Transmission, Inheritance, Emulation 28 (Part Two) by Peter Goldsbury

INTERLUDE
XIV: Aikido and Organizations:
A Necessary Evil, or Essential 'Software' of the Dojo?

PART TWO
Geert Hofstede's Dimensions of 'National Cultures' Applied to Aikido Organizations

0 Some Preliminary Notes

NOTE: 1. When I recently glanced back over this series of columns, it came as a major shock for me to realize that I published the first TIE column in 2007, over ten years ago, and that a whole year has passed since Part One of this essay appeared. Added to which, I have only just passed the half-way point. Various events in my own life, including some crippling health issues, have made it more difficult to keep to a strict publication schedule, but an additional reason for this is that most of the columns are not really intended to form a continuous series. The length of the columns themselves also calls for some explanation to those unaccustomed to seeing long scholarly essays published online. I originally intended these TIE columns to form a very discursive—and also very definitely critical—history of aikido, which presented a vaguely chronological narrative and dealt, in turn, with Morihei Ueshiba, his son Kisshomaru, the present Doshu and his son Mitsuteru. However, as I produced successive columns, I found that I needed to interrupt the more strictly chronological narrative with a series of essays of varying length (which I have called *Interludes*) in which a particular topic was discussed in greater detail than would be appropriate in a continuous narrative. Consequently, these columns form a kind of halfway house between collections of archived material, such as Christopher Li is producing in his series of translations and interviews, and formally published books on aikido. As such, they are really inconclusive scholarly research papers, rather than finished articles.

NOTE: 2. The *Interludes* largely keep within the chronological bounds of the general narrative, but I have made two major exceptions. First, I devoted several earlier columns to a discussion of Ellis Amdur's important book, *Hidden in Plain Sight*, and will do so again very soon, now that the new edition has been published. Secondly, in 2016 I retired after 30-odd years as General Secretary and then Chairman of the International Aikido Federation (IAF). As I indicated in Part One, this was not really a planned retirement and as a result I decided to change the order of the columns and bring forward some parts of the series dealing with aikido and organizations, which I had planned to produce much later. My long experience with different aikido organizations led me to consider the dynamics and problems of aikido organizations themselves and the ways in they can help or hinder the development of the individual in the dojo. Very relevant here are the immediate circumstances of the dojo, which the student encounters from the very beginning: the relationship with the teacher and other senior members of the dojo, and also with the umbrella organization of which the dojo is usually a member. In my case—and I suspect that this is not unusual, I moved around quite often, sometimes to different countries, and also practiced in many different dojos, so I had to become accustomed each time to a different organizational culture. I do not think this aspect of aikido and aikido training has been examined before and so the length of this essay is due in great part to the need to give some general background and to establish a meaningful context for the analysis of the 'cultural' and organizational aspects of a typical dojo. The result is that these two groups of columns have interrupted the general chronological flow outlined above. I have also modified the title of this particular essay, in order to call attention to the issues more clearly.

NOTE: 3. As I was writing this installment, a friend and colleague of mine mentioned that in the near future she would be meeting Geert Hofstede (now aged 90), who is my main target in what follows, and offered to show him an earlier version of this essay. I would like to express my gratitude in advance to Prof. Hofstede, both for his books, which I have long used in my university classes in comparative culture and organizations, and for any comments or advice that he might like to give me—which will be reflected in Part Three.

NOTE: 4. In this essay I employ Japanese terms quite frequently and I need to establish a convention for dealing with these terms. The Japanese *kana* and the Chinese-derived characters or *kanji* / 漢字), enclosed in square brackets [], usually follow the first mention of the term and after this the terms are used as normal English words, printed in italics if the word is not in common aikido usage. I have adapted the

transcription in English of Japanese terms to fit the conventions of English spelling and pronunciation. An explanation of the meaning usually follows in the main text. These explanations are really aimed at those who are relatively familiar with aikido, but who are supplementing their aikido training with a study of Japanese reading and writing. Some of these terms were explained in Part One of this essay and the explanations given in this essay should be seen as a more detailed elaboration of these original definitions.

NOTE: 5. I gladly acknowledge an enormous debt owed to other researchers, especially the late Stanley Pranin and Josh Gold, Stan's successor at *Aikido Journal*, and to Ellis Amdur and Christopher Li; and last but certainly not least, to Jun Akiyama for being such a patient and considerate editor.

I Other Essential Preliminaries

If a person wants to practice a martial art like aikido, she or he will usually go to a place called a dojo and this almost invariably involves becoming a member of a club or larger organization, over and above the dojo. Because aikido is an art, which therefore requires a good measure of skill to practice well, it is usually learned from someone who already possesses such skill or is in a more advanced state of learning than the beginner. The person usually finds that the teacher who runs the club has some measure of the required skill, but the teacher is also positioned in some form of vertical lineage that is usually signified by a rank, in aikido usually a *dan* (段). The skills possessed and taught have been learned directly at the hands of others who have gone before—and so on in a long line of transmission, until we reach the founder of the art himself or one of his closest students.

The fact of this lineage, and the ranking system that it indirectly acknowledges, is usually exhibited to the world at large in the form of: (1) the diploma or qualification issued, which is elegantly written in Japanese; (2) the clothing worn, especially the presence of a *hakama* [袴 / はかま = divided skirt or pantaloons, usually black, navy blue, or white]; and (3) evidence of recognition of the lineage, which is usually membership of an aikido organization of some sort. It is actually this third phenomenon that is the main subject of this essay, but more specifically, the essay discusses the general organizational 'culture' that is generated by the combination of three essential factors: (1) the art of aikido itself, considered essentially as many individuals who are practicing a Japanese martial art, but not necessarily in Japan; (2) the location of the art, in a dojo with one or more teachers or coaches, and opponents or partners; and (3) the organizations to which the individual practitioner, dojo, or club, is affiliated.

My own experience of aikido training has generally followed the pattern sketched in the preceding paragraphs, but with one qualification: the experience began with training in the very minimalist of organizations—a small group of six students at university, gathered around a Japanese graduate student who wanted to continue training, the group simply put together in order to obtain funding from the university for essential equipment like *tatami* mats. There were no officers, but one of the students acted as the link with the university sports association of which the group had to become a member. This experience continues many years later in somewhat similar circumstances—teaching and training in two single dojos, which are completely unconnected with any organization over and above recognition by a 'lineage / transmission authentication organization,' which in my own case is the Aikikai Foundation in Tokyo, Japan.

My experience of training and lineage suggests to me that the subject is both difficult and controversial, for it is the origin of most aikido 'politics' and disputes, but it might also be of some general interest, in view of the obvious importance attached to organizations in the martial arts. An eminent aikido shihan named Hiroshi Tada once commented to me that aikido was essentially an individual, solitary activity: progress depends entirely on the individual—and not merely on training with a partner or opponent, though this is also essential for the training to take place. On the other hand, aikido is a type of *bujutsu* [ぶじゅつ /武術 = martial art / skill] and as such envisions potentially fraught encounters with real or potential opponents. Consequently, this solitary activity on the part of the individual is invariably expended in a group, the other members of which are usually called opponents or partners, and the group almost always has the formal structure of a dojo which is embedded within an organization, with affiliation to, or links with, other organizations. In this second part of the essay, I will discuss a number of very general issues affecting culture and organizations in general, as seen through the eyes of a very famous researcher. In the third part of this essay, I will focus more on my own experience of aikido and organizations in more detail and relate these general issues to two main aikido

organizations, which are the Aikikai Foundation [*Zaidan Hojin Aikikai* / 財団法人合気会] and its supposedly democratic offshoot, the International Aikido Federation (IAF).

Culture and Cultures

There are some differences between Japan and the rest of the world in the organization of aikido and these differences reflect the undoubted fact that the martial art is fundamentally rooted in and built on the cultural conventions of Japanese 'national culture.' This term is considered here as denoting both a distinct and recognizable abstract entity and also the particular way in which this entity manifests itself in postwar Japan. Japanese 'national culture' is certainly believed to exist in Japan and this belief actually underlies many general postwar initiatives here for 'cultural exchange' between Japan and other countries. Hiroshima, especially, has become a postwar focal point for such initiatives and an accepted second name for Hiroshima is 'International City of Peace (and) Culture' [K*okusai Heiwa Bunka Toshi*: 国際平和文化都市]. I have participated in such cultural exchanges and they usually start with a demonstration of activities believed to typify Japanese 'national' culture, such as the tea ceremony or 'traditional' drama, such as *kabuki* or *noh*. As a professor at Hiroshima University, I was officially requested to teach a course in a newly created graduate school, aimed at Japanese company employees, and the course was devoted to studies in comparative culture. It was in this course that I used the works of Geert Hofstede as the main texts, since Hofstede was one of the more prominent exponents of 'national culture' as manifested in organizations. In addition, since Hofstede constantly used the term, in this essay I have usually put 'national' and 'national culture' in quotes and assume that it has the meaning given to it by Hofstede.

A major problem arises, however, when this general Japanese belief in 'national' culture as a specific, distinct and recognizable abstract entity is extended to include countries other than Japan and, by another extension, to include all other countries—all possessing and manifesting their respective 'national' cultures. (This is the reason for the single quotes around 'national culture,' above.). This assumption is easily made and is also in a broad sense 'politically' charged, since the other side of the coin is the belief that if a country does not have a distinct national culture, the lack indicates some sort of failure of nationhood. This general 'political' aspect is especially true in regard to Japan and a Japanese art like aikido. Most variations of the art do not have competitive championships and tournaments and in addition some manifestations of aikido emphasize the so-called 'spiritual' dimensions of training, and this aspect is sometimes emphasized over and against the purely practical value of the art as an effective means of subduing an opponent. This is the reason why I have placed particular emphasis on the culture of postwar Japan, since the overseas expansion of the art of aikido is very firmly rooted in the period from the mid-1950s onwards, as Japan was developing a distinct postwar 'peace' culture, dedicated to peaceful 'cultural exchanges' and which was quite different from the warmongering culture that was flourishing when the art of aikido was first created. I hope to make clear the general dimensions of this problem as we proceed, but first, some more precisions about language are necessary.

A Sextet of Pairs…

One example of the language difficulty concerns a whole set of Japanese paired concepts, which are given below. Some important concepts were already considered in Part One of this essay and those given below should be seen as further elaborations on a common theme.

Tatemae / Honne: *tatemae* [たてまえ / 建前]: *honne* [ほんね / 本音];

Omote / Ura: *omote* [おもて / 表]: / *ura* [うら / 裏];

Uchi / Soto: *uchi* [うち / 内]: *soto* [そと / 外];

Tate / Yoko: *tate* [たて / 縦]: *yoko* [よこ / 横];

Sempai / Kohai: *senpai* [せんぱい / 先輩] ; *kouhai* [こうはい / 後輩]; and

Kyu / Dan: *kyuu* [きゅう / 級]: *dan* [だん / 段]

The first five pairs are often used to explain 'Japanese' culture to non-Japanese and I first learned these concepts when I started aikido and, more especially, when I came to live in Japan. I will often make use of these concepts in what follows, but I should emphasize that I use them exclusively in the context of living in Japan. A second, major, issue for this essay is whether these concepts can be found in other 'national' cultures and to see the issues

involved here, we need to give a brief 'cultural' explanation of each pair.

1. Tatemae / Honne

The first pair, *tatemae* / *honne*, stand for the 'official' / 'unofficial' aspects of a Japanese cultural and organizational practice. The professors' meeting [*kyoujukai* = きょうじゅかい / 教授会] in a Japanese national university is a good example. There are usually two layers of such meetings. The main *kyojukai* is a meeting of all the members of a particular faculty under the direction of the dean of the faculty, supported by officials seconded to the faculty by the central government. The meeting is conducted in an atmosphere of extreme politeness, but largely consists of necessary rubber stamping of decisions made by other bodies, mainly academic and administrative committees. This polite professors' meeting is the *tatemae* aspect; the actual—and usually more controversial and argumentative decision-making by the department heads and officials seconded from the education ministry is the *honne* aspect.

However, in my own faculty there was another body, called the *jinji-kyojukai* [じんじきょうじゅかい / 人事教授会], which deals with setting policy within the faculty, including promotions, and which is certainly not a rubber stamp. Only full professors are entitled to participate in the *jinji-kyojukai* and when promotions are on the agenda, the credentials of the candidate, academic and otherwise, are set out in scrupulously elegant Japanese by the professor proposing the promotion, who explains how the selection has been made and then extols the candidate's academic and other, more personal, virtues. (I have occasionally performed this task myself.) Promotions are decided by a secret ballot and very occasionally the request for promotion is actually voted down, with grave consequences for the 'face' of both candidate and proposer. I have occasionally witnessed quite bitter arguments at these meetings and this is also an important *honne* aspect of such meetings.

One might think of *tatemae* – *honne* as two opposing modes of social interaction, but the *honne* aspect, certainly as regards interactions among university faculty, would rarely be encountered outside the closed meetings outlined above. Of course, faculty meetings and promotions take place in universities outside Japan, but the issue here is whether a distinction crystallized in Japanese by two specific terms is sufficiently well-defined as to be recognized as such outside the context of Japanese culture and the Japanese language. I have strong doubts about this.

2. Omote / Ura

The second pair, *omote* / *ura*, are commonly encountered in the typical aikido dojo, as the names for the ways in which the techniques, or *waza*, can be executed. Until I came to Japan and embarked on the serious study of Japanese, I never realized that the *omote* / *ura* pair are in fact used much more widely and have a wider range of meaning and connotation than as semi-technical terms in aikido. In fact, my first teacher never used these terms, preferring instead the more 'physical' terms of *irimi* [いりみ / 入り身 = body moving forward, as a unit] and *tenkan* [てんかん / 転換 = turning, while moving in a backward or forward direction]. The *omote* / *ura* pair are the counterpart of *tatemae* / *honne*, in official / unofficial activities, but relate more to personal relationships. *Omote* basically means 'in front, to one's face'—and what one would do or say to a person face to face, while *ura* means 'behind, behind one's back'—and so is the opposite of *omote*. Then there is the extension of the concept, found in such expressions as 'losing face' / 'saving face', and the fact that such expressions are in common use suggests to me that the *omote* / *ura* pair of concepts are in no way exclusive to Japanese culture.

However, the wider dimensions of these paired concepts are not obvious at first sight and I gradually became aware of these through hints dropped by Japanese teachers and friends on a number of occasions. The concepts are also multi-layered, in the sense that it is possible to think of a particular exhibition of *omote* / *ura* as itself having an *omote* or *ura* aspect. I was made aware of this fact by having a ringside seat in a serious personal dispute, but as a foreigner I was not expected to understand the depths or dimensions of the dispute. The efforts made by Japanese friends to explain these depths and dimensions themselves constituted an *omote* aspect of something that would have remained deeply hidden, though very well understood by all the parties in the dispute. Again, though personal disputes are universal, I have my doubts about whether the extent and depth of this pair of concepts are replicated outside Japan, though I suppose that some version of such a distinction is to be expected in any society that

is highly influenced by the concept of 'face' and of maintaining or losing this, and also of the negative undertones of the concept: an attitude of 'pushiness'—of always putting oneself first.

There is also a variation of one side of the *omote* / *ura* pair and this is gaining attention in the run up to the 2020 Olympic Games, to be held in Tokyo. Adding the negative *nashi* to *omote* gives *omotenashi* [おもてなし] and this is the name of the distinctive attitude of quiet hospitality that the Japanese organizers of the Olympics hope will be in evidence during the Games. One web page gave the following meaning: *To Japanese, "omotenashi" means not just hospitality in the usual sense, but "something more akin to an elevated politeness that makes customers feel valued and respected."* Thus, the absence of *omote* is not necessarily *ura*, which can be seen as a positive opposite, but this new term, which is not found in the usual Japanese monolingual dictionaries. *Omotenashi* is not a term I have (yet) encountered in the Japanese aikido dojo.

3. Uchi / Soto

The third pair, *uchi* / *soto*, are also tied to the physical aspects of relationships, but, like *omote* / *ura*, yield interesting extensions to the 'physical' base meanings, which are, respectively, 'inside' and 'outside'. These concepts are relational concepts, since one is always 'inside' or 'outside' something else, like a building and, by extension, the people, such as family and similar groups, who inhabit the building.

In aikido, the paired concepts are also sometimes used to describe movements. For example, there are several ways of executing a *waza* called *kaiten-nage* from a one-handed grip. One way is *uchi-mawari* [内回り], moving outside the line of attack and under the gripping arm; the counterpart is *soto-mawari* [外回り], moving outside the line of attack, but not under the gripping arm. Nevertheless, the paired concepts are used in Japanese outside the narrow confines of the physical activity in a dojo and are also multi-layered, in the sense that the boundaries specified or assumed by the concepts are extremely flexible.

The Japanese psychiatrist Takeo Doi has made a name for himself by offering a somewhat tendentious analysis of these paired concepts and his paradoxical working assumption is that these concepts are both 'uniquely' Japanese and also replicated to some degree in other 'national' cultures. Doi did this in two works: *Amae no Kozo* [『「甘え」の構造』]; and *Omote to Ura* [『表と裏』], which were translated into English as, respectively, *The Anatomy of Dependence* (1973) and the *Anatomy of Self* (1986). Readers should decide for themselves the value of Doi's analysis, but I myself consider the two as a good example of modern *Nihonjinron* (the meaning of which is explained below).

4. Tate / Yoko

The fourth pair, *tate* / *yoko*, are sometimes used to describe Japanese social relationships in general. The distinction was popularized in a book called *Japanese Society*, written by the Japanese anthropologist Chie Nakane, whose early research concerned the formation of kinship groups in rural Japan. Nakane offers a penetrating analysis of Japanese social groups, and her analysis depicts the kind of large organization typified by a Japanese company or university, and also by an organization like the Aikikai in Japan. This organization is intrinsically vertical in structure, in that it embodies what is called the *iemoto* system [*ie-moto* / いえもと / 家元: family source], wherein power is held by successive generations of the founding family. Thus, the present Doshu, Moriteru Ueshiba, is the grandson of the Founder of the art and as such stands at the top of the vertical structure of aikido practitioners who recognize Morihei Ueshiba as the source of their aikido and who accept his direct descendants who head the Aikikai as the controlling organization in aikido.

5. Sempai / Kohai

The vertical structure of these groups can be illustrated by the fifth pair of terms, which is a specific example that can be seen in some Japanese organizations that emphasize a particular date of entry. I discussed this pair in Part One of this essay, but really as a pair (and omitting the third member). However, I wish to emphasize here that in Japan the trio is very closely connected with organizations and especially with the date of entry to such organizations. Consequently, it is not a general title on the same level as 'Sensei' or in the same category as the other groups of terms discussed in this section.

The date of entry gives rise to the particular vertical relationships exhibited in the sports clubs attached to

Japanese high schools and universities. These terms are the relationships of *sempai* [先輩: senior]; *kohai* [後輩: junior]; and *dohai* [同輩: contemporary: same entry date], which exist in the aikido clubs attached to Japanese high schools and universities. *Sempai* enter the club before *kohai* and are supposed to guide the *kohai* in the traditions and conventions of the club. (*Dohai* enter the club at the same time, but compared with the other two, this term is very rarely used.) These relationships, first encountered in junior high school, are a prominent example of relationships in a vertically-structured social grouping, and in school and university clubs they serve an important function of being miniatures or 'role-plays' of very similar relationships that the students will encounter in Japanese government institutions or private companies after they graduate. I have also heard the term used by one Hombu shihan who trained at the Hombu Dojo in Tokyo (Y Yamada), when referring to and even addressing another shihan who entered before him (N Tamura).

However, in some dojos outside Japan, these terms are used as part of the formal organizational structure of the dojo, with 'sempai' occupying a teaching role directly below that of the sensei, who is the chief instructor of the dojo. I think it is safe to state that such a formal use of the term in a dojo hierarchy is unheard of in Japan. The terms are an essential part of the social fabric, but only in very specific situations and contexts such as a school or university club – and it is a mistake, in my opinion, to extend and overgeneralize these terms.

6. Kyu / Dan

The final pair, kyu and dan, indicating one's grade or rank, denotes a common classification of skill and progress in aikido and does not need such detailed discussion. The kyu ranks start at the highest number, which in my own dojo is 10th kyu, and the number decreases as the student advances in skill—and also in age and experience—down to first kyu [*ikkyu*: 一級]. The dan rank starts at *shodan* (初段, meaning, *beginning rank*), which, with *ikkyu*, is really the pivot of the numbering system, since from *shodan* onwards the number increases. The rank is also marked by the colour of the belt worn. In my own dojo, children wear coloured belts until they reach 5th kyu. They then join the adult class and wear a white belt until they take their dan examination. Passing this allows the wearing of a black belt and also the *hakama*.

… and Another Important Quartet

Finally, we need to consider a quartet of terms that is somewhat separate from the pairs considered above, but they will often be encountered in most organizations dedicated to the practice and teaching of aikido. Japan is a *tate shakai* (a vertically structured society: See 4, above) and to the extent that such a social structure is exhibited in a dojo organization, these terms will sometimes be used.

指導員 / 副指導員 / 師範 / 先生
Shidoin / Fukushidoin / Shihan / Sensei

Working from the top downwards, *shihan* is a term designating someone who has the rank of sixth dan or above in aikido and other martial arts. In Japan, there are no special rules designating who has the title and who does not, but if someone has been 6th dan for a number of years (I think it is six) and is also the owner and/or senior instructor in a dojo or dojo organization, he or she will be regarded as a shihan. The situation is somewhat complicated in Japan because there are other terms, like 道場長 (*dojo-cho*: chief instructor); 本部長/支部長 (*hombu-cho*/*shibu-cho*: headquarters/branch organization head); 責任者 (*sekininsha*: person nominally responsible for the organization). These are all commonly used as titles, but if there is a large dojo, with many experienced *yudansha*, the chief instructor will be supported by these 6th dan holders and above, who are of shihan rank. Outside Japan, however, the situation is different. In the Aikikai, the shihan title is given specifically, with decisions and announcements made at the beginning of each year and a certificate awarded to each recipient. The result is that there is much more control over the shihan title outside Japan than here. The other two names are used far less often and usually only in large dojo organizations. *Shidoin* simply means teacher / instructor and *fuku* added to the term designates an assistant or deputy.

It should be emphasized that other organizations, such as schools and universities, employ a completely different set of terms to designate rank. The fourth term, however, is ubiquitous in Japan and is quite different from the others. *Sensei* combines the Japanese terms for *life* / *living* and *prior* / *before* and is an honorary term for anyone who commands a high level of respect or experience. It is given to politicians, lawyers and gangsters, and is also the common form of address for teachers in a classroom and also for a teacher in a dojo. However, it is not a

specific category, like shihan, or even *sempai* (See 5, above), and so a dojo or organization that uses these three terms together, for example, *sempai*, *shihan* and *sensei*—as an ordered series of teaching positions, makes a big category mistake, for *sensei* is a general category that implicitly contains all the other terms.

Models of Culture

The Aikikai and its IAF offshoot are both organizations and as such make a very suitable subject for the general study of the comparative culture of organizations, but such a study of culture is best pursued with some awareness of the fundamental problems involved. The scope and depth of the problems can best be understood if we pose three sets of questions:

(1) What is a culture? When we claim to be comparing cultures, what exactly are we comparing?

(2) What is a valid comparison? How can we avoid comparing like with unlike? Are the accepted defining characteristics of a culture, especially a 'national' culture, sufficient for a valid comparison?

(3) Can the comparisons ever be objective, or even scientific? Are the subjective biases of the observer / comparer inevitable and, if not, how can they be avoided?

The problems underlying the above sets of questions have accompanied cross-cultural studies ever since the subject was created. Problems of comparing like with like go back at least as far as Plato, and the quest to be objective or scientific has an even longer history, plausibly beginning with ancient Greek science, with its apogee in Aristotle's studies in biology. The 'scientific method' evolved and was inevitably applied to the 'human' sciences like cultural anthropology. Pioneers like Bronislaw Malinowski and Margaret Mead patiently collected data, assuming the guise of impartial and disinterested observers, but their critics claim that they grossly underestimated the biases that came with the collecting and identifying of the 'data' and, as we shall see, these problems have not really been solved.

There is a certain context to the study of culture, which is suggested in the introduction to a paper by Lena Schmitz and Wiebke Weber, to be discussed in detail in Part Three of this essay.

> *"In the 1960s, a new sub-discipline of general psychology became institutionalized, called cross-cultural psychology. Until today, researchers of this sub-discipline have been following the aim of 'comparing data from several cultures, in order to detect intercultural differences, usually by means of standardized questionnaires."* (Lena Schmitz and Wiebke Weber, *Interculture Journal, 2014, pp. 13-22.)*

The new sub-discipline gave rise to many studies on comparative culture and these have been conveniently collected in a website entitled *The Lewis Model*, details of which follow: (https://www.crossculture.com/latest-news/the-lewis-model-dimensions-of-behaviour/). The Lewis Model is named after its creator, Richard Lewis, who produced his book, *When Cultures Collide*, in 1996. All the models surveyed on the website claim to be based on extensive research, but a major question arises here, which has in fact been debated for many centuries, concerning the distinction to be drawn between scientific research and what might be called conceptual analysis.

Scientific research is presumed to be objective and purely governed by the collection and analysis of data, but this presumption itself rests on a particular conception of scientific method. It was the Greeks, especially the Presocratics and Aristotle, who pioneered this method, as evidenced by Aristotle's extensive works on biology, but Aristotle also researched the roots of this method and struggled to find the difference between **beliefs**, which additionally turned out to be true beliefs, and **knowledge**, especially scientific knowledge, the possession of which he further considered to be indispensable for teaching any subject. Aristotle investigated the ways of proceeding from true beliefs to scientific knowledge, but he was also responding to the arguments set out by his teacher and mentor Plato, especially in his work called *Theaetetus*, which concerned the nature of knowledge: what needed to be added to 'true' belief to warrant the new designation of knowledge. Plato's work was what we might call 'dialectical' analysis, as he himself saw it, but an essential part of Aristotle's method included surveying and analyzing 'opinions' held on a topic by 'the many and the wise'—which was his shorthand term for expert scientific theory—and subjecting these opinions to rigorous scrutiny. (In fact, this is precisely what we shall be doing in this essay.) Aristotle wrote an early work called *Topics*, which is

a handbook of argument schemata: accepted ways in which these opinions can be subjected to such scrutiny, but it forms the first part of the set of logical works known as the *Organon*. Aristotle regarded these logical works as preliminary to other, more strictly scientific, research which he undertook in biology. Collecting the 'opinions' of 'the many and the wise' and subjecting these to rigorous analysis is precisely the method employed by the researchers listed on the Lewis website, but the ambivalence between strictly scientific research and the conceptual or philosophical analysis that lay behind Aristotle's treatment can also be seen there.

There is another factor underlying the study of culture that is mentioned in the title of this essay, but which has not yet been discussed specifically. The three sets of questions deal with culture or culture, but this essay deals more specifically with culture and **organizations** and thus we can pose a fourth set of questions:

(4) Is there an aspect of culture, or cultures, that is specific to organizations? Do cultures require organizations? Are organizations themselves contained in the concept of culture, or does the study of organizations add something new to the general study of culture or cultures?

Organizational Culture: Geert Hofstede and his Critics

The entry in the *Lewis Model* website notes that, "*Several dozen cross-cultural experts have proposed such dimensions*" (of culture, but) "*None has yet succeeded in capturing the whole field*." The comment is certainly relevant to at least one of the four important researchers whose names are included in the list:

"Edward Hall, who classified groups as mono-chronic or poly-chronic, high or low context and past- or future-oriented;

Kluckholn, who saw 5 dimensions – attitude to problems, time, Nature, nature of man, form of activity and reaction to compatriots;

Geert Hofstede's 4-D model looked at power distance, collectivism vs. individualism, femininity vs. masculinity and uncertainty avoidance. Later he added long-term vs. short-term orientation;

Trompenaars' dimensions came out as universalist vs. particularist, individualist vs. collectivist, specific vs. diffuse, achievement-oriented vs. ascriptive and neutral vs. emotional or affective."

The list includes the research on culture and **organizations** undertaken by the Dutch researcher, Geert Hofstede, and the fact that Hofstede specifically studied the culture of organizations is the main reason why I have chosen Hofstede as the focus of this essay, rather than the other researchers listed on Lewis's website. Hofstede has made a major attempt to "*capture the whole field*," and in addition to ardent admirers, he has attracted a number of critics. In Part Three of this essay I have devoted some space to a detailed discussion of two such criticisms, contained in papers produced, respectively, by Brendan McSweeney and by Lena Schmitz & Wiebke Weber (quoted earlier). Their criticisms generally coincide with my own view of Hofstede's studies of culture, which is that his theories, while quite popular and superficially attractive, should really be considered as an example of detailed conceptual analysis, originating in the empiricist tradition of Locke, Berkeley and Hume, and more recently following the early theories of Bertrand Russell and both the earlier and later theories of Ludwig Wittgenstein. This has been called the 'British Tradition' in philosophy (though Hofstede is Dutch) and was a staple of undergraduate courses taught at UK universities from the 1960s to the 1980s—when Hofstede was doing his research. I believe that quasi-philosophical conceptual analysis is a more appropriate description of Hofstede's method than strictly scientific analysis or research.

Geert Hofstede

Hofstede researched the 'national' cultural attitudes of employees in a single large international company and it is a reasonable hypothesis that such research might well be of some value in considering both the Aikikai and the IAF, as two other large international organizations with a worldwide spread, with each possessing a different structure. Both organizations fit Hofstede's model of national / international organizations, in so far as this model is defined at all.

Japan and the Aikikai thus constitute a plausible example of the 'national' cultures that Hofstede analyses in his book. However, it will be necessary to move the goalposts somewhat, away from the positions set out by Hofstede, and in a way that Hofstede probably never considered. Aikido is

considered by the Aikikai as an expression of Japanese culture and here we come back to the first set of questions considered above:

> *(1) What is a culture? When we claim to be comparing cultures, what exactly are we comparing?*

Both Hofstede and the Aikikai appear to assume that the term 'culture' has the same cash value, so to speak, whenever and wherever it is used. With the Aikikai, this is simply taken for granted. Aikido has been spread worldwide mainly by Japanese teachers and it has been assumed without much question, first, that non-Japanese who study aikido are in fact indirectly studying Japanese culture, and, secondly, that during this process the non-Japanese cultures from which they start are simply assumed to be analogues of the Japanese base concept. With Hofstede, on the other hand, this assumption is made at the outset and is then argued to be based strictly on scientific evidence. Hofstede defines culture as 'an onion, with values' and assumes without any further argument that his research exhibits differing 'national' manifestations of the common term—as he has defined it. He claims that his discussion of culture results from his scientific research, but his critics have argued that the definition is really used as a conceptual principle that actually guides and structures his research. We will return to this point quite often during this essay.

It should, of course, be emphasized here that the focus in this essay on Hofstede's research is not intended to imply that his research is a model of any kind. Both his research methods and his claimed results have been severely criticized, and so Hofstede's research is not presented here as any kind of standard to be followed; it is offered more as a substantial hook on which to hang a much wider discussion. The size of the company that Hofstede chose for his research, which was IBM, offers some parallels with the present IAF, which now has over fifty member organizations, and the content—and problems—of his research also offer some instructive parallels with any attempt to make a dispassionate analysis of the IAF and its aims, organizational structure, operations, and also the major problems that confront this organization.

There are some obvious differences, of course. Hofstede researched a large company, staffed by paid professionals, whereas the IAF is federation directed entirely by volunteers—and this fact also brings its own problems. Like the Aikikai, some of the larger member federations have the resources to employ office staff, but the vast majority of member organizations are run by volunteers and this fact imposes certain constraints, both on the way in which the IAF is expected to operate and also on the way it actually does operate—for the two are not the same. Nevertheless, some instructive parallels can be drawn between what we might call (1) the 'organizational culture' of the international company studied by Hofstede, with all the various constraints affecting employed staff, and (2) the 'volunteer' organizational culture of the IAF, with the constraints—or their absence—affecting the volunteers who work for the federation. Such a comparison would be highly suitable as a subject of a large-scale research study for something like a Ph.D.

The discussion of Hofstede's views affords a platform for examining some fundamental questions relating to crucial aspects of aikido training that have not, as far as I know, received much attention up to now. The questions concern the extent to which 'culture affects training'—whether and how the cognate concepts of *culture*, *national culture*, and *organizational culture* all influence, affect, or even determine, how an individual aikido student or dojo group sees both the art itself and also progress in the art.

This essay therefore presents a critical examination of Geert Hofstede's research. The two original sources I have used are (1) *Culture's Consequences: Comparing Values, Behaviors, Institutions, and Organizations Across Nations*, which is the main report of his research, and (2) a shorter summary, without all the technical appendices, entitled, *Cultures and Organizations: Software of the Mind*, the latest edition of which was published in 2010. The main discussion is based on this shorter summary, since it is more generally accessible than the earlier work. In this Part Two of this essay, I examine each of Hofstede's cultural dimensions as applied to organizations in general and a fictional aikido in particular. In Part Three, to follow, Hofstede's discussion of organizational culture, which comes in the latter part of *Culture's Consequences*, is examined especially in the light of two highly critical reviews. The first examines Hofstede's whole methodology, while the second has a more specific focus on one of the cultural dimensions that Hofstede claims to have uncovered during his research. It is argued that both the overall methodology and also the examination of cultural

dimensions are very seriously flawed—to the extent that they lose any value as a scientific exercise.

II: Geert Hofstede's Research

In the preface to *Culture's Consequences*, Hofstede describes his target readers in the following terms:

> *"*Culture's Consequences *is a scholarly book, written for social scientists, using scientific language. For practitioners and students, I recommend my short and popular text,* Cultures and Organizations: Software of the Mind *(1991), which has appeared in 16 languages and is more reader-friendly. However, anyone who wants to know the justification and validation of my message in empirical material, or plans to use it in research, needs to use the scholarly book." (*Hofstede*, Culture's Consequences, 2001, p. xvii.)*

As a member of Hofstede's target readership, I used both texts in one of my my graduate seminars, but my Japanese students were rather harder to convince of the virtues of Hofstede's approach than the author might have assumed, so much so that his texts became more of exercise on how not to conduct cross-cultural research. A similar reaction was expressed by a different set of students, in a seminar conducted in a different research institute affiliated to the same university. The students were preparing for their own research projects and took one of my classes on how to write research papers. The students followed a model that is still considered the norm for research papers in the 'soft' sciences of social or cultural anthropology and applied linguistics and is actually recommended by the research institute. Basically, the model envisages a series of steps: (1) setting out the main dimensions of the research to be followed; (2) definitions of the terms used; (3) collection of primary and secondary data; (4) analysis of the data collected; (5) evaluation of the data; and (6) conclusions to be drawn from this evaluation, in relation to Step (1). My students usually could not resist the temptation to add a further step (7), in the form of general recommendations directed to the institution that funded them, on how the conclusions of the research could be applied to their specific circumstances. Personally, I believe that only in very rare cases is this step actually warranted by the data collected and evaluated. It is not that the process of research itself is necessarily compromised. Rather, the general recommendations tend to go well beyond the conclusions that are actually warranted by the evidence collected and analyzed.

In Hofstede's case, problems arise with each step. Hofstede follows the same basic model and, like some of my students and colleagues here, also happily falls into the temptation of offering general comments on the importance of "intercultural communication" as a means to "survival". He adds much more besides this, however, and these additions also add to the problems. The result is that Hofstede's discussions are not really examples of strict scientific research, but rather fall into the general category of semi-philosophical conceptual analyses of culture. I have called Hofstede's discussions *semi-*philosophical, because philosophical analysis can be as rigorous as 'hard' science, as a glance at Ludwig Wittgenstein's early writings will show. Hofstede's discussions are much less rigorous and are very much like the rather superficial discussions sometimes found about Japanese culture that are examples of *Nihonjin-ron* [にほんじんろん 日本人論 = Discussions, mainly by Japanese authors, about what it is to be Japanese].

This mention of *Nihonjin-ron* is of some importance, and for two reasons. First, the postwar Japanese preoccupation with *Nihonjin-ron* carries with it an assumption that there is a distinct culture that is essentially Japanese—and shared equally by all Japanese, and which is therefore a **national** culture. In fact, a recent book, entitled *The Myth of Japanese Uniqueness*, illustrates the way in which the Japanese are alleged to regard their culture and a corollary here is that this culture is fully shared by all Japanese and, since it is acquired by birth, is also exclusive. Thus, Japan would be a prime example of a 'national' culture in the sense assumed by Hofstede, but this phenomenon of *Nihonjin-ron*, with its promotion of Japan as a postwar cultural beacon shining out over the rest of Asia, is quite separate from Hofstede's research.

Secondly, the Japanese preoccupation with Japanese culture is of great importance when one considers a martial art like aikido. As a fundamentally non-competitive 'spiritual' art, in which the Japanese cultural links are constantly emphasized, aikido does not exhibit any clear measure of quality or progress. In arts like sumo, judo, kendo and karate, a student's progress is marked by means of competitive matches, in which the student either wins or loses, or gains more points than the opponent in the opinion of the judges who oversee the matches. In aikido, the

student moves up the kyu ranks, but in descending numerical order, and then obtains the coveted initial dan rank. Progress is measured by means of practical tests in which the applicant has to demonstrate knowledge of aikido, but the so-called spiritual aspects of the art are not really measured at all; progress is simply assumed to take place, to match the advance in the physical aspects displayed in the kyu and dan tests. In any case, the practical tests cease after fourth dan and so for the senior dan ranks further 'spiritual' progress is simply assumed to take place with the passage of time.

The lack of competition in aikido, coupled with the organization of the art into national federations, is one aspect which clouds the straightforward application of Hofstede's research to aikido. On the other hand, to the extent that Hofstede's research is considered a philosophical exercise, rather than scientific analysis, his research can illuminate aikido organizations in many respects, but in ways that Hofstede himself might never have considered.

The Earlier Core Research: *Culture's Consequences*

Hofstede sets out to answer the questions posed above in the following manner. The central core of Hofstede's research, as set out in *Culture's Consequences*, consists of responses to two questionnaires that were distributed to IBM employees working in 72 countries. These responses, comprising a total of 116,000 questionnaires in 20 languages, were supplemented by further questionnaires that were unconnected with the IBM material. On the basis of "theoretical reasoning and statistical analysis," Hofstede postulated a number of "main dimensions on which country cultures differ." In the *Summary* of *Culture's Consequences*, Hofstede briefly summarizes four of these dimensions:

> *"***Power distance** *... is the extent to which the less powerful members of organizations and institutions accept and expect that power is distributed unequally. The basic problem involved is the degree of human inequality that underlies the functioning of each particular society.*
>
> **Uncertainty avoidance** *... is the extent to which a culture programs its members to feel either uncomfortable or comfortable in unstructured situations. Unstructured situations are novel, unknown, surprising, different from usual. The basic problem involved is the degree to which a society tries to control the uncontrollable.*
>
> **Individualism***, on the one side versus its opposite, collectivism, ... is the degree to which individuals are supposed to look after themselves or remain integrated into groups, usually around the family. Positioning itself between these poles is a very basic problem all societies face.*
>
> **Masculinity** *versus its opposite,* **femininity***, ... refers to the distribution of emotional roles between the genders, which is another fundamental for any society to which a range of solutions are found; it opposes "tough" masculine to tender "feminine" societies.*

These were the dimensions listed on the Lewis model website, but Hofstede adds another dimension, which he regards as completely unrelated to the IBM survey. This is

> **Long-term** *versus* **short-term orientation** *... refers to the extent to which a culture programs its members to accept delayed gratification of their material, social and emotional needs." (Hofstede, ibid., pp. xix-xx; bold type added.)*

Later, we will discuss this orientation in detail and the survey on which it is based, but Hofstede's own explanation seems unusual for a scientific monograph:

> *"This chapter (sc. Chapter 7) adds a fifth dimension of national cultures that is independent of the four identified in the IBM studies and covered in the preceding chapters. The new dimension, long- versus short-term orientation, was found in the answers of student samples from 23 countries around 1985 to the Chinese Value Survey (CVS), an instrument developed by Michael Harris Bond in Hong Kong from values suggested by Chinese scholars. The fact that this dimension was not found in the IBM data* ***can be attributed to the Western minds of the designers*** *of the IBM questionnaire and other values lists used in international research so far. The CVS was composed from* ***a values inventory suggested by Eastern minds, which only partly covered the themes judged***

> ***important in the West****. In fact, the long-/short-term orientation dimension appears to be based on items reminiscent of the teachings of Confucius, on both of its poles. It opposes long-term to short-term aspects of Confucian thinking: persistence and thrift to personal stability and respect for tradition." (Culture's Consequences, p. 351,* Bold type mine*.)*

Hofstede gives the explanation in his summary to the chapter, but in the main body of the chapter he accepts and laments the existence of such biases. However, he sees no contradiction between accepting the 'western' and 'eastern' biases of those who compose questionnaires concerning national cultures to begin with, and also accepting the results of such questionnaires as 'strictly' scientific, with the findings based solely on the evidence furnished by the questionnaires and untarnished by any other, extraneous, factors.

The heart of *Culture's Consequences*, therefore, consists of the five chapters that expound these cultural dimensions, which are intended to provide a valid and reliable basis from which to make scientific comparisons between 'national' cultures. These chapters are preceded and followed by chapters that define culture and cultures, defend the methodology adopted, relate the cultural dimensions to organizations and intercultural communication, and suggest lines of further research using the 'dimensional model' that Hofstede has created. The book reads like a lengthy doctoral dissertation and therefore needs the sustained and constructive criticism that should accompany the oral defence of such dissertations. Hofstede does include some criticisms of his method and results, but he also believes that he has adequately responded to these criticisms. Hofstede's research attracted both wide acclaim and also severe criticism, the latter especially from academic colleagues also expert in the field of social anthropology and related disciplines.

The 'Popular' Summary: *Cultures and Organizations*

The 595 densely-written pages of *Culture's Consequences* in its black cover present a rather forbidding prospect to the general reader, especially one who has not entered Hofstede's 'web of discourse' and is not familiar with the subtle devices he uses to persuade his readers. In 1991 Hofstede published another book, intended for "an intelligent lay readership," which presented the conclusions of the earlier book, but in a more palatable form. The shorter book was co-authored with Hofstede's son, Gert Jan Hofstede, and the result had the title of *Cultures and Organizations: Software of the Mind*. In the latest paperback edition that I possess, there is a subtitle: *Intercultural Cooperation and Its Importance for Survival*.

According to Hofstede:

> *"The theme of cultural differences is, of course, not only nor even primarily of interest to social scientists or to international business students. It pertains to anyone who meets people from outside his or her own narrow circle, and in the modern world this means virtually everybody. The new book addressed itself to any interested reader. It avoided social scientific jargon where possible and explained it where necessary." (*Hofstede*, Cultures and Organizations: Software of the Mind,* p. x.*)*

The third edition of Geert Hofstede's *Cultures and Organizations* appeared in 2010. Another co-author was added, a researcher from Bulgaria named Michael Minkov, who used data analyzed from a large survey, entitled the *World Values Survey*. The World Values Survey (www.worldvaluessurvey.org), is a major academic project that was originally started in Europe in 1981 by departments of divinity in six European countries who were concerned with a loss of Christian faith. It was transformed from a limited European survey to something much more open and international by an American sociologist named Ronald Inglehart, who established the present practice of conducting extensive research at ten-year intervals. Areas covered by the survey include ecology, economy, education, emotions, family, gender & sexuality, government & politics, happiness, health, leisure & friends, morality, religion, society& nation, and work. Hofstede, referring to himself in the third person, explained the importance of the survey in the following terms:

> *"When Geert started his research in the 1970s, the IBM employee survey data comprised the largest cross-national collection of comparative value statements anywhere in the world. If he had to start again now, he would do it from the World Values Survey." (Op. cit.,* p. 44.*)*

Michael Minkov was a student of Hofstede's and in his own books he has surveyed some of the vast amount of work on cross-cultural studies produced since Hofstede wrote the earlier *Culture's Consequences*. I have not been able to survey all this material and some of it may indeed respond to the criticisms levelled at Hofstede's research by others working in the field of cultures and organizations. This should be borne in mind during the discussion of the criticisms, both in what follows and in the third part of this essay. I do not want to belittle or diminish the immense contribution that Hofstede has made to the study of comparative culture.

One important detail, however, stands out. Hofstede's core research as recorded in *Culture's Consequences* lists four dimensions that were strictly based on the results of his IBM survey, plus another dimension based on the *Chinese Values Survey*. However, the summary of the research intended for the general reader and presented in the latest edition of *Cultures and Organizations* adds yet another dimension, based on the results of research on yet another survey, this time called the *World Values Survey*, and carried out by Michael Minkov. Hofstede has no problem at all with regarding the new dimensions as complementary to the general mix of those he has already 'uncovered'. We have mentioned this discrepancy above, but the general flexibility of Hofstede's methodology, especially with regard to deciding which data conform with his research and which do not, should be borne in mind during the subsequent critical discussion.

Culture and Cultures …

In the first two chapters of *Culture's Consequences* (Second Edition, 2001), Geert Hofstede offers a detailed and sustained exposition, first, of his definition of culture and national cultures and, secondly, of his methods of data collection, analysis and validation. In the two editions of *Cultures and Organizations*, the presentation is somewhat different. Instead of a justification of his methodology, Hofstede presents a general exposition of how studying cultural differences leads to the cultural dimensions discussed in the rest of the book. Hofstede tackles the second set of questions posed earlier:

> *(2) What is a valid comparison? How can we avoid comparing like with unlike? Are the accepted defining characteristics of a culture, especially a 'national' culture, sufficient for a valid comparison?*

Mental Software and Programming

Hofstede defines culture in general and different national cultures by means of a metaphor from computer science: culture is mental programming.

> *"Using the analogy of the way computers are programmed, this book will call such patterns of thinking, feeling and acting mental programs, or, as per the book's subtitle, software of the mind. This does not mean, of course, that people are programmed the way computers are. A person's behavior is only partially predetermined by his or her mental programs: he or she has a basic ability to deviate from them and react in ways that are new, creative, destructive, or unexpected. The software that this book is about only indicates what reactions are likely and understandable, given one's past." (Cultures and Organizations,* Third Edition, 2010, p.5. NOTE: All the quotations in this summary of Hofstede's research are taken from this edition and can be found in the first two chapters: Pages 3 to 49.*)*

A very relevant question here is why, despite all the caveats he makes in the passage quoted, Hofstede has chosen the metaphor to begin with. Though superficially quite common and plausible, the metaphor is still a metaphor. In fact, it merits critical examination as a metaphor, which Hofstede does not do. Hofstede offers no justification for it, but simply announces that this is the way he will define the term. This will be a major problem later, when Hofstede later argues that his theoretical statements are the results of 'rational' scientific analysis of the data furnished by the responses to his questionnaires. In another sense, the metaphor is another variation of that expounded by the French *philosophe*, Julien Offray La Mettrie, in his classic work, *Man as Machine* (1747) and later illustrated by the work of the British mathematician Alan Turing and his 'Turing Machine.' The computer and its operation form a very common core metaphor for describing the mind/body continuum, or different segments of this, and has generated a vast amount of critical literature, the mere fact of which suggests problems of interpretation, if not of actual coherence. However, the metaphor is attractive only to the extent that the base elements of the metaphor—the ground and the

argument—are not examined too critically. Hofstede simply assumes without any argument that the body/mind continuum operates by means of 'mental' software in the same way that a computer works by means of 'physical' software.

Hofstede starts off with a person's learned patterns of thinking, feeling and acting, which are learned throughout a person's lifetime, and then notes that *culture* is the customary label for this. The label operates at a much more basic level than the common meaning of *culture* as "civilization" or "refinement of the mind", as expressed in literature and poetry, and includes

> *"the ordinary and menial things in life: greeting, eating, showing, or not showing feelings, keeping a certain physical distance from others, making love and maintaining bodily hygiene." (Ibid.)*

Hofstede distinguishes three levels of this mental programming, of which the lowest level is human nature itself, common to everyone and inherited; the middle level is culture, which is specific to a group or category and is learned; and, finally, the top level is personality, which is both inherited and learned, but is quite specific to each individual. Again, this classification is philosophically quite reasonable, but it is not really the result of the scientific analysis of the results of his questionnaires; one could argue instead that it is a set of reasoned principles that is used to structure the research to begin with and then to analyze the results.

Culture as an Onion …

The second metaphor used by Hofstede to define culture is that of the layers of an onion. Quietly shifting the ground of his argument from culture itself to cultural differences, he chooses four basic terms to describe the manifestations of culture. Three of these are *practices*, of which the closest to the surface of the onion are *symbols*, such as language, pictures, dress, hairstyles, flags, status symbols, all of which are recognized as such only by those who share the particular culture. The middle layer of the onion are *heroes*, persons alive or dead, real or imaginary, who serve as role models. The deepest layer of the onion are *rituals*, which Hofstede calls "*collective activities that are technically superfluous to reach desired ends, but that, within a culture, are considered socially essential.*" Examples are greetings, business meetings, general meetings of organizations, discourse, meaning the way language is used in text and conversation.

Hofstede's onion metaphor, like the 'mental' software metaphor, is quite attractive as a description of how 'culture' is supposed to operate and one can easily see its relevance to aikido. A Hofstedean researcher of aikido would have a field day in analyzing how the three layers of his cultural onion are manifested in a typical dojo or organization. Practices, heroes and symbols all figure very prominently in the aikido dojo and in aikido organizations. However, I think it is extremely difficult for Hofstede to argue that his definitions are the result of any scientific analysis of his research or have been arrived at by means of the research itself. In fact, they constitute a 'given', for they are assumed to be correct to begin with, and as such become fundamental working assumptions that actually guide and structure his research.

… but an Onion with Values …

According to Hofstede, at the core of the onion are *values*, which is the fourth basic term and which he calls "*feelings with an added arrow attached indicating a plus and a minus side*." He lists a set of pairings about which the feelings operate:

Evil versus good

Dirty versus clean

Dangerous versus safe

Forbidden versus permitted

Decent versus indecent

Moral versus immoral

Ugly versus beautiful

Unnatural versus natural

Abnormal versus normal

Paradoxical versus logical

Irrational versus rational

The list, which is assumed to be complete, is offered without any qualification or comment as to which sides are 'plus' and which are 'minus' and the possible ranking of the pairs, so one might conclude

that there is no ranking at all and that all the values have the same importance. The only discussion that Hofstede offers concerns the age at which a person comes to acquire the core values in the above list. This timespan, which is also open to question, is supposed to begin immediately after birth and continue until a person reaches the age of 20, in other words, until the person reaches maturity as an adult. After reaching such maturity, "*the person gradually switches to a different, conscious way of learning, focusing primarily on new practices*." The reason why Hofstede does this is to enable him to distinguish more clearly between the different layers of the onion, and to leave the core, the values listed above, as already formed within the specified timescale.

Apart from the initial explanations about studying the 'job attitudes' and 'employee values' of the IBM employees, we are given no indication of how Hofstede has arrived at the list of core values, or how it relates to his 116,000 questionnaires. Clearly, the list could be used to frame the questions that one might ask in a questionnaire, but this also entails that the list has not been arrived at as a result of the responses to these questions. One can see that this problem is not really solved by means of an initial pilot survey, since all this will do is to confirm the conceptual dimensions of the questionnaire that have previously been established. One can also see intuitively that the list of core values might well apply to any culture which operates via what Hofstede / Bourdieu called 'practices', such as training in a martial arts dojo, for it is theoretically possible to place all the core values listed above in the context of aikido training and organizations, especially if aikido is conceived as a 'spiritual' (i.e., intrinsically value-laden) art, essentially performed with a partner, and ordered to the 'wellbeing' of the person who practices the art. I think the list is harder to apply, however, if the art is basically conceived as a set of tools focused on developing what its exponents call an 'aiki body,' with the main emphasis placed on solo training. In this case, many of the values of the onion metaphor lose much of their absolute relevance, since they are subordinated to the need for efficient training.

In *Cultures and Organizations* (p. 61), Hofstede adds a qualification, namely that, "institutions *are the basic elements of society, such as the family, the school, and the community;* organizations *are the places where people work.*" The qualification is added to the discussion on power distance and, while the definition of institutions might be acceptable, the definition of organizations is far too restrictive, since it appears to rule out organizations dedicated to the pursuit of activities other than gainful employment. There are many such organizations and the 'political' intrigues that are found in their management are one reason why they are attractive to study.

… and Values of *National* Cultures

Hofstede moves from culture as mental software / learned values & practices to specifically national cultures in one step—and this is where more serious issues arise. The issues are of some importance for aikido and the IAF, since the Aikikai places great important on national organizations and the IAF is a federation entirely composed of such national organizations. Hofstede's defence of his move is noteworthy in several important respects.

First, Hofstede notes that the 'invention' of nations is a recent phenomenon and was introduced worldwide only in the mid-twentieth century. He distinguishes between *nations* and *societies*—and then fudges the application of both to culture.

> *"Strictly speaking, the concept of a common culture applies to societies, not to nations." (Op.cit.,* p. 21*.)*

Why, then, does he focus on nations and national differences? His answers are rather lame.

> *"Nevertheless, many nations do form historically developed wholes, even if they consist of clearly defined different groups and even if they contain less integrated minorities." (Ibid.)*

After noting the conflicting tendencies towards integration and for ethnic, linguistic, and religious groups to fight for recognition of a distinct identity, Hofstede gives his justification for focusing on national differences and this deserves a more critical examination, for it is highly relevant to aikido and the IAF.

> *"In research on cultural differences, nationality—the passport one holds—should therefore be used with care. Yet it is often the only feasible criterion for classification. Rightly or wrongly, collective properties are ascribed to the citizens of certain countries: people refer to "typically American,"*

> *"typically German," and "typically Japanese" behavior. Using nationality as a criterion is a matter of expediency, because it is immensely easier to obtain data for nations than for organic homogeneous societies. Nations as political bodies supply all kinds of statistics about their populations. Survey data (that is, the answers people give on paper-and-pencil questionnaires related to their culture) are also mostly connected through national networks. Where it is possible to separate by regional, linguistic groups, this is useful. (Ibid.)*

Hofstede's justification seems to be that nationality offers the best opportunity to collect data, but he does not indicate the kind of care that should be taken. His research does indeed focus on cultural differences, but it is taken for granted that one has to compare like with like, and so the basis for comparison has to be 'units' with the same research 'value'. Hofstede continues with another, more important reason that is as much 'ideological' or 'political' as it is supposedly 'strictly' scientific:

> *"A strong reason for collecting data at the level of nations is that one of the purposes of cross-cultural research is to promote cooperation among nations. ... the (more than two hundred) nations that exist today populate one single world, and we either survive or perish together. So, it makes sense to focus on cultural factors separating or uniting nations." (Op.cit.,* pp. 21-22.*)*

The sentiments expressed in the latter paragraph are fine indeed and are highly appropriate to an organization like the IAF, but I think they have no place in supposedly objective, scientific research and are more appropriate in a political manifesto or a peace declaration, of the sort that is presented every year in Hiroshima by the mayor.

I plan to discuss the development of aikido outside Japan later in this series of *AikiWeb* essays, but it is probably sufficient to state here that the division of the IAF into nations or countries seems to have been a matter of practicalities, rather than the result of any carefully thought out theses about different cultures, such as those pursued by Hofstede in his research. In some respects, it might have been better for Hofstede to focus on volunteer organizations like the IAF, rather than a commercial company like IBM. IBM is an American company ('western' in Hofstede's terms), but the IAF is much more difficult to characterize as 'western' or 'eastern'. Clearly, aikido is a Japanese martial art, not a sport, but the art is practiced all over the world according to a model that it gradually losing its original Japanese character. The impetus for creating the IAF, however, originated in Europe, not in Japan, and by aikido practitioners who wanted to create an international federation that followed the model of sports, like judo, kendo and karate. The crucial differences between aikido and these Japanese sports were simply assumed not to constitute any major obstacles for an international federation like the IAF.

As I will explain in Part Three, I came to the IAF quite late in my aikido career, if one may use this term for a completely volunteer activity. After beginnings at the University of Sussex, I trained at a London dojo of the *Aikikai of* ***Great Britain***, which was the name that K Chiba gave his original organization in the UK. After I returned from the USA, where I trained at the New England Aikikai, I resumed training at my university dojo, which I assumed was still affiliated to Chiba's Aikikai of Great Britain, only to find that the name of the whole organization had changed to ***British*** *Aikido* ***Federation*** (BAF). I understood later that this was the result of the creation of the IAF, which, crucially following the example of the sporting world, was organized on the basis of countries, and therefore of 'national' federations. (Eventually, the dojos of the BAF in Scotland formed their own federation, the Scottish Aikido Federation (ScAF), to match the existence of an Irish aikido federation. However, the choice of name simply matched the geographical realities noted at the time and had no connection whatever with the supposed existence or otherwise of a distinct 'national' culture that was assumed to correspond with the name and on to which aikido was supposedly grafted—if we follow Hofstede's model.)

A Local Example of a 'National' Culture

Before I retired as a professor at Hiroshima University, I spent ten years as the convenor of a group charged with making a policy blueprint for foreign residents of the city of Hiroshima. The group itself had been very carefully selected by the city government, through a process of both direct appointment and popular election, and I found out later, to my surprise—given my penchant for driving powerful sports cars well above the speed limit, that I had been appointed, not elected, and that my appointment had been actively sponsored by the

prefectural police department. Members of the group were chosen on the basis of nationality, not because of any deep cultural differences, but on the basis of the relative numbers of those possessing alien registration cards (the appropriate information having been obtained from the national government). There were approximately 15,000 foreign residents in the city and prefecture, respectively, and the larger the national representation, the greater the proportion of the members, whether elected or appointed. Thus, the members included four Korean residents (two from each division of the peninsula), two Chinese residents, two Brazilian residents, and one each from the Philippines, the US, and the UK, making eleven members in all. I was put in the chair on grounds both of seniority in age and of being a tenured professor at the leading university in the region.

The task of the group was to discuss general issues raised by the city government and make recommendations, but the task included making a survey of precisely the type used by Hofstede in his research. Since neither the group nor the city was capable of handling such a large and detailed survey, this task was entrusted to a specialist public-relations company. However, the group still had to devise appropriate survey questions, which effectively uncovered problems, concerning all the aspects of their lives, that were likely to be encountered by foreign residents. The members of the group spent much time devising these questions and biases might well have been there, as they were with Hofstede's IBM questionnaire, but the questions were devised largely on the basis of their own individual experiences in Japan, rather than as members of the relevant 'national' culture. In fact, questions of 'national' culture never surfaced during this stage. The group then planned the three stages of the survey: a pilot questionnaire (given to 100 residents); the main questionnaire (given to 3,000 residents); and follow-up open-ended interviews (given to 200 residents). Responses were received from about half of the random sample and the results were used by the city government to make policies. I believe the group became permanent and is still in existence.

Unlike Hofstede's research database, which was largely confined to employees of a single commercial enterprise, the database for this survey were simply 'foreign residents' and the only likely differences arising from the research was the length of time they had resided or intended to reside in Hiroshima. However, this was allowed for in the questions asked in the survey, which, incidentally, was issued in five languages, with the translations from the Japanese original overseen by bilingual foreign residents. Consequently, some of the problems that affected Hofstede's research were avoided. First, the respondents did not work for a single commercial company and there was therefore no possibility of interference by the company in the way that the employees answered the questions; secondly, the multilingual versions also removed the dominant influence of any one language, in this case, Japanese. Of course, Japanese was the original language and the questionnaires were translated, so there were language issues that we will need to consider later, namely, the linguistic 'imperialism' that governed the construction of the original survey and which might well have limited the strictly 'objective' value of the survey.

Although the group was composed of members of different nationalities, the uncovering of differences between 'national cultures' and the locating of each culture on a set of 'national' cultural dimensions was not the purpose of the exercise, though the sentiments about cross-cultural cooperation expressed in Hofstede's second paragraph, quoted above, were probably as important to members of the group as they were to Hofstede. In fact, the only assumption made about 'national culture' in the survey was the extent to which both the Japanese organizers and all the non-Japanese members of the group—the latter seen as representatives of the foreign residents—accepted the existence of a Japanese 'national' culture, in which they had become embedded, so to speak. The survey did not have to carry Hofstede's ideological baggage and as a result was closer than his research to the accepted model of 'objective' research in cultural anthropology. However, I believe that this model of 'objective' research is very much a Platonic ideal, in the sense that it is virtually impossible to attain in actual practice—as Plato himself actually believed.

The overriding aim of the survey was to draft a blueprint for a policy that would enable long-term foreign residents of Hiroshima to adapt to living in Japan—in other words, to cope with the practical demands made by participation in a 'foreign' host culture. It is not difficult to detect the underlying assumptions, suggested above, that were made by the Hiroshima city government, namely, (1) the existence of 'Japanese culture' as a 'national' culture shared to the fullest extent by every native Japanese, and (2) the very pressing need for non-Japanese to adapt

themselves to living in this culture in as 'smooth' and uncomplicated a way as possible.

The concept of a national culture, therefore, is certainly very much alive in Japan and is accepted—taken for granted, almost—by the population as a whole. The concept is also accepted by at least one non-Japanese, as can be seen from a recent observation on the Internet.

> *"There's no white culture. There's German culture, Dutch culture, Irish culture, English culture, etc. Each of those nations have traditions and events that mark their culture. White people in America are made up of descendants of European (as well as Australian, New Zealand, South African, etc.) nations, and as descendants of those nations, will celebrate holidays marking such cultures, such as Mariä Lichtmess or Boxing Day. The shared White experience in America, inasmuch as it involved simply being White (not "from Alabama," or "from Illinois") - is built around the oppression of people that aren't white, i.e. making sure that the Latins and Blacks and Italians don't get too uppity and forget who their betters are. Apart from violence and other action against minorities, there is no "white" experience in America. When you say you want "White Power," you don't mean that you want your traditions to be respected. What tradition would that be? The tradition of sipping mint juleps on your back porch and shooting geese out of the sky? That's a southern tradition, not a white one, and your white friends in Albany or Boise, would not share that tradition. The only "White power" that you might share with other white men in Albany or Boise would be the tradition of terrorizing black people." (Retrieved on August 14, 2017,* from a discussion on Facebook about the Charlottesville incident in the US.*)*

The (male) writer certainly accepts the existence of national cultures in Europe and would certainly accept the existence of a national culture in Japan, but he seems to have great difficulty in including the United States in the same category. He seems very clear that there is no "white culture" in the US—even under the presidency of Obama or Donald Trump, he but is far less clear about the possibility of a distinct American national culture ('American' here signifying the United States and not the whole continent). One problem seems to be that he is uncertain whether his view of culture is defined in terms of a country, a nation (which he seems to prefer), or a language, or in terms of all three.

A Local Example of a 'National *Aikido*' Culture

As we go through the detailed critical review of Hofstede's analysis, it is important not to lose sight of the overall aim, which is to examine the rather complex 'cultural' context of aikido dojos and the organizations built up around them. This is probably best achieved by giving a concrete example and referring to this example in what follows. I consider a fictional aikido organization, located somewhere outside Japan. The central dojo is headed by a Japanese instructor of shihan rank (6th dan and above), who began training in the Aikikai Hombu headquarters when the Founder was alive, but who was never a designated *uchi-deshi*. Our fictional instructor moved from Japan to another country, married and established a family, and adopted this country as the 'home' country. Initially, the instructor made frequent visits back to Japan, but the frequency diminished as the dojo in this 'home' country became more established as a local centre of serious aikido training. The shihan's 'home' dojo is supplemented by a very small group of other dojos in the same country and even fewer in different countries, all technically run by the shihan and his senior students. All of these students are non-Japanese—they are nationals of the various countries in which the dojos are situated—and in fact the senior students play an increasingly prominent role in aikido training and teaching, since the shihan is quite advanced in years and has largely retired from teaching aikido and from active involvement in the organization. However, the way in which the shihan trained and also his own ideas about aikido have formed a kind of template for a certain way of training and this template was adopted by his own students—to which they added varying degrees of critical awareness about the shihan's own relationship with the founder of aikido and his successors.

Adapting a name from a very famous author of fiction, we will call this equally fictional organization the *Woebegone Aikido Association*, and in the subsequent discussion on the various dimensions of 'national' cultures, we will keep referring back to this organization as a very practical example of an aikido organization exhibiting—or not exhibiting—the marks of a 'national' culture as understood and expounded by Hofstede. In fact, The Woebegone

Aikido Association is a strictly fictional example of a very large number of medium-sized aikido organizations gathered under the general aegis of the Aikikai and the member-organizations of the IAF.

A crucial element of these organizations is the training of what is very fundamentally a Japanese martial art or way, by students who (1) generally are not Japanese, but who (2) train under technical direction of a resident Japanese shihan. The shihan follows a traditional Japanese method of teaching and thus sees very little need for making any distinction between the martial art that he teaches and the 'national' culture in which he regards the art as embedded. Finally, since the students are not Japanese, they (3) need technical and other explanations in English, which the shihan is not very good at and which therefore acts as a spur to his teaching by showing, rather than teaching by means of tortuous verbal explanations. People can also see that this adds to the 'mystery' of the art, wherein the techniques, called *waza*—a term usually left untranslated—have to be 'stolen.'

Since the various dojos affiliated to the Woebegone Aikido Association are situated in different countries, we can expect that all the issues concerning 'national cultures' discussed by Hofstede should be present here, but in the more intense form exhibited by the physical / mental training in a fundamentally Japanese art. (In my own dojos in Hiroshima, the situation is somewhat reversed, since the shihan—myself—is non-Japanese, but all except one of the dojo members are Japanese and any necessary explanations during training are given in Japanese.) Each 'cultural dimension' supposedly 'uncovered' by Hofstede in the IBM survey and other surveys and discussed in *Cultures and Organizations* can therefore be presumed to be present in the branch dojos of the Woebegone Aikido Organization and will be considered in the sections that follow, but in the context of the aikido dojos that make up the association. (For those who have read Garrison Keillor's novels on which the name is based, the Woebegone Aikido Association does not at all embody the assumed meaning of the modified name, being a flourishing aikido organization and one that is not at all laden with woe.)

One might argue here that I am not comparing like with like and we will need to discuss this issue in some detail later. Hofstede surveyed the employees of an American company with branches throughout the world and the only similarity between IBM and the Woebegone Aikido Association is the international spread of the two organizations. This objection fails, however, because of the assumptions that Hofstede makes—and has to make—about the IBM survey. He regards the survey—and the other surveys done by his associates, as wholly applicable to 'national cultures' and this entails that all the members of each 'national culture' will exhibit all the dimensions revealed by the surveys to a greater or lesser degree—and will exhibit the dimensions regardless of whether they work for IBM or are members of the Woebegone Aikido Association. The argument for the universal nature of the cultural dimensions is an essential element in Hofstede's oft-repeated claims that he is following proper scientific procedures and that the cultural dimensions are 'revealed' by the survey results.

NOTE: 6. Discussing existing aikido organizations is a very delicate undertaking, especially if there are elements in the discussion that can be regarded as critical of any existing organization, and so I wish to stress here that the Woebegone Aikido Organization is strictly fictional and that any discovered similarity with existing aikido organizations affiliated to the Aikikai is both unintentional and purely coincidental. The fictional Woebegone Aikido Organization is really a literary metaphor devised to illuminate the structural issues relating to aikido organizations in general, but especially as these are studied through the lenses afforded by the research of Geert Hofstede and Michael Minkov.

The Evidence of Language…

Before we discuss in detail Hofstede's views on the general dimensions of national cultures, it is worth making a few comments about an important aspect of culture that seems curiously lacking in his analysis. In his essay entitled, "The Evidence of Language," and published in the first volume of the *Cambridge Ancient History*, W F Albright gives a brief introductory sketch of the connection that he sees between language and culture:

> *"While it is difficult to establish a close relationship between language form and the racial or cultural characteristics of its speakers, an intimate relationship does exist between culture and language content. The study of language content needs no special justification, since the written records of antiquity are our most valuable source of information concerning the peoples and*

> *civilizations which form the object of historical investigation. But language as a formal structure, like the tools and institutions of a society, represents a kind of transmitted organism and as such falls into the category of data which can be ordered in typologically related sequences. Thus, for the historian, who is interested primarily in tracing continuities, the study of the history and development of a language, apart from its use as a vehicle for oral and written traditions, provides useful and sometimes unique evidence of otherwise undiscernible ethnic and cultural affiliations." (*W F Albright*, "The Evidence of Language," in Cambridge Ancient History, Volume I, Part 1: Prolegomena and Prehistory,* p. 122.*)*

Hofstede is supposed to be conducting a strictly scientific analysis of culture and organizations, based on the questionnaires he gave to the many IBM employees in the various countries where the company operates, and in *Culture's Consequences*, he discusses the issues mentioned by Albright and, to his credit, he uses many of the same sources. That language presents something of an issue for Hofstede is clear from the brief section in *Culture's Consequences* entitled "*Language and Translation*." One or two brief extracts will suffice to underline the point I am making here:

> *"Language is both the vehicle of most of cross-cultural research and part of its object. Culture, as I use the word in this book, includes language. Language is the most clearly recognizable part of culture and the part that has lent itself to systematic study and theory building…"*
>
> *"Language is not a neutral vehicle. Our thinking is affected by the categories and words available in our language..." (*Hofstede*, Culture's Consequences, p. 21.)*

Hofstede then gives a very brief summary of his understanding of what linguists call the Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis, namely, that '*observers are not led by the same picture of the universe, unless their language backgrounds are similar or can in some way be calibrated*.' (*Ibid*.)

This is of some relevance for Hofstede's own research, since he had to use translation and back-translation to test the accuracy of the responses he received to his IBM questionnaires. He draws his conclusions at the end of the relevant section in *Culture's Consequences*:

> *"Finally, translation errors are randomized when the number of languages used is increased. One bad translation may invalidate a two-country study, but it is unlikely that systematic translation errors will affect the conclusions of a 53-country, 20-language study such as the one described in this book. Language, in this case, becomes variable in the analysis and not just a source of bias." (Op. cit.,* p. 23.*)*

Hofstede's logic is hard to fathom here. On the one hand, one can easily see that the conclusions of a two-country study could be invalidated by a bad translation (such as occasionally happens when Japanese texts about aikido are translated into English), but Hofstede sees some sort of self-correcting mechanism at work when the erroneous translations of a study are extended to twenty languages in over 50 countries. The only way in which such a self-correcting mechanism might work is if all the translations of a 20-language study were made at the same time, but by different experts—all bilingual in the base and target language, and all proficient in the complex of skills required for translation. One of the major issues in aikido is the very variable quality of the translations encountered, including those made from both the published writings and also the various oral pronouncements of Morihei Ueshiba.

To his credit, Hofstede does consider language in some detail in *Cultures and Organizations*, which is a later and extended summary of *Culture's Consequences*, but an issue for me here is why he did not consider language itself and language differences as one of the central cultural dimensions discussed in the book. He does indeed regard language as a part of culture, for it is listed among the symbols, along with dress, hairstyles and flags, that form a crucial part of his onion metaphor, discussed earlier. However, language for Hofstede seem to lack the crucial role it has for someone like Ludwig Wittgenstein, whose studies on language included theories about the role of language in discourse. Hofstede clearly regards language as important, but he has little of substance to report on the roles it actually plays in forming the culture dimensions discussed in his two books. The relevance of this issue was made clear to me from a conversation with a close friend and aikido colleague,

with whom I often discussed Hofstede when I was using his texts in my university seminars. My friend, who is Dutch, commented that Hofstede's overall approach in his research was "very Dutch" and his comment was intended to cover not only the explicitly 'cultural' parts of the research, but also the general language aspects—implicit and explicit, and including the language in which the works were originally written. In this respect, my treatment of Hofstede's research is different from my research on the history and evolution of aikido. Whereas I can speak and read Japanese and can therefore read the writings of Morihei Ueshiba in the original language, my total inability in the Dutch language means that I have to approach Hofstede via English translations and my operating assumption has to be that these translations are accurate enough to be reliable. I will return to the language issue when considering Hofstede's cultural dimensions one by one, below, and discuss it further in Part Three of this essay.

Hofstede's General Dimensions of 'National' Cultures

Hofstede argues that his concept of 'cultural' dimensions is a 'direct consequence of his research' and it is very clear that this concept affords him an effective platform from which to survey cultural differences and he provides ample statistical evidence (invariably based on his survey) to support his conclusions. A very relevant question here, however, is how Hofstede arrived at his notion of cultural dimensions and to what extent this notion actually guided the structuring of his research. Another, related, question concerns the apparent flexibility of the number of cultural dimensions, which appears to increase in number with the appearance of each new edition of his 'philosophical' summary, *Cultures and Organizations*. This is not a major question if it is accepted that Hofstede's cultural dimensions are not really the result of scientific objective research—supposedly objective and relying very strictly on the evidence and nothing else, but more an example of conceptual analysis, of the sort practiced by postwar linguistic philosophers and students of comparative culture. In any case, the first step is to expand the brief description given by Hofstede himself, above, with a more detailed analysis of each 'cultural' dimension. We can then take a very critical look at the whole structure of these dimensions and the alleged role that they play in Hofstede's own 'mental software.'

Hofstede's Dimensions: 1. Power Distance

In his earlier description of power difference Hofstede begins with the degree of acceptance of the unequal distribution of power in a society, and then moves to the degree of acceptance of the social inequality that is assumed to be a consequence of this unequal power distribution. In his later treatment of the subject, he reverses the order of presentation and uses the 'pecking order' in animals as a springboard for a general discussion of inequality in human societies, which he traces back at least as far as Plato.

Inequality is exhibited in five broad areas: (1) physical and mental characteristics (from birth); (2) social status and prestige; (3) wealth; (4) power; (5) laws, rights and rules. Hofstede notes that inequality in these areas does not need to go together and gives a number of examples. Champion athletes, for example, might well have special physical and mental endowments from birth, enhanced by intensive training, but this difference from the rest of the population does not necessarily give them wealth or political power (though it often does in practice). Hofstede does not give the example of hereditary heads of martial arts like the Morihei Ueshiba and his successors, after the Japanese model of *iemoto*, but this most certainly has to be included as an example of power distance. Such families resemble royal families in the sense that they exhibit a similar inequality, but in more respects than that of athletes. Nevertheless, proficiency in the martial art of which they are the heads does not come from the mere fact of birth in a particular family, but also has to be acquired through hard training: they cannot simply look and act in a 'regal' fashion, but really have to act the part they are expected to play.

The Power Distance Index (PDI)

Inequality and power distance are simply assumed to be a 'given' in any social structure and the major issue for Hofstede is how different 'national' cultures deal with this. The result is the **Power Distance Index (PDI)**, which is based on the answers given to three questions in the IBM questionnaire. Hofstede spends much space justifying his method, analysis and validation, but the fact remains that his whole analysis—of a national culture, in relation to power distance—rests solely on guided answers to just three questions in Hofstede's massive questionnaire, which relate to the management of a particular commercial company or of a department within the company. The three questions ask whether employees are 'afraid' of managers, how they relate to their 'perceived manager' and how they relate to their 'preferred

manager.' The answers, also, are organized in a particular way, namely, as typologies. This allows Hofstede to present the answers as points on a spectrum, ranging from complete acceptance (high power distance) to complete negation (low—or no—power distance). However, Hofstede's decision to present his results in the form of typologies—and to extend the facets of the Power Distance construct in so many ways, also serves to undermine its validity. We will discuss this point in more detail later.

Hofstede then extends his concept of power distance to include detailed descriptions of the 'national' cultures in which such differences are exhibited. Accordingly, the results of the survey move from an analysis solely of power ***distance*** to an analysis of ***attitudes*** concerning power distance within the 'national' cultures themselves. This is a major step, especially if we consider organizations that are not commercial companies like IBM. We are asked to believe that precisely the same attitudes concerning power distance as those operating in a commercial company like IBM are also exhibited in other organizations, like aikido associations, which Hofstede would have to assume fully exhibit the 'national' culture of the country or countries in which they are situated.

Power Distance: Language Issues …

In *Cultures and Organizations*, Hofstede gives his account of the origins of power distance differences and attributes this to language differences. He refers to his Table 3.1, mentioned above.

> *"European countries in which the native language is Romance (French, Italian, Portuguese, Romanian, Spanish) scored medium to high on the power distance scale… (from 50 for Italy to 90 for Romania). European countries in which the native language is Germanic (Danish, Dutch, English, German, Norwegian, Swedish) scored low (from 11 in Austria to 40 in Luxembourg). There seems to be a relationship between language area and present-day mental software regarding power difference. The fact that a country belongs to a language area is rooted in history: Romance languages all derived from Low Latin and were adopted in countries once parts of the Roman Empire, or, in the case of Latin America, in countries colonized by Spain and Portugal, which themselves were former colonies of Rome. Germanic languages are spoken in countries that remained "barbaric" in Roman days, in areas once under Roman rule but reconquered by barbarians (such as England), and in former colonies of these entities. Thus, some roots of the mental program called power distance go back as least to Roman times—two thousand years ago. Countries with a Chinese (Confucian) cultural inheritance also cluster on the medium to high side of the power distance scale—and they carry a culture at least four thousand years old." (Cultures and Organizations,* pp. 83-84.*)*

Japan appears in the middle of his power-difference table, ranked 49-50, and with a score of 54 on the PDI. In fact, Japan appears at the very bottom of a scattered group of Asian and (South) East Asian countries and so is unlike the nations that are clustered closely together at the bottom of the table, with PDI scores ranking from 40 down to 11. This group includes the UK, US and Canada, Australia, and nations in central Europe and Scandinavia. Hofstede leaves this apparent anomaly unexplained (the anomaly rests on his view, expounded above, about the close connection between language area and 'present-day mental software'). This matter is of some relevance to aikido, in view of its provenance and history as a Japanese *budo* art and the central role played by Japanese instructors in spreading the art outside Japan.

Inequality, Power Distance, Norms and Differences in Organizations …

Hofstede states his views on inequality in organizations very clearly:

> *"Within organizations as units of society, we inevitably find inequality of members' abilities and inequality of power. An unequal distribution of power over members is the essence of organization. Without it, we get something like a 'flock of birds, in which the only rule of behavior for each bird is to change the direction of flight so that, relatively, it always sees its fellows in the same position and thus never leaves the group' (Cotta, 1976, p. 178). Inequality of power in organizations is essential for control and for temporarily overcoming the law of entropy, which states that disorder will increase (Cotta, 1976, p. 176). Even*

> *organizations designed to be egalitarian, such as political parties, develop their own power elites; this is Mitchell's (1915/1962, pp. 342.ff.) 'iron law of oligarchy.'" (Culture's Consequences.,* p. 82.*)*

Hofstede regards the usual boss-subordinate relationship as archetypal and notes resemblances "*to even more fundamental relationships earlier in life: those of parent and child and of teacher and pupil.*" (*Ibid*.) It is the flexibility that Hofstede sees in this relationship that gives his research some relevance in a martial art like aikido, where the parent / child and teacher / pupil metaphor are constantly used in a typical dojo or organization. Despite his insistence on the inevitability of inequality in organizations, Hofstede regards his findings on power distance as purely based on the responses to the three survey questions, as we have seen, and on the basis of these responses he constructs his Power Distance Index (PDI), with each of the 53 countries and regions being ranked on the basis of their respective index values. (These are displayed in Table 3.1, on pp. 58-59, of *Cultures and Organizations.*) Malaysia ranks first with an index value of 104; Austria ranks last at 53rd, with an index value of 11; Japan is near the middle of the range, with an index value of 54, and is followed at some distance by the US (40) and the UK (35). Hofstede's conclusion is that in general Asian countries tend to be on the high end of the PDI scale—with Japan being an unexplained anomaly, whereas European nations, and also nations that have been influenced by European culture, tend to be on the low end of the scale. He attributes some of these rankings to language differences, which we will consider below.

However, not content with merely ranking the countries, Hofstede gives a description of 'general societal norms' behind the low PDI and high PDI ranking. This is "*an exercise in induction, which means that I complete the picture with elements based on intuition rather than on empirical evidence, much as an archeologist completes ancient pottery from which shards are missing.*" (*Op. cit.*, p. 97.) These 'elements' are presented as an Exhibit (*Op.cit.*, p. 98) and are followed by a much more detailed description of the 'Key Differences between Low- and High-PDI Societies'—in the family, at school and at work. (*Op.cit.*, pp. 107-108.) A few examples follow.

Some General Societal Norms

Hofstede's list of 'societal norms' based on the PDI is like a spectrum, with low PDI norms and high PDI norms at opposite ends, separated by a double slash mark. In the examples that follow, the low PDI norms always come first:

> *"All should be independent. // A few should be independent; most should be dependent.*
>
> *Inequality in a society should be minimized. // There should be an order of inequality in this world in which everyone has his/her rightful place; high and low are protected by this order.*
>
> *Hierarchy means an inequality of roles, established for convenience. // Hierarchy means existential inequality.*
>
> *Subordinates are people like me. // Superiors consider subordinates as being of a different kind.*
>
> *Superiors are people like me. // Subordinates consider superiors as being of a different kind.*
>
> *Powerful people should try to look less powerful than they are // Powerful people should try to look as powerful as possible." (Op.cit.,* p. 98.*)*

A similar pattern governs Hofstede's list of 'Key Differences between Low- and High-PDI Societies.' A few examples follow, of differences in work organizations:

> *"Decentralized decision structures; less concentration of authority. // Centralized decision structures; more concentration of authority.*
>
> *Flat organization pyramids. // Tall organization pyramids.*
>
> *Hierarchy in organizations means an inequality of roles, established for convenience. // Hierarchy in organizations reflects the existential inequality between higher-ups and lower-downs.*
>
> *The ideal boss is a resourceful democrat, sees self as practical, orderly, and relying on*

support. // The ideal boss is a well-meaning autocrat or good father; sees self as a benevolent decision-maker.

Institutionalized grievance channels in case of power abuse by superior. // No defence against power abuse by superior.

Openness with information, also to non-superiors. // Information constrained by hierarchy." (Op.cit., pp. 108-109*.)*

The same explanation of differing social norms is given in *Cultures and Organizations*.

Hofstede previously mentioned archeologists and cited a relatively simple operation of identifying missing shards of broken pottery. However, archeologists also share similar operations and methods with social anthropologists, namely, allowing 'induction' and 'intuition' to frame supposedly objective scientific analysis, and Hofstede is doing much more than merely examining and completing the 'ancient pottery' of organizations.

Now one can easily see that one could easily substitute 'dojo instructor' or 'chief instructor' for 'manager' in Hofstede's three survey questions, and Hofstede would have grounds to argue, if he practiced aikido, that the resulting 'power distance' gave a convincing indication of 'national' cultural attitudes to the organization found in a dojo. However, this approach is far too superficial and does not do justice to the complexity of supposedly 'national' aikido organizations, compared with that of companies.

Inequality, Power Distance, Norms and Differences in the Woebegone Aikido association

The Power Distance Index of the Woebegone Aikido Association is presumably quite high and if it were regarded as a Japanese cultural organization, it would be different from Japan as a whole, which is in the middle of the PDI scale and is therefore regarded as 'average' (whatever this means for Hofstede). The higher than average scores for the Woebegone Aikido Association would be based on relatively few factors, which we can enumerate and specify.

1. It is based, first, on the obvious fact of the knowledge and skill of the Japanese shihan, who has had some links with the founder of the art and his successors. No one else in the dojo possesses these links or this level of skill and it is actually a mark of pride for the association that it is directed by a shihan who possesses this pedigree and supposed level of skill. (*Supposed* here implies that it is the students themselves who discover this level of skill, not the shihan himself who displays it.)

2. It is based, secondly, on the fact of dissemination of this knowledge and skill by the shihan to the students who acquire this. The shihan teaches by whatever means at his disposal (given the Japanese context, almost invariably *his*—but see below); the students receive his teaching by whatever means at their disposal—and a common Japanese metaphor here is stealing [技を盗む / わざをぬすむ / *waza wo nusumu*].

3. Finally, it is based on the fact of acquisition of such skill and knowledge by those who do not possess it, or who do possess it, but to a significantly lesser degree than the shihan. Dissemination by teaching and acquisition by learning are not at all the opposite sides of the same process, as can be seen from any classroom, or, indeed, any dojo.

However, even this relatively straightforward model is too simple, since there is a wide variety of ways in which this knowledge can be given or acquired, and there are also very strong grounds for arguing that this knowledge and skill would be displayed because of the way in which the art is typically taught, and not because the high PDI of the dojo is reflected in the attitudes displayed of a so-called 'national' culture, as Hofstede is constrained by his research to argue. In the case of the Woebegone Aikido Association, the art is being taught by an eminent Japanese instructor and so the transmission of the knowledge and skills is quite likely to be based on the traditional Japanese model known as SHU-HA-RI, explained elsewhere in these columns. The SHU-HA-RI model, of course, brings with it its own particular problems, since it assumes a cultural base that is entirely Japanese. However, some dojos are situated outside Japan and the Japanese chief instructor is teaching both Japanese and non-Japanese students, who might be considered by Hofstede to exhibit the PDI of their own 'national' culture in the same way that the Japanese instructor supposedly exhibits his own.

There is also the problem of Hofstede's sliding from the *fact* of power difference to the *attitudes* concerning the fact of power difference held by members of the Woebegone Aikido Association. The two are certainly not the same, as can be illustrated by what follows.

As well as being a vertically-structured collection of dojos, each headed by an instructor, the Woebegone Aikido Association is an organization and as such is democratic in many respects, thus possessing a different structure to that of the component dojos. The two structures have their own forms of decision making, which sit uneasily together in the Woebegone Aikido Association. The differences can be illustrated by two examples: (1) deciding who is promoted and (2) deciding whether to open or close a branch dojo.

(1) The established *tatemae* is that the decision on who takes kyu and dan examinations is made solely by the Japanese shihan, who in fact invariably consults with his senior 'powerholder' students. The powerholders, on their side, tend to be those who have trained the longest, and this is usually symbolized by the dan rank, black belt and the hakama, and progress in the organization usually follows the same pattern through the stages of SHU, HA, and RI as in the dojo. These senior students are consulted bv the shihan with respect to promotions, but the shihan is not technically obliged to do so and the promotion requests made to the Aikikai bear only the shihan's signature and seal.

(2) Opening or closing a branch dojo, on the other hand, involves much more than any technical judgment of quality on the part of the shihan, especially if the shihan has no experience of the legal issues involving buying and selling land or property.

In other words, the senior members in the vertical structure of the constituent dojos tend also to be the senior members in the horizontal structure of the organization of dojos. Thus, in spite of the supposedly democratic appearances, the decision makers in both organizations tend to be the same people.

The fictional Woebegone Aikido Association as a whole is recognized by the Aikikai, this *tatemae* being that the organization itself, and also the dojos therein, are well-run, in the sense that both achieve the aims of affording the individual members of the constituent dojos the means of effective training within the parameters defined by the keepers of the art. The Aikikai in fact occasionally emphasizes that recognition is given because the organization itself is well run, and not because it is headed by an individual, despite the fact that this individual is a native Japanese instructor.

The fictional Woebegone Aikido Association is also indirectly a member of the main international aikido organization sponsored by the Aikikai, known in real life as the IAF, since the countries in which it is situated are members. However, the connection between the two organizations becomes real only at general congresses, and also the connections between the various organizations in the few countries in which the Woebegone Aikido Association is situated are virtually non-existent. In terms of power-distance and the PDI, the situation is less straightforward in a larger organization like the IAF, where the links between the knowledge and skills in the art acquired in a dojo at the hands of a shihan, and the knowledge and skills of handling democratic decision-making in a large meeting like a congress are much less clear. The accepted *tatemae* here is that the IAF is a federation of organizations composed entirely of individuals who possess the first type of knowledge and skills—the skills of the art itself, but this is simply assumed without question. In addition, the power distance in the IAF can manifest itself in completely different ways from in a dojo. The IAF is actually a much more fragile blend of the vertical and horizontal social structure outlined by Chie Nakane and mentioned earlier, and it is also at the mercy of 'political' machinations that seem to be endemic to both types of social structure. These will progressively appear as we proceed with the discussion of Hofstede's cultural dimensions.

Concluding Remarks on Power Distance

As a conclusion to this section on power-distance, and making use of Nakane's distinction, we can perhaps state that Geert Hofstede's concept of power-distance in organizations applies very clearly—indeed very starkly—to vertically-structured aikido organizations such as a dojo or pyramid-style conglomerations of dojos operating under the direction of a Japanese shihan. However, these clear waters are somewhat muddied to the extent that the stakeholders in the association are not Japanese and

are muddied even more substantially in the IAF. The IAF is at first sight much more ostensibly democratic, with delegates meeting at regular intervals in a general congress, where officers are elected and where decisions made by majority vote and sometimes by secret ballot. So far, so good. However, the presence in the IAF of two groups tends to undermine the directness of the democracy. The day-to-day operations of the IAF are led by a powerful directing committee, ostensibly composed of 'ordinary' members of the member federations elected by the congress. This committee does not itself have a technical or teaching role, but some of the members might well be senior aikido practitioners who do indeed have such a role.

However, behind this elected committee is an unelected group called the Senior Council, composed of shihans of the highest rank and possessing both a technical and teaching role and also a veto power over the democratic decisions taken by the directing committee and the congress. This suggests to me an apprehension that democratic decision-making by the committee or congress might lead to unforeseen and unpredictable results, despite the fact that those making the decisions are almost invariably in a supposedly satisfactory vertical relationship with a shihan. One might argue that the veto has never been exercised, but this misses the point. The mere possibility is the big stick that allows those who carry it to speak softly, if they speak at all. The presence of the Senior Council constitutes very strong evidence that maintaining a high level of power-distance, in Hofstede's terms, is also a major aspect of the federation's actual purpose. In recent years, however, official relations between the Aikikai and the IAF, ostensibly at least, appear to have become considerably closer. Regular liaison meetings take place and the impression is given that the power-distance, to continue using Hofstede's term, has been reduced. Another consequence is that the clear dividing line between the elected body and the unelected body has become less distinct in actual practice.

Hofstede's Dimensions: 2. Individualism

If we compare *Culture's Consequences* with the latest edition of *Cultures and Organizations*, we shall see that Hofstede has changed both the number and the order of presentation of the cultural dimensions he has supposedly uncovered. Power distance is very closely related with uncertainty avoidance, but Hofstede considers two other dimensions first. He is on ground that is more familiar to students of aikido when he discusses the second cultural dimension presented in *Cultures and Organizations*, which concerns the individual over against the group, for this is one area where training in Japan differs in some respects from training outside Japan. He begins his account of this second dimension with a story illustrating the differing cultural attitudes to the role of personal relationships in business. According to the example, which presumably has been chosen because of the 'typicality' of the opposed cultures chosen, in one culture, that of Sweden, business is done with a company; in the other, that of Saudi Arabia, business is done with a trusted individual. Hofstede concludes, on the basis of this example, that

> *"At the root of the difference between these cultures is a fundamental issue in human societies: the role of the individual versus the role of the group." (Cultures and Organizations,* p. 90*.)*

There are the same issues here relating to scientific methodology, as were encountered with the first dimension on power difference, but one can dispense with Hofstede's repeated claims of scientific rigour and consider his discussion as a very adequate example of sophisticated and detailed conceptual analysis.

Hofstede's story concerns making a business agreement, but the instruction and training of a martial art like aikido in an international context certainly uncovers similar problems of differing—and sometimes conflicting—cultural attitudes. Hofstede begins with a definition of individualism and the IDV dimension:

> *"The new dimension is defined as follows:* Individualism pertains to societies in which the ties between individuals are loose: everyone is expected to look after him- or herself and his or her immediate family. Collectivism as its opposite pertains to societies in which people from birth onward are integrated into strong, cohesive in-groups, which throughout people's lifetime continue to protect them in exchange for unquestioning loyalty.
>
> *Degrees of individualism obviously vary within countries as well as among them, so it is important to base the country scores on comparable samples from one country to*

another. The IBM samples offered this comparability." (Cultures and Organizations, p. 92; italicization reversed*.)*

Individualism: Language Issues …

Hofstede briefly discusses language issues relating to IDV, focusing especially on the presence or absence of the first-person singular pronoun when written or when uttered by a speaker. Making use of the researches of others, he notes that the presence or absence of the "I" pronoun correlated most strongly with IDV. He also notes that languages spoken in 'individualist cultures' tend to require speakers to use the "I" pronoun when referring to themselves, whereas languages spoken in 'collectivist cultures' allow or even prescribe dropping this pronoun. He notes that English, spoken in the most 'individualist' countries (ranked in a table on pp. 95-97 in *Cultures and Organizations*) is the sole language "we know of" that writes "I" with a capital letter.

It is difficult to evaluate the importance of Hofstede's comments here. The very close connection between language and culture, understood here as universal and unanalyzed 'entities' is undeniable, but the connection needs much more detailed investigation than Hofstede undertakes and, in any case, is beyond the scope of Hofstede's research. If we consider further the example he gives of the personal pronoun in English, the initial letter of names of persons is always capitalized in English, but this rule extends far beyond persons. On the other hand, Japan appears in the middle range of the IDV table, but Japanese is written with a combination of Chinese characters and Japanese ideographs, so the significance of the initial "I" in English has no relevance whatever here. Japanese has very rich resources for denoting the first person and further differentiates between the sex of the speaker, which English does not do. 僕 can be read as *boku*, but it is considered extremely impolite for a member of the female sex to refer to herself using this term, 私 (*watashi*, *watakushi*) being preferred—and these terms are actually common to both sexes. Thus, Hofstede's example of English as a linguistic marker of individualism can be met with counterexamples that suggest that English is in no way unique in this regard, and so he needs to ground his discussion on the language issues connected with IDV in a rather more detailed analysis of individual language and cultures in which they are embedded—which he does not do in either of the works considered here.

Individualism and Collectivism in Organizations …

Having given his definition of individualism, Hofstede then portrays low IDV and high IDV in a variety of contexts. He begins with 'general norms' and the 'family' and sets out the differences in twelve instances. There is space only for a very brief selection of examples.

*"**Collectivist***

People are born into extended families or other in-groups that continue protecting them in exchange for loyalty.

Value standards differ for in-groups and out-groups: exclusionism.

Friendships are predetermined.

High-context communication prevails.

The most powerful on girls' beauty ideals is girlfriends.

Individualist

Everyone grows up to look after himself or herself and his or her immediate (nuclear) family only.

The same value standards are supposed to apply to everyone.

Friendships are voluntary and should be fostered.

Low-context communication prevails.

The most powerful influence on girls' beauty ideal is boys in general." (Op.cit., p. 113*.)*

A similar number of examples is given for differences at school, in the workplace and even in ICT (information & communication technologies). Readers should note that the examples have been chosen with aikido dojos in mind.

*"**Collectivist***

The purpose of education is learning how to do.

Management is management of groups.

Direct appraisal of subordinates spoils harmony.

Relationship prevails over task.

The Internet and e-mail are less attractive and less frequently used.

Individualist

The purpose of education is learning how to learn.

Management is management of individuals.

Management training teaches the honest sharing of feelings.

Task prevails over relationship.

The Internet and e-mail hold strong appeal and are frequently used to link individuals." (Op.cit., p. 124*.)*

Hofstede discusses the results of other surveys, in addition to the IBM survey conducted by himself, and argues that in all cases the results of these other surveys strengthen those of his IBM survey. He then moves more blatantly from the supposedly scientific discussion of the survey results and offers his predictions about the future of individualism and collectivism. Like the astrologers who write the agony columns for popular magazines, Hofstede manages to offer both optimism and pessimism in his predictions.

"The deep roots of national cultures make it likely that individualism-collectivism differences, such as power distance differences, will survive for a long time in the future." (This is a fairly safe prediction, not based on any evidence.) "That said, if there is to be any convergence between national cultures, it could be on this dimension. The strong relationships between national wealth and individualism is undeniable, with the arrow of causality directed … from wealth to individualism. Countries having experienced fast economic development have experienced a shift towards individualism. For example, care for the elderly by family members is becoming less self-evident."

"Nevertheless, even at equal levels of wealth in per-capita income, countries also preserve individualist and collectivist values from their history. East Asian societies, such as Japan and Korea, do conserve distinctive collectivist elements in their family, school and work spheres. Among western countries, such as Britain, Sweden and Germany, in spite of a notable convergence to individualism under the influence of common economic development, relationships between the individual and the group continue to differ." (Again, this is a fairly safe prediction, but Hofstede wrote this in 2011, before the Brexit issue arose in the European Union.) "The cultures shift, but they shift together, so that their relative position remains intact, and there is no reason why differences between them should disappear." (Op.cit., pp. 133-134*.)*

All of which seems to suggest that Hofstede himself appreciates the difficulty of drawing any meaningful conclusions here.

Individualism and Collectivism in the Woebegone Aikido Association

Compared with the Power Distance Index (PDI), which is based on the knowledge & skill of the shihan and its reflection in the ranks of individual members, the Individualism Index (IDV) of the Woebegone Aikido Association is less easy to estimate. As I mentioned above, Hiroshi Tada once stated to me that aikido is basically a solitary art, which would suggest that it is the individual members of the dojo, not the dojo group or organization itself, who are the essential focus of the art. However, Tada Shihan was Japanese and was thus part of a culture that Chie Nakane stated to be vertical in orientation, with an emphasis on ranking, and therefore on the common shared experience of being in a particular rank or category. In the Woebegone dojos, the children wear coloured belts according to their kyu rank, whereas the adults all wear white belts until they achieve a dan rank, after which they wear a black belt and hakama. To an outsider, therefore, who happens to attend a training session, there will be three definite groups, all based on dress. The little kids will be running around in coloured belts, usually supervised by one or two older kids or adults, part of the majority of adult students, who are wearing white belts. The Japanese shihan and his (fewer) senior non-Japanese students will all be wearing hakama. The Woebegone Dojo is unusual in having a large and thriving children's

section and also of having the children wear coloured belts according to their age and kyu level. This level starts at 10th kyu and the children progress downwards through the kyu ranks until they reach 5th kyu, when they enter the adult class and wear a white belt, where the particular rank is no longer distinguished.

However, the practice of black belts and white belts as a sign of rank is common throughout the worldwide organization to which the Woebegone dojos belong and does not depend on any manifestation of a 'national' culture. Hofstede might argue that the dojos do in fact manifest a 'national' culture because, since they are practicing a Japanese martial art, this culture is Japanese. However, this is not a good argument and in fact works against Hofstede's general thesis, supposedly based on the results of his questionnaires, that the IBM employees manifest their own 'national' cultures in how they work for IBM. The Woebegone dojo members clearly do not do this in their own dojos and this suggests that Hofstede's research is either seriously flawed or is not directly applicable to the Woebegone Aikido Association—or both.

In a typical training session at a Woebegone dojo, the shihan leads the training by demonstrating the particular *waza* or techniques that will be featured during the training session. All the students watch the demonstration and then form pairs and each pair practices the particular technique. The shihan circulates from one pair to another and checks the training of each pair, giving brief explanations where necessary. Explanations are very occasionally given to the whole class before or between each *waza* shown, but the shihan, especially, and most of the senior instructors prefer to show rather than explain verbally. This general training pattern is followed regardless of whether the (Japanese) shihan is teaching or his (non-Japanese) senior students and in fact is a common practice throughout the international federation of which the Woebegone Aikido Association is indirectly a member. The aspects of individualism and collectivism are present, but are present in all the dojos, so it is very difficult to give a PDI value to each individual dojo and even more difficult to argue that a possible PDF value will be based on the particular 'national' culture of the country in which the dojo is situated.

The traditional Japanese model of SHU-HA-RI has been mentioned before and, along with 'stealing techniques' (the latter simply shown, without much or any explanation), is an accepted model of teaching aikido, even though it is regarded as a traditional teaching model in the Japanese martial arts. However, many teachers make occasional use of the model without knowing that it is a traditional Japanese model, followed in traditional arts like the tea ceremony, and (even more likely) without knowing that is has a specific name. So, the fact that some members of the Woebegone Dojo Association sometimes use a traditional Japanese pedagogical model (exhibited in Japan only in very specific contexts) when teaching in Woebegone dojos, cannot be used as evidence that the association is collectively following a teaching model of Japanese 'national' culture. The model is certainly Japanese, but it is 'national' only in the extremely narrow sense that it originated in Japan and is occasionally used by some Japanese and also by some non-Japanese, both inside and outside Japan, when occasionally teaching certain aspects of a traditional Japanese art like the tea ceremony.

Hofstede's Dimensions: 3. Masculinity / Femininity

In discussing this dimension (the discussion of the dimensions follows a different order in the two works discussed), Hofstede takes great pains to point out that he is not discussing the physical differences between males and females, which he takes to be obvious. Rather, the discussion concerns more abstract psychological attitudes, of masculinity and femininity. Hofstede has earlier discussed core values, which he defined as, "*feelings with an added arrow attached indicating a plus and a minus side*." The real arrow usually has a pointed barb at one end and feathers at the other and so in Hofstede's metaphor an arrow is intended to fly in one direction only; consequently, it is not really a good metaphor to deal with 'mixed' feelings or ambivalence, where the plus and minus sides seem to occur at the same time and with the same arrow.

Masculinity and Femininity: Language Issues …

Mention has already been made of the differences in the use of the "I" pronoun in 'individualist' cultures and it was noted that in Japanese males and females refer to themselves in different way (僕 *boku*, being used exclusively by males). However, Hofstede is strictly concerned with what he calls 'mental software' and does not discuss language and language differences at all in his treatment of MAS differences. One is left to conclude that he simply

assumes that differences in language use will be already reflected the MAS differences he has previously established on the basis of his IBM survey.

Masculinity and Femininity (the MAS Index) in Organizations …

Hofstede begins his discussion of this dimension with a brief summary of his findings on masculinity and femininity:

> *"The fourth dimension along which national cultures differ systematically has been called masculinity, with its opposite pole femininity. The duality of the sexes is a fundamental fact with which different societies cope in different ways; the issue is what implications the biological differences between the sexes should have for the emotional and social roles of the genders. Surveys on the importance of work goals, both inside IBM and elsewhere, show that almost universally women attach more importance to social goals such as relationships, helping others, and the physical environment, and men attach more importance to ego goals such as careers and money. However, the IBM database revealed that the importance attached to such goals varied across countries as well as across occupations." (Culture's Consequences,* p. 279.*)*

In *Cultures and Organizations* Hofstede gives a definition that is applied to 'national' societies as a whole:

> *"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 feminine when emotional gender rules overlap: both men and women are supposed to be modest, tender, and concerned with the quality of life." (Cultures and Organizations,* p. 140.*)*

One should note here in passing that both sets of definitions relate to the workplace and work goals. The MAS follows Hofstede's other dimensions in being characterized as polar opposites and an outline of the MAS dimension is given in *Cultures and Organizations*.

> *"**For the masculine pole***
>
> ***Earnings**: have an opportunity for high earnings*
>
> ***Recognition**: get the recognition you deserve when you do a good job*
>
> ***Advancement**: have an opportunity for advancement to higher-level jobs*
>
> ***Challenge**: have challenging work to do—work from which you can get a personal sense of accomplishment*
>
> ***For the opposite, feminine pole***
>
> ***Manager**: have a good working relationship with your direct superior*
>
> ***Cooperation**: work with people who cooperate well with one another*
>
> ***Living area**: love in an area desirable to you and your family*
>
> ***Employment security**: have the security that you will be able to work for your company for as long as you want to." (Op. cit.,* p. 139.*)*

The chart given in Chapter 5 *Cultures and Organizations* divides the list of 76 countries and regions based on the IBM database, plus extensions, into three, with one-third listed on each page. Each page lists around 25 countries, all grouped horizontally into regions: America; Southern Europe; Northern Europe; Central & Eastern Europe (countries from the former Soviet bloc); the Muslim world; and South and East Asia. In each region the countries are ranked vertically in terms of MAS value. (I have presented this information in detail by way of a reference to the IAF, which at present has member organizations in 130 countries and regions. A survey of MAS in the IAF would be a difficult but interesting exercise. For Hofstede, such an exercise would not reveal anything new, since he is investigating dimensions of values possessed by all members of the national culture in equal measure.)

> *"The most feminine-scoring countries (ranks 76 through 72) were Sweden, Norway, Latvia, the Netherlands, and Denmark; Finland came*

close with a rank of 68. The lower third of Table 5.1 further contains some Latin countries: Costa Rica, Chile, Portugal, Guatemala, Uruguay, El Salvador, Peru, Spain and France; and some Eastern European countries: Slovenia, Lithuania, Estonia, Russia, Croatia, Bulgaria, Romania, and Serbia. From Asia it contains Thailand, South Korea, Vietnam, and Iran. Other feminine-scoring cultures were the former Dutch colony of Surinam in South America, the Flemish (Dutch-speaking Belgians), and countries from the East African region.

The top third of Table 5.1 includes all the Anglo countries: Ireland, Jamaica, Great Britain, South Africa, the United States, Australia, New Zealand, and Trinidad. Also from Europe are Slovakia (with a rank of 1), Hungary, Austria, German-speaking Switzerland, Italy, Germany, Poland, and the French-speaking Belgians and Swiss. In Asia are Japan (rank 2), China and the Philippines. From Latin America are the larger countries around the Caribbean—Venezuela, Mexico, and Colombia—and Ecuador." (Op.cit., pp. 141-143*).*

Hofstede then assumes without any argument that such masculine and feminine goals in the work place can easily extend to other areas of life, such as training in a martial arts organization or dojo. Having given his findings and defined the terms to his own satisfaction, Hofstede then follows his usual practice and portrays low MAS and high MAS in a large number of countries and then in a wide variety of contexts. What is of note here is that Japan has the second highest MAS score of all those given in Hofstede's chart, so he would conclude—always strictly on the basis of the evidence presented by the IBM survey—that Japanese have a very high MAS index. However, he would then conclude that this is the case not merely in a company like IBM, but in all walks of life, including the typical aikido dojo.

Hofstede then presents over 50 'key differences' between Feminine and Masculine Societies in five categories. There is no space to present all these differences, but since aikido was created in Japan, which has the second highest MAS score, it will be appropriate to present a selection of differences with Sweden, which has the lowest MAS score, as the opposite pole. Hofstede goes through five areas of life: general norms and family; gender and sex; education; the workplace; and politics and religion. Feminine differences come first (F); masculine difference come second (M). A question of great interest would be the extent to which these so-called 'key differences' are manifested in a typical aikido dojo at either end of the MAS scale, namely, in Japan and in Sweden.

Hofstede's Key MAS Differences: 1. General Norms

F: Both men and women should be modest; M: Men should be assertive, ambitious and tough.

F: Boys and girls are allowed to cry, but neither should fight; M: Girls cry, but boys don't; boys should fight back, and girls should not fight at all.

F: Boys and girls play to be together; M: Boys play to compete; girls play to be together. (*Cultures and Organizations*, p. 113.)

Hofstede's Key MAS Differences: 2. Gender and Sex

F: Being responsible, decisive, ambitious, caring and gently is for women and men alike; M: Being responsible, decisive, ambitious is for men; being caring and gentle is for women.

F: Girls don't cheer for boys; Women's ambition is channeled towards men's success.

F: Homosexuality is considered a fact of life; M: Homosexuality is considered a threat to society. (*Op.cit.*, p. 113.)

Hofstede's Key MAS Differences: 3. Education

F: Average student is the norm; praise for weak students; M: Best student is the norm; praise for excellent students.

F: Jealousy of those who try to excel; M: Competition in class; trying to excel.

F: Failing in school is a minor incident; M: Failing in school is a disaster.

F: Competitive sports are extracurricular; M: Competitive sports are part of the curriculum.

F: Couples share one car; M: Couples need two cars. (*Op.cit.*, p. 113.)

Hofstede's Key MAS Differences: 4. The Workplace

F: Resolution of conflicts by compromise and negotiation; M: Resolution of conflicts by letting the strongest win.

F: Preference for smaller organizations; M: Preference for larger organizations.

F: More leisure time is preferred over money; M: More money is preferred over leisure time. (*Op.cit.*, p. 113.)

Hofstede's Key MAS Differences: 5. Politics and Religion

F: Welfare society ideal; help for the needy; M: Performance society ideal; support for the strong.

F: Immigrants should integrate; M: Immigrants should assimilate.

F: International conflicts should be resolved by negotiation and compromise; M: International conflicts should be resolved by a show of strength or by fighting.

F: Tender religions; M: Tough religions.

F: Dominant religions give equal roles to both sexes; M: Dominant religions stress the male prerogative. (*Op.cit.*, p. 113.)

The selection presented above (*Cultures and Organizations*, pp. 155-170) was aimed less at the IBM workplace than at masculinity and femininity differences in the aikido dojo, where the aim is to practice and gain proficiency in a Japanese martial art that is fundamentally non-competitive, but also heavily male-dominated. The fact that aikido is both fundamentally Japanese and also fundamentally non-competitive makes it more difficult to estimate the degree of masculinity and femininity in aikido in similar terms to that in a more internationally recognized competitive sporting activity like judo, karate or kendo. However, the International Aikido Federation (IAF) recently took more active steps to recognize the gender imbalance in aikido and to correct it. A working group has been active since 2016 and has been organizing various events in IAF member countries.

Masculinity and Femininity in the Woebegone Aikido Association

In one obvious sense the Masculinity Index (MAS) in the Woebegone Aikido Association is relatively easy to estimate, though this would be only a superficial estimate, based as it is on numbers, rather than 'cultural' attitudes—which latter is preferred by Hofstede. The organization is run by a male chief instructor and the vast majority of the senior instructors are also male, though the gender balance of the students, especially the younger students, is much more evenly divided. There is a nod to the generally acknowledged need for parity in numbers, but this does not translate into any campaigns to attract female beginners, rather than male.

The Japanese shihan created the headquarters dojo when he was quite young, having been sent overseas by the Aikikai. At that time, the shihan embodied pretty well all of Hofstede's key MAS differences as applied to Japan. Training was very tough and the reputation as a 'hell dojo' was well deserved, so much so that the female members of the dojo found themselves having to practice with the same toughness and intensity as the men. The senior instructors did their best to replicate these conditions in their own dojos, but since they did not generally have the shihan's technical skill and 'martial' charisma, initially gained from his time spent training with the founder of the art, they made up for this by liberal applications of 'male' physical strength. So, the Woebegone Aikido Association was firmly at the masculinity end of the MAS spectrum and this tended to be the case even in the few dojos affiliated to the association where the chief instructor was female.

Over the years, however, the situation changed to some extent and this change might be explained in terms of changes in the MAS values from the masculinity end to the femininity end of the value spectrum. The shihan slowed down due to advancing age and also changed the emphasis of his training, also to some extent. Sheer brute strength was never explicitly emphasized to begin with—it was simply used, but the shihan rarely gave any verbal explanation of what he was doing or how aikido had to be practiced; he did what a shihan was supposed to do, which was to be a teacher-as-model, following the traditional paradigm of SHU-HA-RI (discussed elsewhere in these columns). However, this also had

the effect of making it harder for the students to understand the finer points of what he was doing. Ease or difficulty of understanding in the Woebegone Aikido Association is also covered by the other traditional Japanese paradigm, namely 技を盗む/ *waza wo nusumu*: stealing *waza*: the shihan teaches the *waza* by being a good model, but it is up to the students to 'steal' this knowledge from the shihan; a very reasonable implication of the metaphor being that it is up to the shihan to give the potential robbers a run for their money and not to make it unusually easy for the *waza* to be stolen.

The dojos of the Woebegone Aikido Association, therefore, present a much wider spectrum of MAS values than might be suggested by the high score of Japan in Hofstede's MAS index. It is also unlikely that the width of the MAS spectrum can be attributed to the particular MAS values of the 'national' culture of the countries in which the dojos are situated. The branch dojo based in Sweden conducts training in an identical manner to the way it is conducted in the headquarters dojo in Japan—and also in the Woebegone Aikido Association as a whole.

The wife of the Japanese Woebegone shihan presents an interesting cultural nexus. (There are various terms for wife in Japanese: *tsuma* [妻], *oku-san* [奥さん], and *kanai* [家内, meaning *inside the house*]). She is non-Japanese and does not practice aikido, but she also does her best to embody the tatemae of a 'traditional' Japanese wife. Since she matches the shihan in age, she also tends to reside at the conservative end of the cultural spectrum and embodies the Japanese cultural nostrum of 'walking two steps behind' her husband. Her roles include making sure that his *keikogi* [稽古着: training suit] is always pristinely—almost glowingly—white, fully aware that white is traditionally regarded as the Japanese symbol of purity. The shihan's wife also embodies the meaning of 家内 in aikido terms by rarely being seen in the dojo, her main role being to look after the shihan and bring up the children (none of whom practice aikido). She might occasionally appear on festive occasions, when she will invariably wear a traditional Japanese kimono plus the usual accoutrements. Such an appearance at dojo functions could well be supposed by Hofstede to be a prime example of femininity in the Woebegone Aikido Association, with the Japanese shihan ably representing the opposite pole, as the MAS index for Japan indicated. However, Hofstede's surmise needs to be combined with the fact that the shihan's wife comes from Slovakia and to the extent that she represents her 'national' culture by simply being Slovakian, she would have even higher MAS values than her Japanese husband.

Hofstede's Dimensions: 4. Uncertainty Avoidance

Hofstede starts off his treatment of this dimension with a brief anecdote intended to illustrate the different way that the British and the Germans treat rules and rule following. He quotes at length a British sociologist on the German railway system.

> *"What strikes a foreigner travelling in Germany is the importance attached to the idea of punctuality, whether or not the standard is realized. Punctuality, not the weather, is the standard topics of conversation for travelers in railway compartments. Long distance trains in Germany have a pamphlet laid out in each compartment called a Zugbegleiter (literally, "train accompanier") which lists all the stops with arrival and departure times and all the possible connections en route. It is almost a national sport in Germany, as a train pulls into a station, for hands to reach out for the Zugbegleiter so that the train's progress may be checked against the digital watch. When trains are late, and it happens, the loudspeaker announcements relay this fact in a tone which falls between the stoic and the tragic. The worst category of lateness which figures in these announcements is unbestimmte Verspätung (indeterminate lateness: we don't know how late it is going to be!) and this is pronounced as a funeral oration." (Hofstede, Cultures and Organizations,* p. 188. Quoted from P Lawrence, Managers and Management in West Germany, 1980*.)*

I remember such items as the Zugbegleiter from the days when I travelled around Europe on a *Eurailpass*, but I am not entirely convinced that railway operations are a reliable indication of such a supposedly crucially important aspect of a 'national culture' as uncertainty avoidance. I have much more experience of long distance travel in Japan and this includes the *shinkansen* bullet trains, as well as slower (and far less frequent) long distance sleeper trains. (For trips to the Aikikai Hombu, I often used the *Asakaze* sleeper train, which left Hiroshima at 8 pm and arrived in Tokyo at 7.30 the following

morning. I usually ate breakfast in the dining car, as the train made its leisurely way around the base of Mount Fujii.) The shinkansen trains that travel between Tokyo and Fukuoka are so fast, frequent and punctual, that there is no need for any Zugbegleiter and on the very rare occasions that trains are late, the announcements follow a set form of apology that never varies in format or tone. However, I am far less certain than Hofstede might be about any conclusions that can be drawn from Japan's superb railway system that are relevant to Japanese 'national' culture.

Hofstede has borrowed the concept of uncertainty avoidance from other researchers. Richard M. Cyert and James G. March use it in their book, *A Behavioral Theory of the Firm* (1963), and Hofstede cites their argument that organizations avoid uncertainty in their environments in two major ways:

> First, *"they avoid the requirement that they correctly anticipate events in the distant future by using decision rules and emphasizing short-run reaction to short-run feedback rather than anticipation of long-run uncertain events. They solve pressing problems rather than develop long-term strategies.*
>
> *Second, they avoid the requirement that they anticipate the reactions of other parts of their environment by arranging a negotiated environment. They impose plans, standard operating procedures, industry tradition, and uncertainty-absorbing contracts on that situation by avoiding planning where plans depend on prediction of uncertain future events and by emphasizing planning where the plans can be made self-confirming by some control device." (*Quoted by Hofstede*, Culture's Consequences,* p. 147*.)*

Hofstede adds that "*human societies at large use technology, law and religion to cope with uncertainty, organizations use technology, rules and rituals*," (ibid.) and then explains exactly how organizations do this, the explanation allegedly based entirely on the IBM data collated from answers given to just three questions. Presumably, the point of the above statement is to show that the general concepts appropriate for analyzing societies in general need to be made more specific when analyzing organizations, where the procedures for dealing with uncertainty avoidance are also made more specific. Though Hofstede rightly separates the dimensions of uncertainty avoidance and time orientation, the two are closely related and the separate treatment is somewhat artificial.

Uncertainty Avoidance: Language Issues …

Hofstede makes only a very brief reference to language issues when discussing uncertainty avoidance and the reference is one single paragraph on p. 201 of *Cultures and Organizations*.

> *"The less flexible system of rules and norms for children in stronger uncertainty-avoiding cultures is also reflected in language. Data about the structure of languages presented by Kashima and Kashima … show that languages in uncertainty-avoiding cultures more often have different modes of address for different persons, like* tu *and* vous *in French. Children learning such languages face more choices according to tight cultural rules. Languages in lower UAI cultures tend to have fewer such rules." (Cultures and Organizations,* p. 201; italics reversed*.)*

The reference to Kashima and Kashima is to two scholars who have published research articles on modes of address. Hofstede cites two articles published in the *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, and thus we have the curious situation of two groups of scholars citing and supporting each other, in order to support the validity of their respective research. This would normally lead to claims of circularity in reasoning, but this really beyond the scope of this essay.

The Research of Emiko Kashima and Yoshihisa Kashima

The first paper cited by Hofstede appeared in 1998 and was entitled, "Culture and Language: The Case of Cultural Dimensions and Personal Pronoun Use." The matter of personal pronoun use was mentioned by Hofstede earlier, when dealing with individualism and his IDV index. He stated that English was the only language that used the capitalized "I" when referring to the person who initiates the utterance. The paper makes a much wider discussion, as can be judged from the summary that preceded the actual article.

> *"The relationship between culture and language was examined across 39 languages spoken in 71 cultures. Correlations were*

> *computed across languages and cultures between the use of first- and second-person singular pronouns (e.g., "I" and "you") and global cultural dimensions such as Individualism, which were previously extracted in large-scale cross-cultural surveys. The personal pronoun was analyzed in terms of the number of first- and second-person singular pronouns and whether the pronouns can be dropped when used as the subject of a sentence in speech. Cultures with pronoun drop languages tended to be less Individualistic than those with non-pronoun drop languages. Personal deixis (person-indexing pronouns) may provide a window through which cultural practices can be investigated." (*E Kashima and Y Kashima*, Op. cit.,* p. 461*.)*

As may be gathered from this summary, the authors accept Hofstede's definition of culture and his identification of nations and cultures, but, in keeping with the limited scope of the research, are rather more cautious than Hofstede seems to be in accepting the conclusions warranted by their statistical analysis. They also accept a particular theory of language and grammar (R W Langaker's theory of cognitive grammar and construal relationships) and also accept the Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis, namely, "that language determines, or at least influences, the way we look at our world." (*Ibid*.) On the other hand, the authors have surveyed a much wider range of cultural dimensions than Hofstede presents, but are much more cautious than Hofstede in accepting the validity of both their methodology and the results.

The second paper cited by Hofstede appeared in 2004, with the title of "Individualism, GNP, Climate and Pronoun Drop: Is Individualism Determined by Affluence and Climate, or Does Language Use Play a Role?" This paper is of wider scope, for the authors sought to investigate the role played by language in forming / maintaining the cultural dimension of individualism, in contrast to affluence and climate. More specifically, the aim was to uncover possible non-material factors at work in predicting Hofstede's IDV index. The factor under study was DROP, which:

> *"refers to a linguistic phenomenon in which the pronominal subject of a sentence is dropped. In English it is not grammatically correct to drop the subject in a sentence such as, 'I went to a movie last night.' By contrast, in other languages, such as Japanese, it is more often the case to drop the subject and say, 'Went to the movie last night.' The subject of the sentence is recovered sometimes from the verb conjugation, for instance, in Spanish, or from the context of the utterance as in Chinese, Japanese, or Korean. They (sc., the authors of the 2004 paper) reported that those countries in which their main language requires the explicit use of the first-person pronoun in a sentence tend to be individualistic." (*Y Kashima and E Kashima*, Op. cit.,* p. 126*.)*

The authors are rather more hesitant than Hofstede in establishing a causal connection between the factors discussed and Individualism and they also accept that if there is a causal connection, it will work both ways. However, they accept Hofstede's general definition of culture and national cultures and his identification of the two. Thus, their research is of only limited value in supporting the claims made by Hofstede in his discussion of uncertainty avoidance.

Uncertainty Avoidance Index (UAI) in Organizations

On pp. 191-193 of *Cultures and Organizations* Hofstede presents a table showing the UAI scores for 76 countries and regions, the maximum score being 112 and the minimum score being 8. National organizations are assumed to be the equivalent of whole countries and the countries are placed in geographical groups: Central & South America; Southern and South-Eastern Europe; Northern Europe and the 'Anglo-Saxon' world; Northern and North-Eastern Europe; Muslim World, Middle-East and Africa; East and South-East Asia. However, the classification is not purely geographical, since it also reflects historical events and what we may call power politics.

The classification, however, has only a limited value, for only very limited conclusions can be drawn from the occurrence in the table of individual countries. If we take the geographical groups listed, the countries in central and South America are spread out over the entire table, with Guatemala occupying first place with an index score of 101 and Jamaica occupying last place with an index score of 75. The most that can be stated here is that the majority of the countries listed in this group appear in the upper third of the table. Greece and Portugal head the countries in the second group, which is Southern and South-Eastern

Europe, and the remaining countries are all in the upper half of the table. The opposite is true of the countries in the third group, which is Northern Europe and what Hofstede calls the 'Anglo World.' The French and Dutch halves of Belgium are very near the top of the table here, but Belgium is very much the exception, with the remaining countries all occupying the bottom half of the table (Austria coming 35th with an index score of 70 and Denmark coming 74th with an index score of 23). The only other group of countries with a similar pattern is the Muslim World, in which the highest ranked country, Israel, is in 28th place with an index score of 81, and South Africa is in 60th place with an index score of 49. The countries in the remaining groups are scattered over the table, with the closest grouping being the East Asian countries in the lower third of the table. Japan is a major exception here, being ranked 11th overall with an index score of 92.

Having presented his results in the form of a ranked table, Hofstede then follows his usual practice and presents the characteristics of strong and weak UAI countries in another set of tables, with weak uncertainty avoidance on one side and strong uncertainly avoidance on the other. These are simply presented as a set and involve general norms prevalent in any society: health & education, work and organization. A brief selection follows.

General Norms and the Family (In all cases in what follows, Strong UA follows weak UA, after the double slash.)

"*Uncertainty is a normal feature of life and each day it is accepted as it comes. // The uncertainty inherent in life is a continuous threat and must be fought.*

Aggression and emotions should not be shown. // Aggression and emotion may at proper times and places be vented.

Comfortable in ambiguous situations and with unfamiliar risks. // Acceptance of familiar risks; fear of ambiguous situations and unfamiliar risks.

Lenient rules for children on what is dirty and taboo. // Tight rules for children on what is dirty and taboo.

Similar modes of address for different others. // Different modes of address for different others."

(*Cultures and Organizations*, p. 203.)

Health, Education and Shopping

"*Fewer people feel unhappy. // More people feel unhappy.*

People have fewer worries about health and money. // People have more worries about health and money.

People have more heart attacks. // People have fewer heart attacks.

Students are comfortable with open-ended learning situations and concerned with good discussions. // Students are comfortable in structured learning situations and concerned with the right answers.

In shopping, the search is for convenience. // In shopping, the search is for purity and cleanliness.

People more often claim ethical considerations in buying. // People read fewer books and newspapers.

There is faster acceptance of new features such as mobile phones, e-mail and the Internet. // There is a hesitancy towards new products and technologies." (*Op. cit.*, p. 208.)

Work, Organization and Motivation

"*More changes of employer, shorter service. // Fewer changes of employer, longer service, more difficult work-life balance.*

Work hard only when needed. // There is an emotional need to be busy and an inner urge to work hard.

Tolerance for ambiguity and chaos. // Need for precision and formalization.

More new trademarks. // Fewer new trademarks.

Focus on decision process. // Focus on decision content.

Top managers are concerned with strategy. // Top managers are concerned with daily operations." (*Op. cit.*, p. 217.)

The Citizen and the State

"*Few and general laws or unwritten rules. // Many and precise laws or unwritten rules.*

If laws cannot be respected, they should be changed. // Laws are necessary, even if they cannot be respected.

Civil servants are positive towards the political process. // Civil servants are negative towards the political process.

There is high participation in voluntary associations and movements. // There is low participation in voluntary associations and movements.

Liberalism. // Conservatism, law and order.

Positive attitudes towards young people. // Negative attitudes towards young people." (*Op. cit.*, p. 223.)

Tolerance, Religion, and Ideas

"*More ethnic tolerance. // More ethnic prejudice.*

Positive or neutral towards foreigners. // Xenophobia.

Defensive nationalism. // Aggressive nationalism.

One religion's truth should not be imposed on others. // In religion, there is only one Truth and we have it.

Human rights: nobody should be persecuted for his or her beliefs. // More religious, political, and ideological intolerance and fundamentalisms.

In philosophy and science, there is a tendency towards relativism and empiricism. // In philosophy and science, there is a tendency towards grand theories.

Literature dealing with fantasy worlds. // Literature dealing with rules and Truth." (*Op. cit.*, p. 231.)

The characteristics presented by Hofstede in the tables above seem to go far beyond the information yielded by the few questions in the IBM questionnaire, but they also present a clear and persuasive picture of opposing attitudes towards the issues presented in each group. The attitudes become ideal types and it is a further—and major—issue to what extent these attitudes are actually held by individual members of each country or culture. As a category, however, forming a piece of conceptual analysis on culture and cultural differences, the concept of uncertainty avoidance has an important role, along with power difference and the other cultural dimensions devised by Hofstede.

Uncertainty Avoidance Index (UAI) in the Woebegone Aikido Association

The Woebegone Aikido Association awards kyu and dan ranks (q.v.) and these are recognized by the Aikikai. Since the Aikikai has rules governing the award of such ranks, uncertainty avoidance is countered to some extent in the Woebegone Aikido Association by the mere fact of the training syllabus. This includes the required length of time for moving up from one rank to another and, for all the kyu ranks and the lower dan ranks, contains a list of the *waza* required for the practical examination-cum-demonstration that each candidate has to perform in front of a panel of examiners. The candidate has to get up and execute the prescribed *waza* in a satisfactory manner.

Nonetheless, the avoidance of uncertainty in the Woebegone Aikido Association is not completely extinguished by the requirements of the syllabus and waiting time necessary for passage through the upper dan ranks. Since the Dojo-cho is the one who presides over the examinations and signs the papers to be sent to the Aikikai, the agreement of the Dojo-cho is usually essential, sometimes even for a test to take place. Whether the candidate passes the test or not is another—though fairly remote—possibility, since the test usually also involves a 'free' demonstration, with *waza* not on the prescribed syllabus, and also *waza* against more than one attacker.

The system governing the testing and award of kyu and dan ranks holds in all the dojos of the Woebegone Aikido Association, regardless of the country in which they are situated, and so the only differences that might be encountered would lie in the method of testing embraced by a particular shihan. However, the shihan of the Woebegone Aikido Association is Japanese and so for Hofstede's 'scientific' findings to make any sense, the shihan will exhibit the same attitudes towards uncertainty avoidance as the rest of his countrymen. Japan exhibits comparatively strong uncertainty avoidance, ranking 9th on Hofstede's index with an index score of 92, so the shihan might be thought to exhibit in an extreme form the attitudes presented in the tables above. This is certainly not true in my own case, and the shihan's attitude might well be due to the way he

has been taught by his (admittedly Japanese) teachers, as much to the fact that he is Japanese.

Since there were very clear differences between the individual Japanese teachers in the various countries I have resided, Hofstede might wish to argue that these differences might be due to the fact of cultural 'contamination' by the host culture of the country in which each individual shihan resides, but I think this would be very difficult. For example, my own first dan was awarded by a Japanese shihan who had resided outside Japan for many years, but who was visiting the UK from his 'home' country (which is the USA), to be the guest shihan at the annual summer school, also a major event for the Woebegone Aikido Association. The USA ranks far lower on the UAI than Japan, but the shihan demanded a display of aikido that was considerably more severe than anything I had experienced elsewhere in the UK, the US, or Japan. I suspect that the shihan resident in the US devised an examination protocol that took the Aikikai requirements as a base, but added or subtracted elements that he thought were necessary, desirable, or superfluous, and this is exactly what the shihan of the Woebegone Aikido Association does in the network of dojos for which he is responsible. The attitudes supposedly uncovered by Hofstede's research on uncertainty avoidance count for very little in this regard.

Hofstede's Dimensions: 5. Time Orientation

This is the final dimension presented in *Culture's Consequences* and earlier we considered Hofstede's justification for including this in his research. In *Cultures and Organizations*, Hofstede precedes the discussion of this fifth dimension with an account of the creation of the Chinese Values Survey (CVS) and his arguments for including the results of this survey in his book. The CVS was given to students in 23 countries around the world and three of these dimensions, across twenty common countries, correlated significantly with the dimensions allegedly discovered by Hofstede from his IBM research. The discussion yields two definitions, one being a definition of the fourth CVS dimension, and the second being a definition of the fifth cultural dimension included in Hofstede's two works.

First Definition:

> *"The fourth CVS dimensions combined on the one side these values:*
>
> 1. *Persistence (perseverance)*
> 2. *Thrift*
> 3. *Ordering relationships by status and observing this order*
> 4. *Having a sense of shame*
>
> *And on the opposite side*
>
> 5. *Reciprocation of greetings, favours and gifts*
> 6. *Respect for tradition*
> 7. *Protecting one's "face"*
> 8. *Personal steadiness and stability*
>
> *Students of Chinese culture recognized in these values elements of the teachings of Confucius…" (Cultures and Organizations,* pp. 236-237*.)*

Second Definition:

> *"The fifth dimension was defined as follows: long-term orientation stands for the fostering of virtues orientated 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." (Op.cit.,* p. 239. Italics reversed*.)*

Hofstede prepares for this definition with a brief history of Confucius and his teachings and isolates four 'key' principles:

1. The stability of the society is based on unequal status relationships between people.
2. The family is the prototype of social organizations.
3. Virtuous behavior toward others consists of not treating others as one would not like to be treated oneself.
4. Virtue with regard to one's tasks in life consists in trying to acquire skills and education, working hard, not spending more

than necessary, being patient and persevering.

Hofstede grounds his analysis of this fifth dimension in prior assumptions concerning the differences in religion and spirituality:

> *"Eastern religions (Hinduism, Buddhism, Shintoism, and Taoism) are separated from Western religions (Judaism, Christianity, and Islam) by a deep philosophical dividing line. The three Western religions belong to the same thought family; historically, they grew from the same roots. … All three are based on the existence of a Truth that is accessible to the true believers. All three have a Book. In the East, neither Confucianism, which is a non-religious ethic, nor any major religion, is based on the assumption that there is a Truth that a human community can embrace. They offer various ways in which a person can improve him- or herself; however, these consist not of believing, but of ritual, meditation, or ways of living. Some of these may lead to a higher spiritual state and, eventually, to unification with God, or gods." (Op. cit.,* p. 248. Some additional punctuation added*.)*

The problem here is that, even when discussing a crucial term here, Hofstede adopts a 'Western' mindset, into which he feeds what are really non-western concepts, and then assumes that the resulting 'common' concept, such as *religion*, for example, has the same cash-value, so to speak, regardless of any differences of mindset. This can be seen in his reference to Confucianism, which he calls a 'non-religious' ethic, but which he has no problem in including in his general category of religion. In playing fast and loose with such superficial conceptual analysis, Hofstede ignores problems which are sufficiently serious that they undermine his whole project.

However, conceptual analysis was certainly a major problem for the Japanese in the closing stages of the Tokugawa era. A new book on Japanese religion argues that the Japanese shogunate had a major problem when Japan was called upon to open up the country to foreign trade. The author, Jason Ananda Josephson, has gone so far as to use the term 'invention' in the title and his argument is straightforward:

> *"Defining religion in Japan was a politically charged, boundary-drawing exercise that extensively reclassified the inherited materials of Buddhism, Confucianism and Shinto. All three traditions were radically changed in a way that has only recently begun attracting scholarly attention. We cannot presume a stable content for 'Japanese religion' in this time period, let alone continuity over time. Thus, the book works to call into question the concept of 'Japanese religions.' In so doing it will undermine the contention that religion is a natural category or a cultural universal." (*Jason Ananda Josephson*, The Invention of Religion in Japan,* p. 2*.)*

Two points need to be noted here. First, the negotiations precipitated by the arrival of the Americans in 1853 issued in a treaty concluded in 1873, which was only ten years before the birth of Morihei Ueshiba and the intellectual upheavals discussed by Josephson continued long after Ueshiba's birth. Secondly, Josephson considers only the three 'established' religions in Japan and does not consider the so-called 'new' religions, which include Omoto-kyo. The extent to which Deguchi Onisaburo made use of established religious concepts in defining his new approach—and which Ueshiba appropriated in expounding his new martial way, is also an issue here.

What is also relevant to aikido, commonly described as a 'spiritual' martial art, is that 'spiritual' can be taken in precisely the same way that Hofstede—and also Josephson, use the term 'religion', with the result that aikido is sometimes considered to be a 'spiritual' activity, in the same way that a religious activity is assumed to be spiritual—which is also a dangerous misconception. However, we must postpone this interesting question for another time.

Time Orientation: Language Issues …

Language issues connected with time orientation do not receive any special mention in Hofstede's treatment of this cultural dimension, the implication being that time orientation is expressed in identical ways, regardless of which national culture is in question.

Long-term versus Short-term Orientation Index (LTO) in Nations, Societies, Organizations

The initial discussion in this chapter of *Cultures and Organizations* concerns the Chinese Value Survey, carried out by Michael Bond in 1985. The rankings of the 23 countries are given in Table 7. 1 (p. 240). The scores range from zero (Pakistan) to 118 (China), but apart from the top five positions, held by East Asian countries, there are no overall groupings, and Hofstede's attempt to impose such regional groupings is thwarted by the many exceptions that occur. Nevertheless, Hofstede presents a table (Table 7. 2) of the 'Key Differences' between short-term and long-term orientation societies based on the CVS data. (In the following examples, short-term precedes long-term and is separated by double slash marks.)

General Norms and the Family

Social pressure towards spending // Thrift, being sparing with resources

Efforts should produce results. // Perseverance, sustained efforts towards slow results

Concern with social and status obligations // Willingness to subordinate oneself for a purpose

Concern with "face" // Having a sense of shame

Respect for traditions // Respect for circumstances

Concern with personal stability // Concern with personal adaptiveness

Marriage is a moral arrangement. // Marriage is a pragmatic arrangement.

Living with in-laws is a source of trouble. // Living with in-laws is normal.

Young women associate affection with a boyfriend. // Young women associate affection with a husband.

Humility is for women only. // Humility is for both men and women.

Old age is an unhappy period, but it starts late. // Old age is a happy period and it starts early.

Preschool children can be cared for by others. // Mothers should have time for their preschool children.

Children get gifts for fun and love. // Children get gifts for education and development.

In the rest of the section, Hofstede supplements these findings by discussing episodes that underline these key differences. He returns to one of his favourite themes, namely, the role of religion in fostering the differences uncovered in the survey.

> *"Eastern religions (Hinduism, Buddhism, Shintoism and Taoism) are separated from Western religions (Judaism, Christianity, and Islam) by a deep philosophical dividing line. The three Western religions belong to the same thought family; historically, they grew from the same roots. … All three are based on the existence of a Truth that a human community can embrace. All three have a Book. In the East, neither Confucianism, which is a non-religious ethic, nor any major religion is based on the assumption that there is a Truth that a human community can embrace. They offer various ways in which a person can improve him- or herself; however, these consist not of believing, but of ritual, meditation, or ways of living. Some of these may lead to a higher spiritual state and, eventually, to unification with God or gods." (Op. cit.,* p. 248*.)*

The one point of value for aikido in this superficial sketch of religious systems is a mention of the mythologist, Joseph Campbell, who thought that Western religious myths separated matter and spirit, whereas Eastern religions and philosophers kept them integrated.

To his credit, Hofstede is fully aware of the small number of countries surveyed and in later editions of *Cultures and Organizations* adds data from the World Values Survey (WVS), conducted by Misho Minkov, who later became one of the co-authors of the book. The WVS included data from 93 countries and regions and later still, Hofstede conducted another survey, the African Values Survey, and we can end this discussion with a final list given in in *Cultures and Organizations* (Table 7. 5, p.) of 'key differences' between short-term and long-term orientation societies, based on WVS data. (As usual, short-term precedes long-term and is separated by double slash marks.)

Short-term and Long-term Orientation Societies

Service to others is an important goal. // Children should learn to save money and things.

Proud of my country // Learn from other countries

Tradition is important. // Children should learn to persevere.

Family pride // Family pragmatism

Students attribute success and failure to luck. // Students attribute success to effort and failure to lack of it.

Weaker mathematics and science results of fourteen-year-olds due to less effort // Better mathematics and science results of fourteen-year-olds due to harder work

Appeal of fundamentalisms // Appeal of pragmatism

Appeal of folk wisdom and witchcraft // Appeal of knowledge and education

Long-term versus Short-term Orientation Index (LTO) in the Woebegone Aikido Association

In some respects, the LTO Index in the Woebegone Aikido Association is relatively easy to evaluate. It is closely connected with Power Difference and the PDI, and with Uncertainty Avoidance and the UAI, discussed in the previous sections. It is also uniform throughout the various countries and cultures that make up the Woebegone Aikido Association and so makes the application of Hofstede's LTO cultural dimension rather difficult. The association follows the requirements of the Aikikai *kyu* and *dan* system, which, in addition to a syllabus and list of *waza*, prescribes minimum time conditions for progression from one grade or rank to another. The dojo-cho / chief instructor has been training and teaching for well over 50 years and also regards putting in the required hours as an indispensable condition for any progress in the art. In fact, LTO is the obverse of the UAI. Progression up through the ranks takes time—a shorter time for the kyu grades than for the dan ranks. However, with the lower kyu grades and dan ranks there is always a practical test—which occasionally an applicant might fail. Thus, the LTO is balanced in an important respect and is also geared to a long-term commitment to the art—and this is the case in all the dojos affiliated to the Woebegone Aikido Association.

The consequence is that progression through the ranks is not always uniform and based on the number of years devoted to training and this aspect can be seen in the Woebegone dojo population. Among the members of the main (Hombu) dojo are older members still in the middle kyu ranks who are content merely to turn up each time and train, with no ostensible aim of obtaining a dan rank as soon as possible. If asked, I am pretty sure that they would respond with the simple statement that it depends on the judgement of the shihan. Since the Woebegone Aikido Association uses coloured belts for the lower kyu grades and follows the Hombu system of black belts and hakama for the dan ranks, these obvious differences might well be a spur to the younger members to go for *shodan* as soon as possible. However, this zeal might well be tempered by the much longer time required to progress up through the dan ranks, which after 4th dan no longer depend on a practical test.

Hofstede's Dimensions: 6. Subjective Well-Being

This is the last dimension that Hofstede presents in *Cultures and Organizations* that was not part of the original research conducted for IBM and presented in *Culture's Consequences*. The treatment is very uneven, and Hofstede relies mainly on making 'significant' or 'meaningful' correlations between other cross-cultural surveys and his own IBM survey. Especially important in this respect was Michael Minkov's research on the Chinese Value Survey, mentioned earlier.

The final dimension added to those discussed in Hofstede's earlier research is 'subjective well-being' (SWB), which is measured in terms of polar opposites and presented as an Indulgence Versus Restraint Index (IVR). First, Hofstede sets the scene in a suitably challenging context:

> *"Happiness, or subjective well-being (SWB), as academics prefer to call it, is a universally cherished goal/ Some philosophical schools, such as classic Buddhism, condemn the pursuit of happiness and consider it a reproachable waste of time in which an enlightened person would not engage. However, such elitist doctrines cannot have been easily embraced by the masses. Throughout the world and regardless of their religion, most people would like to attain a state of bliss here and now and, in contrast to classic Buddhist pundits, are not deterred by*

> *the certainty of its transience." (Cultures and Organizations,* p. 278*.)*

Hofstede is in fact comparing 'classic Buddhism,' which he implicitly regards as a religion, with the aspirations of 'most people' and seems not to consider the aims of 'real' religions like Christianity, that regard some sort of 'beatific vision' of God as the ultimate end of mankind. He spends much space in attempting to show that the double dimension of SWB and IVR, as applied to nations and national cultures, is grounded in unimpeachably scientific statistical analysis, but the casual introduction presented above, with his sloppy use of terms, does not suggest that he has been equally scientific here.

Hofstede breaks down the double dimension of SWB and IVR into three components: happiness; life control; importance of leisure.

> *"The correlates and predictors of happiness at the national level are therefore, first, a perception of life control, a feeling that one has the liberty to live one's life more or less as one pleases, without social restrictions that curb one's freedom of choice; and second, importance of leisure as a personal value. Happiness, life control, life control and the importance of leisure are mutually correlated, and these associations remained stable over subsequent survey waves. They thus defined a strong dimension." (Op.cit.,* p. 281*.)*

Hofstede ventures a definition of the dimension:

> *"The definition that we propose for this dimension is as follows: 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." (Ibid.* Italics reversed*.)*

To make sure that he is clearly understood, Hofstede adds the note that:

> *"The gratification of desires on the indulgence side refers to enjoying life in general and having fun, not to gratifying human desires in general." (Ibid.)*

Given the 'strength' of this dimension, it is noteworthy that it is thought of as a 'new' dimension, the importance of which is not reflected in the amount of scholarly literature devoted to its analysis. Hofstede notes that it resembles the distinction in US anthropology between loose and tight societies. In the former, social norms exhibit a wide variety and deviant behavior is relatively easily tolerated; in the latter, group organization is highly valued and deviant behaviour is less easily tolerated, if not strongly discouraged.

Subjective Well-Being: Language Issues …

Hofstede has not isolated any language issues specific to subjective well-being and the IVR index. However, Hofstede is strictly concerned with what he calls 'mental software' and one is left to conclude that he simply assumes that differences in language use relating to IVR will be already reflected in the differences he has previously established on the basis of his IBM survey.

Indulgence Versus Restraint Index (IVR) in Nations, Societies, Organizations

In Table 8.1 (pp. 282-285 of *Cultures and Organizations*), Hofstede ranks the IVR scores of all the countries involved in Michael Minkov's *World Values Survey*. Some are grouped together. Some countries in Latin America appear at the top end of the Index, with the highest scores, followed closely by a group of European countries, the US and UK (with commonwealth nations like Australia and Canada). Sweden heads this group, while Norway brings up the rear. Countries in central & eastern Europe and the former Soviet bloc are all at the lower end of the Index, ranked 57th or lower. Hofstede regards this as significant, but he is not the first researcher to have drawn parallels between indulgence and restraint. Though using a different methodology and making a stronger effort to ground his findings in at least quasi- or would-be scientific research, Hofstede is following in footsteps of thinkers like Max Weber and R H Tawney, who drew a very strong causal connection between what Weber called the 'protestant ethic' and the making of money, otherwise known as the rise or 'spirit' of capitalism. Weber and Tawney were specialists in history or theories of history and in my undergraduate days, were required reading (along

with Frederick Jackson Turner on the 'Rise of the American Frontier' and Jacob Burckhardt on the Italian Renaissance) for students who specialized in that cluster of subjects which appeared in course catalogues as philosophy, language studies, history, sociology and anthropology—well before the rise of subjects like comparative culture. Hofstede's work on culture and organizations could well form part of this cluster and he goes one step further by attempting to base his research on serious statistical evidence. I do not think he succeeds, but it is up to his readers to find out for themselves if my skepticism is at all well-grounded. As I stated earlier, for me Hofstede's work is a passable example of conceptual analysis, if not of strictly scientific research.

Hofstede goes much further than the thinkers mentioned above and presents a set of what he calls 'key differences' between societies—actually, nations—at either end of the IVR spectrum. In each case the selection below presents indulgence (I) first, followed by restraint (R):

General Norms:

"*Higher percentages of 'very happy people' (VHP). // Lower percentages of VHP.*

Perception of life control. // Perception of helplessness.

Thrift is not very important. // Thrift is very important.

Higher importance of having friends. // Lower importance of having friends.

Positive attitude. // Negative attitude.

More extroverted personalities. // More neurotic personalities.

In countries with well-educated populations, higher birthrates. // In countries with well-educated populations, lower birthrates.

Lower death rates from cardiovascular diseases. // Higher death rates from cardiovascular diseases." (*Cultures and Organizations*, pp. 00.)

Private Life, Consumer Behaviour, Sex and Politics

"*Higher approval of foreign music and films. // Lower approval of foreign music and films.*

More satisfying family life. // Less satisfied with family life.

People are actively involved in sports. // People are rarely involved in sports.

E-mail and the Internet are used for private contacts. // Less use of e-mail and the Internet for private contacts.

More consumption of soft drinks and beer. // Less consumption of soft drinks and beer.

In wealthy countries, higher percentages of obese people. // In wealthy countries lower percentages of obese people.

Loosely prescribed gender roles. // Strictly prescribed gender roles.

In wealthy countries, less strict sexual norms. // In wealthy countries, stricter sexual norms.

Smiling as a norm. // Smiling as suspect.

Freedom of speech is viewed as relatively important. // Freedom of speech is not a primary concern.

Maintaining order in the nation is not given a high priority. // Maintaining order in the nation is considered a high priority.

Lower numbers of police officers per 100,000 population. // Higher numbers of police officers per 100,000 population." (*Op. cit.*, pp. 00.)

Indulgence Versus Restraint Index (IVR) in the Woebegone Aikido Association

The IVR values in The Woebegone Aikido Association are as easy—or difficult—to estimate as the MAS values discussed earlier. If we assume that the founder of aikido began his martial journey in the context of Shingon Buddhism, we might assume that he would have had much to say on the non-importance of the pursuit of happiness, as this is expressed in Hofstede's terms. The fact that he says virtually nothing at all is a problem only for those who wish to establish a direct line between the founder of the art—with his supposed beliefs about

indulgence and restraint—and the average dojo organization, represented here by the Woebegone Aikido Association. So, rather than attempting to trace any direct links between the possible IVR values of the founder of the art and the Woebegone Aikido Association, it would seem more plausible to regard the latter as a typical post-war aikido organization, with all that this entails.

Very soon after World War II, the Aikikai was reestablished as a tax-free foundation dedicated to the pursuit of the art established by Morihei Ueshiba, but a crucial factor here was what the Japanese call 家元 (*iemoto*), which is the transmission of the art via the oldest male members of the founder's family. The office of Doshu (道主: head master) is held by the founder's grandson and he will eventually be succeeded by his own son.

The notion of *iemoto* as applied to aikido has evolved over three generations. While Morihei Ueshiba created the art and put an indelible stamp upon it, his son Kisshomaru undertook the practical task of rebuilding the art from the ashes of World War II and, especially, in spreading aikido outside Japan. In conversations made several years ago, Kisshomaru Doshu laid no stress on *iemoto*, but his son, Moriteru, has occasionally used the term, also in private conversation. In other words, Morihei Ueshiba's individual vision couched in the terms of Shingon Buddhism and the Omoto religion became the operating motif of an organization headed by the founding family, with the unspoken assumption, even premise, that the founder's individual vision would be available through training under the aegis of the 'family' organization. The operation of the Woebegone Aikido Organization is one example of this unspoken premise being translated into reality—in the form of a flourishing dojo organization that has provided the means for individuals to incorporate into their own lives—in quite a literal sense—this unspoken premise about the founder's individual vision and its manifestation as an organization. The main issue here would be for the individual practitioner to understand and use the content of this individual vision, but translated into terms that the practitioner understands, but through the practical training in the art.

One problem arises immediately, especially in the immediate context of IVR is why practice the art at all and the vast majority of Woebegone Association members practice the art as a hobby—which they enjoy doing and which also contributes to a reasonably good level of physical fitness. However, since aikido is an art that can be practiced with profit at any age, it is very difficult to generalize here about the reasons people have for their continued training. Some members certainly do not practice the art in order to best an opponent in a physical fight or conflict and so for them this aspect of the training is essentially hypothetical. But other members do indeed see aikido as a very practical defensive art, with strong historical and conceptual links with Daito-ryu aiki-jujutsu and also some conceptual links with BJJ.

The Woebegone Aikido Association thus strictly follows the rules governing holding of dan and kyu examinations laid down by the Aikikai, to which it is affiliated, and any sense of SWB and IVR has to be seen strictly within the context of physical training in the art and of the so-called 'spiritual' virtues that training in the art is supposed to nurture. This can vary from physical replication of a *waza* at a basic level, to varying degrees of mastery of the entire repertoire, coupled with a deep understanding of Japanese social, political, religious and 'martial' history, especially during the era in which the founder lived. The training may even be undertaken in accordance with the findings of SWB and IVR, supposedly uncovered by Hofstede in the countries in which branches of the Woebegone Aikido Association are situated.

III: A Conclusion in which Nothing is Concluded…

In this part of the essay, I have been concerned to present very detailed accounts of Hofstede's six dimensions of so-called national cultures and then apply these in some detail to a fictional aikido organization. Conclusions indeed need to be drawn, but, due to the length of this essay, I will postpone this until Part Three. Accordingly, there is no conclusion to this part and the title of this section is not my original. I have borrowed it from the final chapter of Samuel Johnson's *Rasselas*, *Prince of Abyssinia*, which I studied as an undergraduate. Later, I will also explain why I chose Johnson's book as a suitable source.

FURTHER READING

The full report of Geert Hofstede's research can be found in *Culture's Consequences: Comparing Values, Behaviors, Institutions, and Organizations Across Nations*, Second Edition, 2001, Sage

Publications. The more widely-read summary appeared as *Cultures and Organizations – Software of the Mind: Intercultural Cooperation and Its Importance for Survival*, Third Edition, 2010. (This third edition was more of a joint effort than the earlier editions, with Hofstede's son, Gert Jan Hofstede, and Michael Minkov listed as co-authors.)

Articles on language use referred to by Hofstede in *Cultures and Organizations* include:

Emiko S Kashima and Yoshihisa Kashima, "Culture and Language: The case of cultural dimensions and personal pronoun use." *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, 29, pp. 461-486.

Yoshihisa Kashima and Emiko S Kashima, "Individualism, GNP, climate, and pronoun drop: Is individualism determined by affluence and climate, or does language use play a role?" *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, 34 (1), pp. 125-134.

The BBC report discussed in the essay is entitled, "Different nationalities really have different personalities." The report is a piece of journalism, not serious research, and takes very much for granted. The value of the piece really lies in the references given, which can be checked independently. The report appeared in the series entitled *BBC Future*, and was originally accessible (at the time this was written) at:

http://www.bbc.com/future/story/20170413-different-nationalities-really-have-differentpersonalities. The report appears to have been removed from the website (as of July 2018), but its absence does not constitute any great loss.

Metaphor has been studied extensively from both a grammatical and a philosophical viewpoint and there is extensive literature, including a classic pioneering work by George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, entitled *Metaphors We Live By* (Chicago U P, 1980). This book is famous enough to have a Japanese translation, which itself is an interesting example of the cultural problems involved in translation: 『レトリックと人生』, 大修館書店.

Two works by Raymond Gibbs Jr., one a monograph and the other a collection of essays, provide detailed guidance for further research.

Raymond Gibbs Jr., *Embodiment and Cognitive Science*, 2005, Cambridge U P;

Raymond Gibbs Jr (ed.), *The Cambridge Handbook of Metaphor and Thought*, 2008, Cambridge U P.

Thought and meaning is approached from a Japanese angle in a recent study of hermeneutics: Michael F. Marra, *Japan's Frames of Meaning: A Hermeneutics Reader*, Honolulu, University of Hawai'i Press, 2011.

A dense and closely-argued work on Japanese religion cited in the text is: Jason Ananda Josephson, *The Invention of Religion in Japan*, Chicago U. P., 2012.

The following are the works referred to in the discussion of Hofstede's dimension of subjective well-being:

Max Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, 1904, 1930, Various publishers;

R H Tawney, *Religion and the Rise of Capitalism*; 1926, Various publishers.

Frederick Jackson Turner, *The Frontier in American History*, 1921, Henry Holt;

Jacob Burkhardt, *The Civilization of the Renaissance in Italy*, 1860, Various publishers.

All these works have spawned a vast literature of their own.

Peter Goldsbury (b. 28 April 1944). Aikido 7th dan Aikikai, Emeritus Professor at Hiroshima University, teaching philosophy and comparative culture. B. in UK. Began aikido as a student and practiced at various dojo. Became a student of Mitsunari Kanai at the New England Aikikai in 1973. After moving back to the UK in 1975, trained in the Ryushinkan Dojo under Minoru Kanetsuka. Also trained with K Chiba on his frequent visits to the UK. Moved to Hiroshima, Japan, in 1980 and continued training with the resident Shihan, Mazakazu Kitahira, 7th dan Also trained regularly with Seigo Yamaguchi, Hiroshi Tada, Sadateru Arikawa and Masatake Fujita, both in Hiroshima and at the Aikikai Hombu. Was elected Chairman of the IAF in 1998. With two German colleagues, opened a small dojo in Higashi-Hiroshima City in 2001. Instructed at Aiki Expo 2002 in Las Vegas, Nevada.