, Sarah Biddulph, and Andrew Godwin, 2017. Available from: http://law.unimelb.edu.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0004/2380684/ALC-Briefing-Paper-6-Wang,-Biddulph,-Godwin_5.pdf

¹⁵⁰ A Brief Introduction to the Chinese Judicial System and Court Hierarchy, Asian Law Centre, Yifan Wang, Sarah Biddulph, and Andrew Godwin, 2017. Available from: http://law.unimelb.edu.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0004/2380684/ALC-Briefing-Paper-6-Wang,-Biddulph,-Godwin_5.pdf.

¹⁵¹ "IMF -- International Monetary Fund Home Page." IMF -- International Monetary Fund Home Page, <www.imf.org/>; World Health Organization, website: <http://www.who.int/en/>; United Nations Human Development Report, website at: https://web.archive.org/web/20090303135527/http://hdrstats.undp.org:80/countries/data_sheets/cty_ds_CHN.html> .

at only 27 deaths.¹⁵² The Fertility rate is fairly high for a developed country at 1.7 births per woman. For a country with such a high population, China is impressively able to provide access to an improved water source for 77% of its population of 1.312 billion people. Health expenditure as a percentage of GDP is 1.8% in the public sector and 2.9% in the private sector, however, it's important to note that in China's command economy the two sectors are heavily intertwined. Spending per capita in China is only \$277 dollars, which is very low for a developed country.¹⁵³ Despite these issues, China is able to immunize 86% of its children (1 years old) against tuberculosis and measles and provide contraception to 87% of its population.

Role of family

The family is one of the most important things in life for Chinese. The family for Chinese means support, love, security, loyalty, trust, dedication, fidelity, the family will never make you "lose face". As China is a collectivistic country, family is broadened. It is consist of not just family members, but also grandparents, in-laws, all relatives that live in the same place. In China, children must respect elders according to filial piety (Confucian philosophy). According to Confucius, people must respect elders, children are responsible to their parents, parents to grandparents, and all people to the government, the government should be good to people, follow moral norms, and be fair to folk. Children should take care of their parents once they are retired. The support should be moral, physical and financial as the government does not provide pensions.¹⁵⁴ Through the history, China was for a long time an Agrarian society. In agrarian society, people need help to work on the land. The help was children, especially boys, due to man's skills to work on the land. That is one of the reasons of big population.

¹⁵² "IMF -- International Monetary Fund Home Page." IMF -- International Monetary Fund Home Page, <www.imf.org/>; World Health Organization, website: <http://www.who.int/en/>; United Nations Human Development Report, website at: <https://web.archive.org/web/20090303135527/http://hdrstats.undp.org:80/countries/data_sheets/cty_ds_CHN.html>.

¹⁵³ "IMF -- International Monetary Fund Home Page." IMF -- International Monetary Fund Home Page, <www.imf.org/>; World Health Organization, website: <http://www.who.int/en/>; United Nations Human Development Report, website at: <https://web.archive.org/web/20090303135527/http://hdrstats.undp.org:80/countries/data_sheets/cty_ds_CHN.html>.

¹⁵⁴ Bočánková, Milena. *Intercultural Communication: Typical Features of the Czech, British, American, Japanese, Chinese and Arab Cultures*. Oeconomica, 2010, p 127.

Nowadays, the relationship between family members changing but very slowly due to economic growth, education, and western influence.

Religion

During the so-called Golden Age of Chinese thought, the way how to behave and think was provided by two religions: Confucianism and Taoism. After the Communist revolution, religions were not practiced anymore. Communism became another “religion”. During the history China practiced a lot of different religions, nowadays Chinese are all of the religions and none of them. They worship and respect the god, which helps them, and at the same time keeping the distance. If a god does not help, they simply find another one.¹⁵⁵

The most common religions are following:

- 1) **Taoism** sought to promote the inner peace of individuals and harmony with their surroundings. In the Chinese language, the word “Tao” means “way”, indicating a way of thought or life. The Tao is considered unnamed and unknowable the essential unifying elements of all that is. Because all is one, matters of good and evil and of true or false, as well as differing opinions, can only arise when people lose sight of the oneness and think that their private beliefs are absolutely true. Because all is one life and death merge into each other do the seasons of the year. They are not opposite to each other. They are part of one whole.¹⁵⁶
- 2) **Confucianism** is a philosophy, religion, lifestyle and ideology that was developed by Confucius, who contributed to the construction of society. He defined five main characteristics of a noble person such as justice, humanity, discretion and sincerity, reverence for parents and ruler. These five main features build harmonious and high moral society, stable government. All of his teachings were based on morality, ethics, life principles of human-human interaction.¹⁵⁷ And I would like to finish this topic with

¹⁵⁵ Bočánková, Milena. *Intercultural Communication: Typical Features of the Czech, British, American, Japanese, Chinese and Arab Cultures*. Oeconomica, 2010, p 121.

¹⁵⁶ Bočánková, Milena. *Intercultural Communication: Typical Features of the Czech, British, American, Japanese, Chinese and Arab Cultures*. Oeconomica, 2010, p 119.

¹⁵⁷ Bočánková, Milena. *Intercultural Communication: Typical Features of the Czech, British, American, Japanese, Chinese and Arab Cultures*. Oeconomica, 2010, p 119-120.

me of my favorite quote of Confucius: “A nobleman sort of man emphasizes the good qualities in others, and does not accentuate the bad. The inferior does.”

- 3) **Buddhism** is a religion, which came to China from India at the first AD.¹⁵⁸ It can be called a philosophy, lifestyle, and dharma. Buddha Shakyamuni, the creator of the doctrine of Buddhism, claimed that the reason of the suffering of people is themselves, which appears from the attachments to the material values, our nescience. In order to prevent suffering (rich the nirvana), it is necessary to follow five precepts and meditate.¹⁵⁹ Five precepts are following:
1. Avoid killing or harming any living being.
 2. Avoid stealing. Do not take what is not yours to take.
 3. Avoid sexual irresponsibility.
 4. Avoid lying or any hurtful speech.
 5. Avoid alcohol and drugs which diminish the clarity of consciousness.¹⁶⁰
- 4) **Christian** missionaries appeared in China since Roman Catholic belonging to Jesuit order arrived in the early 17th century. Protestant missionaries arrived in the 19th century due to Christianity was perceived by the Chinese as Western imperialism, for the Christian missionaries was very complicated to change Chinese mind. Now Christianity is experiencing the renaissance.¹⁶¹
- 5) **Islam** came to China from Central Asia. Nowadays there are over 4 million people belong to this religion in China.¹⁶²

¹⁵⁸ Bočánková, Milena. *Intercultural Communication: Typical Features of the Czech, British, American, Japanese, Chinese and Arab Cultures*. Oeconomica, 2010, p 120.

¹⁵⁹ Lester, Robert C. *Buddhism: The Path to Nirvana*. Religious Traditions of the World: T. 2- M.: KRON-PRESS, 1996, p. 391-395.

¹⁶⁰ John Daido Looi, *The Eight Gates of Zen*, 2002, P. 240.

¹⁶¹ Bočánková, Milena. *Intercultural Communication: Typical Features of the Czech, British, American, Japanese, Chinese and Arab Cultures*. Oeconomica, 2010, p 120.

¹⁶² Bočánková, Milena. *Intercultural Communication: Typical Features of the Czech, British, American, Japanese, Chinese and Arab Cultures*. Oeconomica, 2010, p 120.

3.6 Chinese Identity, Key Values, and Traditions

China has a rich cultural history that is heavily rooted in the ancient concepts that have stayed with the Chinese people for thousands of years. At the core of Chinese values, traditions, and identity are concepts that grew from the teachings of Confucius. Confucius was the preeminent ancient Chinese thinker, philosopher and writer who lived from 551BC to 479BC¹⁶³. He traveled China teaching his philosophy of Confucianism, which focused on how people should live to achieve happiness not only for themselves, but harmony for society and the family unit. The government was to be just, individuals were to respect each other, society was to focus morality and sincerity. Although China was also influenced by other thinkers, especially during the era of the Hundred Schools of Thought, including the legalism emphasized by Emperor Qin Shi Huang¹⁶⁴, ultimately the core of China is dominated by Confucian principles, with other schools of thought playing a tertiary role that add on to the teachings of Confucius. At the individual level, Chinese philosophy focuses on the harmony between the person and the heaven or “Tian”. This is religious in a sense, as the Chinese refer to the sky in the same way that western religious refer to heaven¹⁶⁵. The other responsibilities, such as those to elders, family members, and society, focus on the pursuit of all humanity to unite in harmony with heaven. Social harmony is believed to be mandated by the Heaven, which demands that there is order in society. The order comes from a balance of forces (Ying and Yang) and a harmony which comes from the following of ethical and moral codes by the government and families. At the very top of Chinese society is the mandate of Heaven, which commands that the Emperor and the government behave in a just and moral way to have harmony with heaven¹⁶⁶. The leaders in China were believed to draw their influence from moral behavior, which should be respected by followers and all of society, which is loyal to the Emperor as long as he is just in his ruler ship. In fact, a reading of Chinese history sees that whenever there is a rebellion or usurpation of power in China against an emperor, the rebellion

¹⁶³ Huan, Yong. Confucius: A Guide for the Perplexed. A&C Black. 2013. p. 3.

¹⁶⁴ Goldin, Paul R. "Persistent misconceptions about Chinese 'Legalism'", *Journal of Chinese Philosophy*. (2011).

¹⁶⁵ Tu, Weiming. "Confucian Tradition in Chinese History". In Ropp, Paul S.; Barrett, Timothy Hugh. *The Heritage of China: Contemporary Perspectives on Chinese Civilization*. University of California Press. 1990.

¹⁶⁶ Tu, Weiming. "Confucian Tradition in Chinese History". In Ropp, Paul S.; Barrett, Timothy Hugh. *The Heritage of China: Contemporary Perspectives on Chinese Civilization*. University of California Press. 1990.

often cites immoral or unjust behavior by the emperor (often times as an excuse to overthrow the regime and seize power)¹⁶⁷. This type of loyalty and reverence extends through all of societal relationships in China. It does not only govern relationship between people and government but also from parents to children. Filial piety is the extension of Confucian principles to the family unit and it creates a very strong bond in the Chinese family settings. The first responsibility of a Chinese individual is to his parents and ancestors¹⁶⁸. The belief is that in a proper society, each individual has an irrevocable duty to take care of their parents, respect their ancestors, carry out their wishes, and go to great lengths of sacrifice to keep them happy¹⁶⁹. Duty to parents extends to providing for them in their old age, and rarely going against their wishes.

Although the principles established for Chinese traditions came thousands of years ago, these core principles, dominated by Confucianism can still be found today¹⁷⁰. Even though China has gone through incredible amounts of change from the dynastic cycles that dominated its lands for thousands of years, these principles still persist in modern China. The behavior of modern families in China still reflects upon the principles of filial piety and societal harmony¹⁷¹. During much of the year, workers leave their villages and head to the massive productivity centers of China, including Beijing, Shanghai, and Guangzhou¹⁷². However, during times that are reserved for family celebrations, such as Chinese New Years, most workers will return home to be with their parents for nearly an entire month. Chinese cities

¹⁶⁷ Mair, Victor H. "Religious Formations and Intercultural Contacts in Early China". In Krech, Volkhard; Steinicke, Marion. *Dynamics in the History of Religions between Asia and Europe: Encounters, Notions, and Comparative Perspectives*. Leiden: Brill. (2011). ISBN 9004225358. pp. 85–110.

¹⁶⁸ Mair, Victor H. "Religious Formations and Intercultural Contacts in Early China". In Krech, Volkhard; Steinicke, Marion. *Dynamics in the History of Religions between Asia and Europe: Encounters, Notions, and Comparative Perspectives*. Leiden: Brill. (2011). ISBN 9004225358. pp. 85–110.

¹⁶⁹ Mair, Victor H. "Religious Formations and Intercultural Contacts in Early China". In Krech, Volkhard; Steinicke, Marion. *Dynamics in the History of Religions between Asia and Europe: Encounters, Notions, and Comparative Perspectives*. Leiden: Brill. (2011). ISBN 9004225358. pp. 85–110.

¹⁷⁰ Benjamin Elman, John Duncan and Herman Ooms ed. *Rethinking Confucianism: Past and Present in China, Japan, Korea, and Vietnam* (Los Angeles: UCLA Asian Pacific Monograph Series, 2002).

¹⁷¹ Benjamin Elman, John Duncan and Herman Ooms ed. *Rethinking Confucianism: Past and Present in China, Japan, Korea, and Vietnam* (Los Angeles: UCLA Asian Pacific Monograph Series, 2002).

¹⁷² Benjamin Elman, John Duncan and Herman Ooms ed. *Rethinking Confucianism: Past and Present in China, Japan, Korea, and Vietnam* (Los Angeles: UCLA Asian Pacific Monograph Series, 2002).

such as Shanghai can shut down for weeks at a time to the point where basic private businesses such as restaurants are closed for weeks (critical services such as hospitals are still open). These workers often bring home much of the money they have saved up over the working year to give to their parents, and are expected to introduce any potential marriage partners so that the family may approve¹⁷³. All these actions are done as a sign of respect to the family and elders. Furthermore, on the date of October 10th in China, the entire country will have a similarly large celebration for the National Day of the Republic of China, in which the Communist Party overthrew the Republic of China (Taiwan) in the Chinese civil war. Although this is a political holiday, many Chinese are happy to celebrate it even if they are not passionate nationalists¹⁷⁴. This type of respect for the government that comes, even without ardent nationalism, is a residue of the ancient Chinese philosophies of the mandate of heaven. These Chinese traditions of respect for elders and government dominate the family unit, the behaviors of the individual, and the reaction of Chinese citizens to the actions of the government¹⁷⁵.

¹⁷³ Benjamin Elman, John Duncan and Herman Ooms ed. *Rethinking Confucianism: Past and Present in China, Japan, Korea, and Vietnam* (Los Angeles: UCLA Asian Pacific Monograph Series, 2002).

¹⁷⁴ Cindy Sui, 10 October 2011, available at :[Legacy debate as Republic of China marks 100 years](#)

¹⁷⁵ Benjamin Elman, John Duncan and Herman Ooms ed. *Rethinking Confucianism: Past and Present in China, Japan, Korea, and Vietnam* (Los Angeles: UCLA Asian Pacific Monograph Series, 2002).

Chapter 4

Practical part

Research

The practical part of the thesis consists of three parts:

1. Description of the methodology of the research
2. The actual research and analysis of the respondents' data
3. The results of the research
4. Comments, helpful advice and suggestions for Chinese how to better understand, perceive and deal with Americans

4.1 Methodology of cultural standards research

The method that was used for the practical part is called narrative interviews. This method was developed by A. Thomas in 1996. The goal of the narrative interviews is to collect critical incidents data, which is one of the steps according to A. Thomas. For the critical incidents data analysis during the interview I was using so-called “wh-probes” questions, which help respondents to understand the situation better, the behavior, strategy, be focused on what is happened in the certain situation, to make them analyze the situation.

The questions are following:

1. Why did you come to the USA?
2. Have you worked with the Americans during your stay in the USA?
3. What was the situation in the working environment that made you surprised/shocked/irritated by the behavior of Americans?
4. What was the behavior and reaction of Americans in this situation?
5. What did you expect from their behavior and which kind of reaction in this situation?
6. What did surprise you the most about their behavior and why?
7. How often do you see the same situation at work with Americans?
8. Was your opinion equal to your expectations about Americans in this situation?
9. Did you change your opinion about Americans once you arrived in the US or it remained the same from the one you had in China?

I was also using the basic questions about the age, gender, origins... for my own understanding and analysis. Additional questions were asked as well when it was necessary.

The interview was taken place in New York from the end of February till the beginning of March. I took an interview in person of 12 Chinese who came to the US for different reasons. All of them are staying there and not going to come back to China. Some of the interviews were recorded, some were written down due to the fact that respondents did not agree to record their voices. All respondents were informed about the purpose of the interview.

I have chosen the respondents by following criteria:

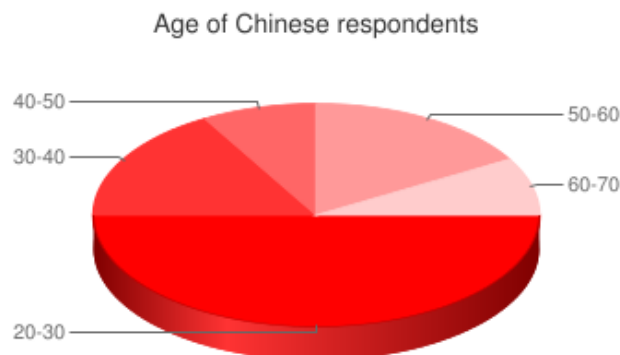
1. The respondent must have the work experience in the US with Americans (There is a lot of Chinese who work with Chinese and never work with Americans)
2. Must be born in China and have Chinese values, traditions, and customs (As there is a lot of Chinese who were born in the US and they have nothing in common with Chinese identity)

4.2 The research and analysis

In my research, I made pie charts for better visual representation of the basic questions. There are 6 figures which show the analysis of the basic questions.

Figure 5.1 shows the range of age of the respondents. The biggest age group is a young generation between 20-30 years old. The second biggest group is between 30-40 and 50-60 years old.

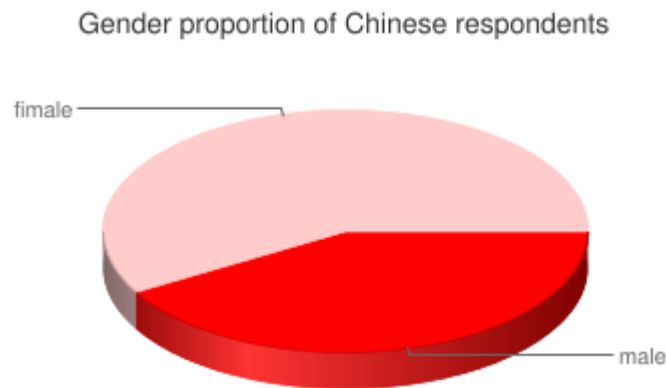
Figure 5.1



Source: data based on the author's research

In my research, the largest gender group was female (7 female and 5 male), which can be seen in figure 5.2.

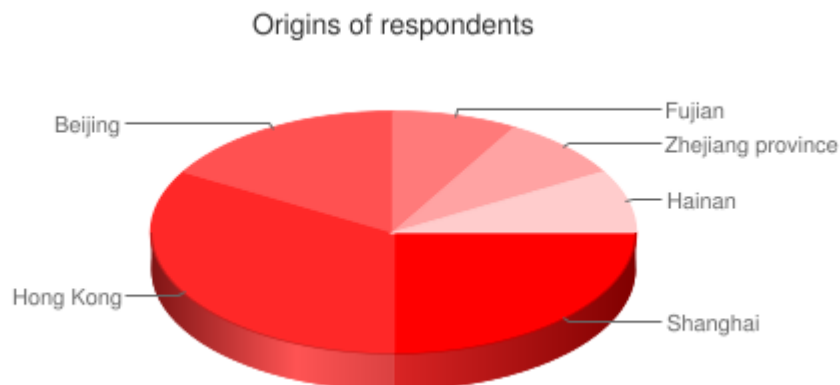
Figure 5.2



Source: data based on the author's research

Very interesting fact for me was the hometown of the respondents. Most of the Chinese came from Hong Kong and big cities such as Shanghai and Beijing. The explanation from the young generation of the movement from such a big city is the competition and pollution, from old generation- underdevelopment, poverty. Just a few people came from small provinces according to Chinese measures. This information can be found in figure 5.3.

Figure 5.3

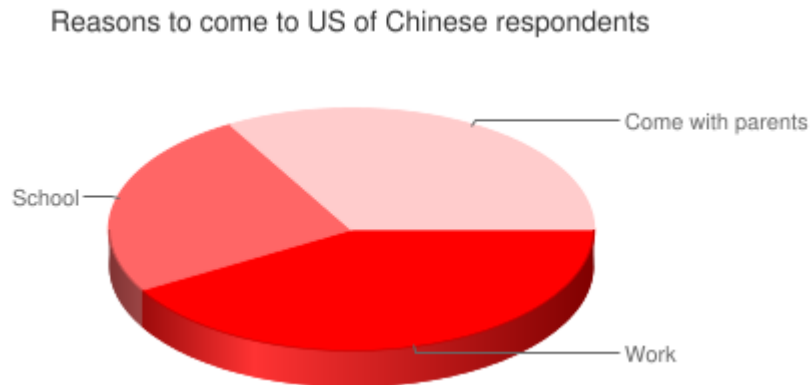


Source: data based on the author's research

Figure 5.4 shows why Chinese immigrated to the US. Most of the response were connected to work, bigger opportunity. A lot of people came there with their parents, who came for the

work opportunity and were successful. Some people came for education due to a big prestige of American universities.

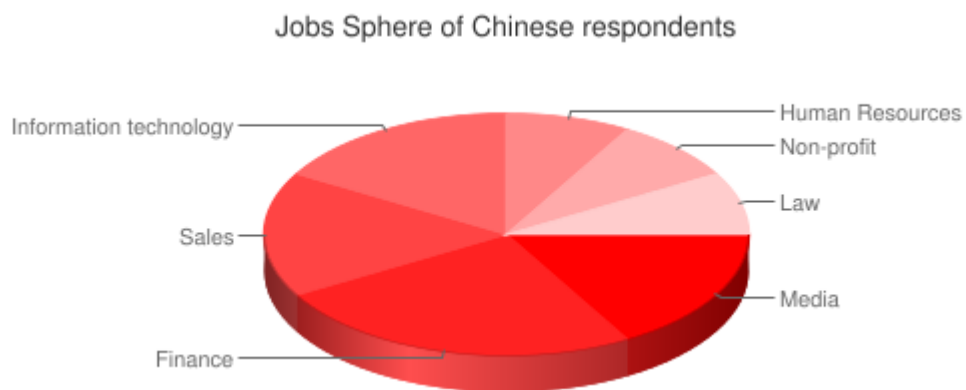
Figure 5.4



Source: data based on the author's research

Another interesting fact for me was the jobs of the respondents. According to the figure 5.5 most Chinese work in finance (accounting, billing), another big group of information technology, media, and sales.

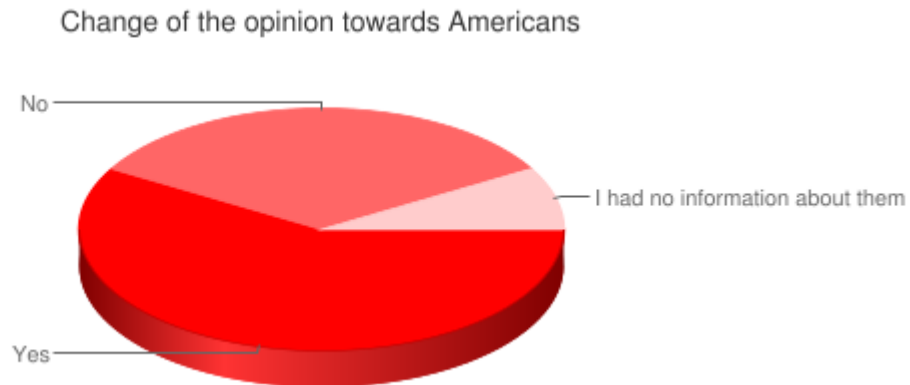
Figure 5.5



Source: data based on the author's research

The last figure shows if the opinion towards Americans changed after the respondents came to the US. Most of the people changed their opinion.

Figure 5.6



Source: data based on the author's research

4.3 American cultural standards from Chinese perspective

The American cultural standards from the Chinese perspective will be described and determined in the current chapter. The determination of the standards is based on the research. The chapter includes 6 cultural standards connected to the work environment, which were defined through the analysis of the interview. The cultural standards are shown in table 1 in descending order of frequency of their use.

Table 1: American cultural standards at work environment

Cultural Standards	Characteristics	Number of respondents mentioning the standard
Individualism	Decision is made by an individual, who is responsible for that. Treat everyone alike at work.	4
Understanding, supporting boss	Positive work atmosphere, nice and patient members of a company	4
Low power distance	Equality is the society, no hierarchy, the boss is a smart democrat.	3
Universalism	Behavior is focused on rules, not relationship. Rules are above all.	3
Backstabbing	Pretense of being a friend and at the same time criticism and dissimulation appear toward the person behind the back.	3

Aggressiveness, straightness	Aggression can mean honesty, direct people are trustworthy.	2
Racism	Prejudice, wrong, unfair attitude towards immigrants and different skin color.	2

Source: data based on the author's research

- **Individualism**

This dimension belongs to G. Hofstede's and F. Trompenaars' dimensions. It is a very typical American feature. Individualism was shown in many situations of my respondents. According to the opinions of the respondents, Americans are individual workers. They work for themselves, not in a group or for a group. They work for their own result. Kin Tsang and Jenny Zheng situations show a good relationship, but not an actual help, your work should be done by yourself. Which is true and fair, but sometimes in collectivistic society, your friend can do it for you.

Kin Tsang situation: *"There was something that my boss was expected to be done and I delegated the task so it was not done. So boss said just deal with that, go home and finish it tomorrow."*

Jenny Zheng situation: *"Americans are so nice. I remember I did a bad job and instead of screaming at me like I'm used to in China my boss was very patient. They were very understanding of my limited English."*

Heidi K describes the situation that proves individual hard work for the result: *"We had a new assignment just before Thanksgiving and Christmas break and people were giving up vacation time to finish the project. No one complained and everyone worked so hard. I thought people would be a lot more upset about missing their vacation. I felt pressured to work harder."*

Another typical feature of individualism is equal treatment at work, no privileges, which is also a part of universalism, which is a sign of professionalism according to Sai Luo. She says: *"Americans are very professional everything is done exactly as they say, they will not make any changes for you even if you are their friend. The CEO and the negotiators from the other side were very interested in the deal and they really wanted to say yes, but the policies of the company were most important and no one was willing to violate the company policy for the*

deal. In China, everything is done in a friendly manner, once you talk to the CEO they can make the deal, there are no problems. Even big deals can be done over dinner the details can be negotiated without the lawyers and accountants checking everything. The policies are more relaxed for Chinese.”

- **Understanding, supporting boss**

This category was mentioned the most by the respondents. It turns out that Americans are very nice and patient when it comes to emotions of the respondents. Managers have the positive attitude, always nice and supportive when you have a bad luck, mood, day and even if you made a mistake. In China, people face an aggression from the boss side for any mistakes. A good example was described by the situation of Edwin Lee:

“My American Boss is so helpful to me. I had a bad day at work so my Boss bought me a drink and dinner and was very helpful. All my co-workers thought it was a nice thing to do. In China, the co-workers will give you a moral support as well.”

Another good example of the helpful and patient boss was from Jenny Zheng and Kin Tsang.

Jenny Zheng says: *“Americans are so nice. I remember I did a bad job and instead of screaming at me like I’m used to in China my boss was very patient. They were very understanding of my limited English. Everyone was so patient. I think I expected them to be more angry of my mistakes.”*

Kin Tsang, who works for IT Company, describes a similar situation: *“There was something that my boss was expected to be done and I delegated the task so it was not done. So boss said just deal with that, go home and finish it tomorrow. Asian boss will tell you to stay and finish. I was surprised that they are relaxed, kind and understanding. I thought the boss will tell me to stay and finish it. They were more understanding. No one got to yell, it is more about how to figure out the solution in the situation. They understand management more.”*

William Wei’s situation is showing how open, relaxed and easygoing is his boss. *“If you have a party for Christmas, first time I saw a big Christmas party in a big company, some of the managers and bosses get really drunk and started dancing. In China, it would*

never happen. They were so open, nice, relaxed... I thought at the party I would not see my boss getting drunk. I thought they would not be so open, relaxed and get drunk with you. There was an informal nature of everything. In the US Company people are very relaxed. They can get drunk with you...”

- **Low Power distance**

G. Hofstede’s cultural dimension could be observed in many responses. Interviewees were mentioning many times the equality in the US. They were surprised by no hierarchy, no privileges, no difference between a boss and a regular worker, less centralization. All of my respondents were saying about the good and friendly relationship with bosses, in whom you could not feel any status difference, any inequality as you feel in China.

Example of William Wei is very suitable for this case.

He has added: *“Generally Americans are more relaxed when it comes to your position in the company. When I worked in Shanghai if you have a boss you have to treat him as a boss. In the US they treat you as equal. They are nicer to you. If you have a party for Christmas, first time I saw a big Christmas party in a big company, some of the managers and bosses get really drunk and started dancing. They will be relaxed and nice to each other not caring who does what in the company. In China, it would never happen. Bosses are bosses. They are like Gods and workers they work, that’s it. Bosses can talk to lower classes but it’s less likely, they talk to the people who are equal to their status.”*

The same thought was for Edwin Lee. He could not imagine that a boss can be a friend. He says: *“My American Boss is so helpful to me. I had a bad day at work so my Boss bought me a drink and dinner and was very helpful. All my co-workers thought it was a nice thing to do. I thought my Boss would be only my Boss, not my friend. My Boss was like a friend and teacher to me.”*

Another interesting case was described by Philip Chang. He works in media and journalism. His story was opposite to the stories above as he was a boss for American workers.

Here is his story: *“Some American workers screamed at me even though I was paying them money to help me move furniture and do other simple things. I was a manager at our news company when we were moving some furniture to a new building. I hired some men to help us*

move, they came to the office and helped me move some equipment and furniture into a truck. I paid these guys money so I was their boss, but when I was lifting the furniture wrong they got really angry with me. They yelled at me and told me I can take my money back and do it myself if I don't do it correctly because if we make a mistake they could be injured. In China, if you are the boss and you are paying people, they are always nice to you, they will not scream and yell at you even if they are angry with you because you are paying them money."

In his conclusion, he points the equality, which helps you to improve yourself and be better. *"The guys yelled at me and took my mistakes very seriously, but I thought this was good because it's to protect the safety of all of us who are moving the furniture. Americans treat each other this way, it doesn't matter who you are they try to treat you equal to them. I think this is a good habit for Americans. They treat everyone equal, and they will yell at you if you make a mistake. It's good, because it helps me improve. I expected it to be different than China but I was very surprised that they would yell at me like that."*

- **Universalism**

This dimension of F. Trompenaars clearly appears in the response. Respondents mentioned the rule-based American society at work. Another feature that was mentioned is no privilege, which is also a part of individualism. No matter who you are for them- a family member, friend, or just a colleague, rules will not be broken. All of the respondents mentioned the strict American policies at work.

Sai Luo is a saleswoman. She described the situation in the company which showed strict American attitude towards rules.

"Americans are very professional everything is done exactly as they say. There was a business deal for over 10,000,000 USD with a big company. The CEO of the company was with us in negotiating this deal. We wanted a free accommodation of supplies that's worth only a few thousand dollars, less than 1% of the value of the deal. The CEO could not say yes, he had to check with the finance department and wait a few days before they could agree to anything. I learned American companies are very strict with their policies. The CEO and the negotiators from the other side were very interested in the deal and they really wanted to say yes, but the policies of the company was most important and no one was willing to violate the company

policy for the deal. In China, everything is done in a friendly manner, once you talk to the CEO they can make the deal, there are no problems. Even big deals can be done over dinner the details can be negotiated without the lawyers and accountants checking everything. The policies are more relaxed for Chinese.

They wanted to make the deal but the rules came first before the deal. I like it, its very professional.

She also made a conclusion that “Chinese can learn from Americans in this area.” This conclusion was mentioned a lot in different situations by Chinese.

Another two respondents gave examples of strict policies at work, which actually make you work harder, thereby make you more professional and improve your skills.

Zhang Wu says: “They have very strict rules about how you report the news. There was a problem with one citation and they made me rewrite the whole article, this was when I was very young. There are some guidelines for American companies and journalistic integrity is an important part. In the U.S. a lot of information comes from Reuters and the Associated Press but sometimes as young journalists we did the reporting ourselves. The press companies have strict rules about how to cite the information because in the USA there are laws about news companies and what they can report. In China, these laws are not so strict but in the US, the laws are stricter so the companies are very careful to give the correct citations and the correct information when possible. It’s still possible to write misleading headlines to describe the information, but the sources have to be properly credited.

Everyone thought this should be the way it’s done, this is the general standard of journalism in the USA and it’s both strict and professional.”

He execrated the same system as in China, but due to universalism the American system is more professional, thus it is better.

“I thought they would be less strict. They are strict about rules even on the timeline in the TV industry. In China, it’s not like this at all, even though there are some situations where the company is strict, usually citations are much less serious. However, recently I was in China and they are becoming more and more like the USA in this area.”

Heidi K is describing how people in American company are obeying the rules no matter what, which gives a lot of pressure and discomfort for the particularist societies like Chinese one.

“I think just how hard working everyone is here, so focused. People were giving up vacation time to finish the project on time as there is a rule about the deadline. I felt pressured to work harder.”

- **Backstabbing**

Backstabbing was mentioned by three respondents. My interviewees were describing me the feature by metaphors such as they throw people under the bus; they are pretending to be your friend. Most people gave me a positive feedback about Americans, but there as always some negative aspects appear.

Rachel gave a good example of her work:

“For example: One supervisor will email you about something was wrong and want to blame you for it but he blanks copied the manager on it. So you don’t even get a chance to explain to them what was right or wrong before you got blamed by the Manager. The supervisor felt right about communicating the mistake the employee had and the manager was mad. They shouldn’t throw the employee under the bus if the supervisor has the problem with something the employee does he can mention to him directly to figure out how to fix it. They throw people under the bus and they don’t think it’s wrong. It was frustrating and because blaming doesn’t really help with the growth of the employee or organization. Knowing how to prevent for the future mistake is the key.”

Patricia T. describes the case that shows that Americans are being nice to you just to take an advantage of you later on.

“Our organization was investigated and there was some corruption using the nonprofit for making money. The nonprofit should be guiding people who did not speak very good English to people who could help them with everyday issues in life. However, our managers were sometimes giving the information of lawyers and doctors in the community for a fee. The doctors and lawyers would pay some of the employees’ money to recommend them to the people who came in for help. This is not ethical practice and the nonprofit became an advertisement machine for lawyers and doctors. I expected the government to fine us, but I didn’t expect so much corruption from an organization that I joined because they did good things for the community. I was surprised people put so much time into nonprofit just to help themselves.”

A good conclusion was made by Jing Chen. A lot of people of different origin have this feature, not just Americans. And it is normal as it is life, which in some situations makes people be cruel, grasping, unfair, hypocritical...

“They were so good at pretending to be your friend and then behind your back, they will alienate you if they don’t like you. The upper society of America is very good at hiding their intentions. At the top of New York City, this happens all the time, and it still happens today. I think this is normal here, and it will always be this way because people are afraid of competition and new things. People will always go with what makes them comfortable.”

- **Aggressiveness, straightness**

Just two of my respondents mentioned these two qualities. They perceive Americans as a very straightforward people. If they do not like your behavior with them at work, no matter if you are just a co-worker or a boss, they will tell you straight. In China people are afraid to lose face, afraid to offend others, they are very indirect.

A good example was from Michael Yu. He had an interesting unexpected situation at work: *Americans are very direct with their feelings. A lady at our company felt she was being treated unfairly, instead of hiding it or holding it in, which sometimes happens in China, she immediately filed reports with our department and even threatened a lawsuit. Everyone was very shocked at how aggressive this older lady was behaving. I expected her to be less aggressive in filing a report with authorities, because it was not a clearly bad situation. She was immediately filing complaints with Human Resource department and contacting her lawyers without even talking to her manager personally. I just think that Americans can be very direct about their complaints, and sometimes they can be combative, such as in this case. I did not know Americans were so aggressive about workplace age discrimination.*

Philip Chang described the aggression from American workers, which shows their honesty. *“Some American workers screamed at me even though I was paying them money to help me move furniture and do other simple things. They yelled at me and told me I can take my money back and do it myself if I don’t do it correctly because if we make a mistake they could be injured. I think it just says that Americans can be very honest. In China, when you are working you would never yell or get angry at someone who is paying you money. Americans are more*

straightforward and direct than Chinese. This is a good trait, makes them easier to work with and trust in some situations.”

- **Racism**

Racism is actually a quit typical America feature. From my personal experience, I can say that a lot of Americans are racists. When I was in the US for 4 months I saw their attitude towards Afro-Americans, Arabs, immigrants... I was surprised at the prejudice. Americans do not really like Russians due to political reasons in my opinion and experience. The same happened to my Chinese respondents.

Jing Chen has a very good example of it:

If you are not white in America, in upper society you will always be treated as an outsider. 20 years ago they fired me and my friends from the company when the financial situation at the Bank was not good. Everybody knew that we were good employees and they fired us anyway because we were outsiders. In the group of top employees, it is all white Americans, they are from here, they know each other, and they are friends with each other. For Asians, Blacks, Russians, Indians, and Hispanics, we were never inside the circle of the top people. They pretend like nothing happen. They act like they don't know, but they know, they are very smart, and they will protect their group at the top. This is similar everywhere, but in China, there are only Chinese, so the top people are just rich Chinese with famous family backgrounds. But in America, they can see you are different on your skin because this country has so many different people, and everyone is trying to compete in New York.

Patricia T. has a good example how in fact Americans threat immigrants.

“Our organization was investigated and there was some corruption using the nonprofit for making money. The nonprofit should be guiding people who did not speak very good English to people who could help them with everyday issues in life. However, our managers were sometimes giving the information of lawyers and doctors in the community for a fee. People with bad English were immigrants from Russian speaking countries, Mexicans, and Asians. I think it is terrible to do this to the needy and helpless to immigrants.”

Of course, it does not mean that all Americans are like this. It is just two situations that were mentioned by just two respondents.

4.4 Comparison of research results with Americans identity and values

In this chapter, I will compare the research result with the theoretical part about Americans identity and values. The comparison will show the reasons why Chinese perceive Americans in a certain way.

I will start with one of the most common cultural standard- *individualism*. As it was mentioned in the theoretical part about the collectivistic society of China, the clear difference can be observed between high individualism and high collectivism. From the research analysis, Chinese can be described as group-oriented workers. They used to work in a group, help each other. If you are a friend you have privilege, any exception can be made for you. Which is completely opposite of Americans. They are very professional and strict. There is no exception and privileges for anyone. Work is work. They will not help you with your work, they will not do it for you. I see in many situations a nice relationship with boss and workers, everyone treats you alike. But no one is actually helping you with your work, they can motivate you, make your mood better, but your work is yours. In Chinese society, if your co-worker is your friend, he/she will try to help you with your work if you have any troubles with it. Which is a typical feature of collectivists society. Chinese society is a communist even that it is changing a lot nowadays. Communism is a one of the typical features of collectivist society. Building trust in the relationship is one of the main things in Chinese society, what is opposite to Americans. They do not really make friends, they make a deal, and friendship does not matter. I would also add that friendship for Americans is very different as for the Chinese. Chinese friendship is real, American is fake, and they just need people to take advantage from them.

The second standard- *Understanding, supporting boss* was also mentioned the most by the respondents. At Chinese work environment, boss is just a boss to you. There is no relationship between worker and manager. This is due to hierarchy. You must obey your boss, do everything manager says without any discussion or disputes. Chinese really care about saving the face. According to this fact, they care what people think about them, thus they will be very restraint, cautious, circumspect.

American bosses are opposite to Chinese one. They are very patient, understanding and kind to their workers. Americans are actually very professional. They are very good at management, which makes the perfect atmosphere at work, gives support at the right moment

and helps to be willing to understand the problem. Good management is the key to work. A good manager is a building material for the company as he/she makes workers comfortable, motivated, and positive. And the company is very successful if the employees are happy and satisfied. This fact is due to the American education, which gives these professional management skills.

American *low power distance* is another cultural standard that is very different from Chinese high power distance. In China there is the hierarchy. The society is unequal. The upper class is separated from the lower, high-status people do not talk to low-status people. Your level class in the society matters a lot.

American society is famous for the equality. It goes from the American history. Americans were fighting for the equality for a very long period of time. Here is the result. There is no hierarchy, everyone is equal. Does not matter who you are in the company, they will communicate and behave very openly, relaxed which makes you comfortable.

Universalism is typical American standard, *Particularism* is in China. Chinese have nepotism which comes from the history, which was described above. Governmental dictatorships, communism, tied to their groups are main reasons for nepotism. Chinese are used to give privileges to friends, family members, someone they trust. Rules do not matter. They exist to break them for important people. At work contracts can be changed, contracts can be made if you trust each other and have a good relationship. This is due to the fact of nontransparent legal system that was described in theoretical part. All of this features are absolutely opposite in the US, that is why it is surprised Chinese so much during their work experience. In the US everything should be according to the laws and rules. There are no exceptions for anyone and anything. Contracts and procedures are made according to the rules and they are final. This is due to the legal system in the US that was described in the theoretical part. Americans are very professional and rational. Business is business, rules are rules, and the relationship does not matter. This approach is very far from the Chinese one. They were so surprised that there is no way to break the rules, there is no building the relationship and making the exceptions for the family and friends.

Backstabbing appears in any society including the US. This standard is very hard to compare as it is quite common everywhere. It is hard to say when it comes from, either it is just the influence of society or it lies somewhere deeper. But I can say that it appears more often in

American society than in Chinese. As it was mentioned before, Chinese cannot lose their face. They are very shame society, and it matters a lot what others think about them. Inasmuch as Confucianism is a very common and old religion in China, many Chinese still adhere to rules of this philosophy and religion. That is why backstabbing will not be a normal situation in China. Americans are very fake sometimes. And they do not care much what others think about them. They are good at pretending. They are always smiling to you even if they hate you. This is a typical feature of politeness. They are always nice and positive. They are trained to be nice, it is professional to be positive and smile. That is why at work everyone is positive, helpful and nice to you. This is their professional feature. For Chinese backstabbing is the same as losing their face. They are also professional at hiding their emotions, but it is not very much connected to saying rumors behind someone's back and harm people. Chinese have the value of harmony in the relationship, at work, home and basically in everything.

Aggressiveness, straightness is a very opposite characteristic of Chinese society. The Heavenly Empire has a very indirect people, who cannot even say directly "no" in order to not lose their face. As it was mentioned above Chinese are very shy. Aggressiveness is a very unusual feature for Chinese.

According to the fact, that a lot of Americans are religious people and big portions of it is Christians and have Christian morals, some part of the behavior is inappropriate. In my case above it was inappropriate behavior towards the woman. The aggression is shown very quick. If Americans do not like someone's behavior they do not hide their feelings. They are very direct and saying straight their opinion sometimes without even thinking about the fact that it can offend someone.

Due to the historical events and slavery *Racism* has appeared in the US and still exist even that it is improving and people are struggling with it. It was described in the theoretical part. An interesting fact is that the percentage of Native Americans is just 2% of the population, and in fact, racism is the most common in the US, which means that racists are immigrants, who came to the US or were born there. Feudalism, uneducated, poor unsuccessful nations and states, lack of norms of proper behavior precipitated the creation of the problems with racism. Unfortunately, my respondents faced this problem as well. In China, there is no such a thing as racism. Most probably it is because there are not many other nationalities, most are Asians. During history, there were not many immigrants coming to China as it happened in the US.

Another fact is that Chinese adhere to conservatism. They try to live in harmony, following 5 characteristics of Confucianism, following their traditions and values. Racism is a system that knocks you out of the harmony.

4.5 Recommendations for Chinese who are going to work with Americans

In this part of my thesis, I will provide some recommendations for Chinese, who are going to work with Americans, which, in my opinion, will prevent misunderstanding of American culture at work environment and will prepare the right attitude towards Americans.

1. Learn about American history and culture before going there in order to be familiar with their traditions and customs.
2. Remember that Americans are patriots and think that US economy is the strongest one, which leads to ignores of the foreign language, traditions, and customs. Thus, you must know English perfectly, and keep in mind they do not know your culture.
3. Americans are rule-based and equal society. Do not be surprised with an informal behavior at work, equality and you must follow the rules.
4. Keep in mind that Americans are very direct and blunt. They will tell you straight if they do not like something.
5. A famous comparison of Americans is “time is money”. Do not waste their time and go straight to the point. No silence and lulls, it is a waste of time, which they will not appreciate. There are no needs to build relationship and trust.
6. They are not group-oriented society. They work independently.
7. Americans are always joking even if the joke is not understandable. It is a part of a culture. In order to understand their jokes, you should know English well, current events in the country, American culture, and political situation.
8. Do not be surprised from the optimistic and informal atmosphere at work.
9. Be ready for the wrong attitude to the skin color and cultural stereotype.

From my own experience, I would recommend to read and learn as much as you can about America. Communicate with people who have been to the US and can share their experience. Do not build high expectations about how great is the US. As lower your expectations as better your impression!

Conclusion

The main goal of bachelor thesis was to define American cultural standards at work environment from the Chinese point of view and to compare them with the theory. It was also focused on the analysis of the historical impact on the culture, traditions, and behavior of people from both countries. To analyze the most known theories of cultural dimensions (Hall, Hofstede, Trompenaars, and Alexander Thomas), in order to understand the explanation of those processes. The aim was also the determination of the cultural standards with the comparison of the theory and to answer three research questions, which were settled in the introduction.

The theoretical part of the thesis was based on the intercultural studies, which were founded by G. Hofstede, F. Trompenaars, E. T. Hall and A. Thomas and presented in chapter 1. Chapter 2 was focused on the American historical, geographical background and also other aspects of American identity have been described. Chapter 3 was focused on the same aspect as Chapter 2, but about Chinese identity.

The practical part consists of the research. The research was made according to the narrative interviews (critical incidents) of 12 respondents from China who has been working with Americans. After the analysis of the research seven cultural standards have been defined. The results of the research were compared with the American identity and values from the theoretical part. The recommendations for Chinese who are going to work with Americans were provided in the practical part as well.

During the research analysis, I determined seven cultural standards at work environment: *individualism; understanding, supporting boss; low power distance; universalism; backstabbing; aggressiveness, straightness; racism.*

My research questions from the introduction part are following:

1. What is the Chinese perception towards Americans in the working area?
2. Which aspects of working environment do the Chinese perceive as the most different?
3. Do the determined American- Chinese cultural standards correspond with American national identity and values?

The response to the first question is ambiguous. From the interviews (critical incidents) I can see that opinions are different due to the expectations and knowledge of American culture. Most of my respondents, which are my target group with the age between 20-30, perceive Americans as they are, very informal, direct, optimistic, always nice, professional and equal. With regard to a bit older generation, the expectations were higher than it should be. Thus, they perceive Americans as good at pretending to be a friend, indifference to building the relationship, they are patriots.

The response to the second question can derive from the founded cultural standards. The most different aspects are *individualism* and *understanding, supporting boss*. Then it goes low *power distance, universalism, and backstabbing*. Concerning to *individualism* and *understanding boss*, the respondents felt a big difference due to the opposite attitude in China. In China there is a high rank of *collectivism*, the boss cannot be a friend, he is above you, a higher class cannot be friend with lower.

The answer to the third question is yes, they do correspond. It can be observed in the subchapter 4.4.

The bachelor thesis as the whole can be helpful and useful for Chinese who are going to work with Americans as a guideline about US culture, traditions, history and many other facts, that help to improve intercultural communication.

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