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Psychology of a Culture: Humanism and Social Ineffectiveness Embedded in Polish Ways of Life

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Abstract

This paper is intended as a learning tool for students wishing to expand their knowledge on culture – psychology interaction derived from a single culture perspective. The paper presents a cultural psychology approach to two themes of Polish culture: Humanism and Social (In)–Effectiveness. The text is divided into three distinct parts: (1) A detailed account of a foreigner's encounter with Poland, where standards typical for this culture are introduced; (2) Historical analysis tracing the origins of these two syndromes in Poland; (3) Empirical comparative studies combined over twenty five years, and their meta–analysis.

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Introduction

Some years ago, Shalom Schwartz, a cross-cultural psychologist well known for his work on the structure of values at the individual (Schwartz, 1992) and cultural levels (Schwartz, 2004), asked a sample of his colleagues and collaborators to serve as research participants. The information he presented to us was a top and bottom rank-ordering of seven selected countries, each of which corresponded to one of Schwartz's seven culture-level value types (based on his 1994 updated results). The task involved a simple quiz-question: which value type was behind each of the seven rankings of countries? The purpose of this exercise was to see if the value types based on sophisticated analyses of thousands of individuals from about seventy countries would have an intuitive appeal to observers of cultural world map. I and other cross-cultural psychologists invited to that task were not naive observers, but considered as specialists. Also, most of us were familiar with Schwartz's or Hofstede's dimensions and how they ranked in their respective research projects. Thus, I responded to the task, by recalling positions of various countries on the scales provided in Schwartz 1994 paper, and using my knowledge. What seemed on surface as an easy task, turned out to be quite difficult. The difficulty seems to be related to:

- highly abstract level at which value types are conceptualized;
- intercorrelations between some of the value types (e.g. embeddedness and hierarchy);
- country-cultures being reduced to numbers on ranking orders.

The task made me consider practical implications that the *etic*, macro-level psychological works of Hofstede or Schwartz may have. Their culture dimensions appear so abstract and semantically far from everyday vocabulary that not many people other than IACCP psychologists and their students may use them when trying to make sense of the world. If the experts cannot perform the task very well, then how can a naïve and inexperienced person utilize the quantified knowledge on the world of cultures?

My thesis is, that in order to understand other cultures and to achieve satisfactory outcomes in our intercultural interactions, people need more specific guidance and an *emic* learning experience. Most likely, we feel more comfortable at the level of stories, scripts, and rich in detail narratives, which appeal to our imagination of "how are things being done out there". This approach is different from Schwartz's strategy like skills of mastering a language (or several languages) are different from general knowledge of comparative linguistics.

The goal of this paper is to demonstrate the usefulness of a cultural competence learning approach where detailed scripts and scenarios of intercultural interactions are first presented and then explained in terms of empirically-validated constructs (dimensions). The cultures compared will be the ones with which I have had most of my personal and research experience: Polish and North American. The paper has three parts:

Part I features a story, *One Day of Bill Morgan's Life: It happened in Warsaw*. This story will give the reader a sample of critical interactions, to be used later as illustrations in explaining key concepts of Polish culture dimensions.

In part II, a psychological analysis of two essential standards – Humanism and Social Ineffectiveness – will be offered, and their roots will be traced in history of the last four hundred years.

Finally, part III will present a summary of several studies comparing Polish culture with several others.

One day in Bill Morgan's life: It happened in Warsaw

It is a Sunday morning. A Delta airliner from Frankfurt has just landed at Warsaw's Okęcie airport. Dr Bill Morgan's visit to Poland is about to begin. He is coming as an academic teacher and business consultant, and was invited by Dr. Piotr Chrzęszczewski, a colleague whom he met last year at a conference in Boston (whose name, though, he can neither pronounce nor memorize).

Dr. Morgan is excited on his first visit to Poland, and indeed to this part of the world, which geo-politically is called Central-East Europe. He is also somewhat worried. In some brief e-mail exchanges during the last weeks, he was asked to prepare a couple of lectures on marketing techniques as well as workshop demonstrations on business games. Yet, he did not receive any precise schedule to follow during his visit to Warsaw and therefore he could not tell how his time would be spent the next four days.

Crossing the custom border in the hall of the airport, Morgan noticed Piotr Chrzęszczewski waving to him. The Polish host opened his arms in a broad embrace. An attractive lady next to Piotr smiled and offered him flowers, which made Bill a bit embarrassed. "*My wife Danuta – Dr. Morgan*" - Chrzęszczewski was trying to introduce the two formally. "*Bill – just call me Bill*" - Morgan corrected. "*Oh, that's like Clinton* ", Danuta cut in, while her husband gave a nod to a young man standing beside him, and the son jumped ready to carry Bill's large suitcase. "*Oh no, it is not necessary* ", he muttered in protest, but young Chrzęszczewski already had it in his grasp and was rolling his suitcase outside the exit door.

Chrzęszczewski's car was parked just at the curb, next to some taxis, limousines and city buses. Bill did not fail to notice a policeman watching them and making a note about the car. When Piotr Chrzęszczewski was about to open the car, the policeman approached, stimulating an animated conversation. Mr. Chrzęszczewski punctuated his words with wide hand movements, pointing out to his guest. His wife joined, in an effort to persuade the policeman, who gave the air of yielding to the pressure. Finally, he said in English - "*Good Morning*" -, saluted and went away.

Mrs. Chrzęszczewska took the driver's seat. Piotr sighed with relief and said: "*Well, you know, it didn't make sense to leave the car at the airport parking. We just stopped for 10 minutes to pick you up. And, in Poland, when you give the policeman a reasonable excuse, like 'I am just waiting for an important foreign visitor', he will not hurt you*".

This all looked bizarre to Bill Morgan, and he wondered why did the whole family come to the airport on Sunday morning to greet him. "Were *they all going to take him to church for a Catholic service?*" - he wondered. Bill was a Methodist by family tradition but he felt personally indifferent about religion. - "*So, Mrs. Krz... , well, Danuta, are you taking us now to the church?*" – he said half-jokingly. Her response long and detailed, came as a real surprise. - "*Oh no, not now at least. You see, for us in Poland, Sunday is a working day. I am driving the car, because Piotr*", - she pointed to her husband -, "*is lecturing today at one of his jobs. He teaches week-end students. And I am a manager at Carrefour, the French supermarket, where we work on Sundays too; incidentally, it is very close to your hotel. So, Piotr will get out first, then I will stop at Carrefour, and our son Artur will drive you straight to the hotel. We have decided that he and his girlfriend Monika, who is a University student of English language and literature, will take you for a tour around Warsaw. Fortunately, the weather is not bad, so you will enjoy the city with professional guides.*"

Bill Morgan found it difficult to follow Danuta Chrzęszczewska's stream of information, and it was not only because her English was just basic. One surprise was following the other. All these complicated family relations, changing one family car from hand to hand; and he, himself being treated as a precious and fragile object – yes, object, not a subject, who decides for himself.

The car stopped at a red light. Piotr Chrzęszczewski explained that he would just "jump out", because he was already late to his class. – "*But the students will understand it, after all, I was at the airport to welcome an international guest. See you in the evening at our home*" – and off he went. - "*Aren't you afraid of letting your husband leave the car amidst other cars, just on red light stop?*" – Bill asked Mrs. Chrzęszczewska. "*Well, I know, she said half-apologetically, but you see, we are so busy all the time. You should realize that Piotr has three jobs. Fortunately, there is a high demand for specialists in business administration and marketing, so we can make it financially, but it is really hard. He is always on the run. Fortunately, we can catch each other on mobile phones during the day, otherwise I wouldn't know of his whereabouts*".

It was becoming too much for Bill, though he still wanted to make some sense of all these kaleidoscopic events. "*How come your husband could have three jobs? Who authorizes it? Isn't it necessary to be at work at certain hours?*" – Mrs. Chrzęszczewska smiled in return, she tried to satisfy Bill's curiosity the best she could. - "*It is difficult to understand, for the foreigners. But you know, we must find some ways to catch up with you in the West. We must work even more than Americans do, otherwise the gap between Poland and the West would stay forever.*" – "*Artur, wake up, why don't you say anything? Explain it more to Dr. Morgan!*" - she demanded her son to get involved, not missing to criticize his lack of enthusiasm .

"*Well, Dr. Morgan, Artur entered the conversation, "can you imagine sir, that here in Warsaw alone, about 70 new private institutions of higher learning have been opened during the last 15 years?! Many of them rent the space for teaching from high schools. So my father, for instance, is teaching now at one of the private schools of business, while I am a student at another. Both located in state-owned high school buildings. But it all is*

working somehow: there is a high demand for education among students who can afford to pay for it, professors can have a better life, and state schools get funds for necessary upgrading. So, finally, it is good for everybody".

Bill listened patiently to Chrzęszczewski's lecturing on the realities of Polish life. Now they stopped by a huge shopping plaza, with Carrefour dominating the scene. "*It is good to work here*", Danuta declared, "*these supermarkets symbolize a new Poland too. We have six Carrefours in the capital, numerous Leclercks, Auchants, Reals, etc. Just like in the West! Besides, I have all best products available in Poland at our home table; you will see it this evening at the dinner table*". She smiled again, gave a kiss to her son, and left the car.

Artur Chrzęszczewski took the driver's seat. In few minutes they were at *Holiday Inn*, where Bill checked in. Artur told him that he and his girlfriend would join him in about one hour for a tour in Łazienki (Royal Baths) and Wilanów, the royal residence called *le petit Versaille*.

Towards the late afternoon, the whole party started regrouping. Coming after their sightseeing tour, Bill was engaged in a lively conversation with Monika, Artur's girlfriend. They spoke English and were already planning Monika's summer job in Los Angeles. The car, driven by Artur stopped by Carrefour's again, where Mrs. Chrzęszczewska, contacted earlier by mobile phone, waited fully loaded with bags of French delicacies. There were varieties of cheese and wine, at good promotion price, along with a 50% cut for employees. Mrs. Chrzęszczewska was telling her stories, half in English half in Polish. After giving Monika a motherly kiss, she was instructing her what and how should be prepared for the dinner. She also called home and spoke to another lady, asking her about the state of preparations there. "*You see*", she explained to Bill, "*we are now going home, where my mother is in charge of the dinner. She has been cooking from late morning hours and we are now carrying some necessary ingredients. Monika will help us, she is like our daughter. We need just to pick up Piotr, who's at another School where he should be finishing his courses now.*" – And she made a phone call to her husband. – "*Piotruniu - she used a childish diminutive for Peter, "are you done with your students? - You better should, that's enough for today, we are coming to pick you up, be ready in five minutes*".

With traffic jam, it took them half an hour to reach another workplace of Piotr. The car stopped at some obscure building. Many young people were leaving in small groups. Artur went inside to drag his father out of work. A few minutes later they came down. Mr. Chrzęszczewski was surrounded by a group of animated students, apparently not wanting to let him go. They approached the car and continued conversing for several more minutes. It irritated Danuta who opened the door and - with a commanding manner - took his husband's briefcase. Finally, he entered the car with an air of total exhaustion. The five passengers hardly squeezed in an old Ford Escort. Peter asked Bill casually how his day was, but did not listen to the American. He was complaining about his own hard day.

Half an hour later, they arrived at a new apartment building, where the Chrzęszczewski family owned a new flat. The grandmother, a dignified lady in her 70s, opened the door. In the living room, where they entered, the table was set for dinner. Showing the guest around, they were quite proud of their 100 square meter apartment,

comparing it to the old one in a shabby socialist “ant house building”, where they lived until two years ago.

Three ladies of three generations took charge of kitchen business. Artur was instructed by his father to serve the drinks, and also reminded not to drink, since later he would be driving Dr. Morgan back to the hotel.

"So, it is a nice apartment" - Bill expressed his compliment. "Quite comfortable for you and your wife, I suppose." – "Well, not quite for us two. Artur, our son, is a student, and he lives with us too. My mother in law has a one room studio of her own, but in fact she spends most of the time here. Since we are so busy, she is the household manager, and often stays here overnight. Finally, Monika should also count as being a member to this household. I see her almost daily, so basically we live five here. So – to your health and a successful visit". With that, Mr. Chrzęszczewski offered a drink.

Around 8:00 pm, as they were about to approach the table for dinner, the telephone rang. Mr. Chrzęszczewski excused himself and went to the other room. It was a business call concerning Morgan’s presentation in the morning. Apparently, it needed to be rescheduled by three hours (at 1pm, and not at 10am, as “tentatively planned before”) or to the next day, that is Tuesday. The reason for the switch was another unexpected and urgent meeting, to be held in the conference hall. Chrzęszczewski argued for a long time over the telephone until his wife ordered him to hang up and join the company at the table.

The food was plentiful and good. Cold salads and meats came first, along with herring and pickles. Vodka was served too, and there were toasts “to your health” and to “friendship”. This was followed by red beetroot soup with croissants. Next was the grandmother’s poultry specialty: duck stuffed with fruits and many vegetables. French *Bordeaux* red wine, which Danuta proudly brought from Carrefour, was served. Bill was always served first and was often asked to eat more, his faint excuses *"thank you, I am fine"* were disregarded. Toward the end of the dinner a couple of friends came in. They joined the company for desert.

Mrs. Chrzęszczewska explained that they were a closely-knit family and preferred to dine at home with friends, rather than going out to restaurants. *"Home food and climate are much better than restaurants, it just does not compare"*, she declared self-assured. Cheese-cake and walnut cake were served along with coffee and liqueurs. It was an excellent and heavy meal. Soon an animated discussion started on current financial crisis and Poland’s prospects in the global world. Though Bill was first kindly asked for his opinions, he was soon left alone, as the Poles started discussing among themselves. He could not follow the arguments but definitely they were quite emotional, and all people wanted to talk at the same time, not listening but raising their voices to be better heard.

Around 10:00 pm. Bill mentioned the work facing him the next day, with his morning presentation as the main event. He suggested it was time to go back to the hotel. It was only then that he learned from Chrzęszczewski about an “unexpected rescheduling”: *"Oh, please do not worry Bill" - he was reassured by his host - "the telephone that I had just before we started dinner was about a slight change in our plans. Your presentation will have to be rescheduled from tomorrow to Tuesday, due to some emergent meeting which I*

and my colleagues need to attend. So we may stay longer tonight, and you will get more time for rest in the morning.

This being said, the party continued in a jovial way. With a jet lag of nine hours, Bill felt very tired when he was driven to his hotel at midnight. On his first long day in Poland, most of the events ran the way he did not expect. What he knew for sure, was that he is visiting quite a different country.

Part II. Psychological Analysis of Core Cultural Standards

The above story contains a number of scripts and interpersonal events which may appear as much unexpected to a foreign visitor as they are typical for Poles. Two themes are dominant and crucial for understanding this intercultural encounter:

- 1) **Humanism**, or close, cordial, and informal personal relations;
- 2) **Low social effectiveness** (or combined low uncertainty avoidance and future time orientation); table 1 presents a list of episodes drawn from *One Day of Bill Morgan's Life*, which fit to these two cultural domains.

Among the family of European nations: The GLOBE Project

GLOBE is a name for an international research program on organizational and societal cultures, carried out by a large group of investigators in 62 countries from 1995 till its publication by House *et al.* (2004). GLOBE presents continuation of the earlier project by Hofstede (1980/2001), whose original five dimensions were given the same names, but not necessarily the same empirical meaning. What is important, the GLOBE dimensions were derived on theoretical grounds, and not “by chance” as it was the case with Hofstede’s. Also, GLOBE dimensions map the contemporary world, while Hofstede’s refer to historical past. Altogether, GLOBE has postulated and measured nine dimensions of *cultural practices (how things are?)*; and corresponding with them nine dimensions of *cultural values (how things should be?)*. They are: *Performance orientation, Future orientation, Uncertainty avoidance, Family collectivism, Institutional collectivism, Power distance, Gender equality, Assertiveness, Humane orientation*. Since in seven out of nine cases, correlations between values and practices have been significantly negative, and practices have shown relationships to various socio-economic and political indices reverse and stronger than values, only culture level practices will be used in our further analyses¹. House and his colleagues report substantial correlations between the scales of practices too. This is why I have applied multidimensional scaling as a statistical procedure to reanalyze the existing country scores. Also, for the purpose of greater simplicity, the scope of analysis was reduced to European countries. Figure 1 shows a two dimensional solution.

¹ GLOBE offers measurement instruments at state culture and at organizational level. Only culture level methods are of interest in this work.

Table 1
Humanism and Social Inefficiency in *One day in Bill Morgan's Life*

Humanism	Social Ineffectiveness [Non-Uncertainty Avoidance]
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Cordial airport welcome by the whole family; embracing, flowers; helping with the suitcase. ▪ Airport police officer persuaded by personal appeal. ▪ Tour-guides by (extended) family members. ▪ Personalized interactions with a newly acquainted person (summer job in the U.S.). ▪ Leading roles of women in organizing all actors' activities, their motherly-commanding manners. ▪ Coordinated actions of all family members to handle the visitor and their personal engagements. ▪ Family home dinner as way of entertaining a business visitor (rather than in a restaurant). ▪ Family home of three generations, open for friends, son's girlfriend included. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Not knowing the schedule of the visit well ahead. □ Car parked illegally at the airport to save money, time and for convenience. □ Police easy to persuade to bend traffic/parking regulations. □ Passenger leaving the car at red light, for being late at work. □ Working regularly on week-ends (Sundays) in an otherwise traditional Catholic country. □ Having several full time jobs at ill-defined locations and hours (private institutions renting space from state schools). □ No sharp boundaries between work and personal life: late night Sunday business calls. □ Last minute changes in scheduled programs, because of unexpected interferences.

The horizontal dimension is called **Societal Effectiveness** (SE) since it substantially correlates with *Performance orientation*, $r(19) = .78, p < .001$; *Future orientation*, $r(19) = .95, p < .001$, *Uncertainty avoidance*, $r(19) = .93, p < .001$, while negatively with *Power distance*, $r(19) = -.80, p < .001$ and with family collectivism, $r(19) = -.86, p < .001$. The vertical dimension is called **Assertiveness – Humanist Orientation** and it correlates significantly and distinctively with *Humane orientation*, $r(19) = .77, p < .001$; *Gender equality*, $r(19) = .81, p < .001$, and negatively with *Assertiveness*, $r(19) = -.89, p < .001$.

Figure 1 shows that the continent is carved into four meaningful cultural regions. Low in societal effectiveness but high on Humanist orientation are the Slavonic countries; Russia and Poland fall in this category. Next region, high in Humanist orientation but also high in Effectiveness, is covered by Nordic /Scandinavian countries. High in effectiveness and assertive region is populated by Germanic culture. It is interesting that both parts of pre-unified Germany but only the German section of Switzerland is located here. Finally, it is Southern/Latin Europe that falls into a quadrant of low effectiveness and assertiveness.

GLOBE: Two dimensions and four regions of European cultures

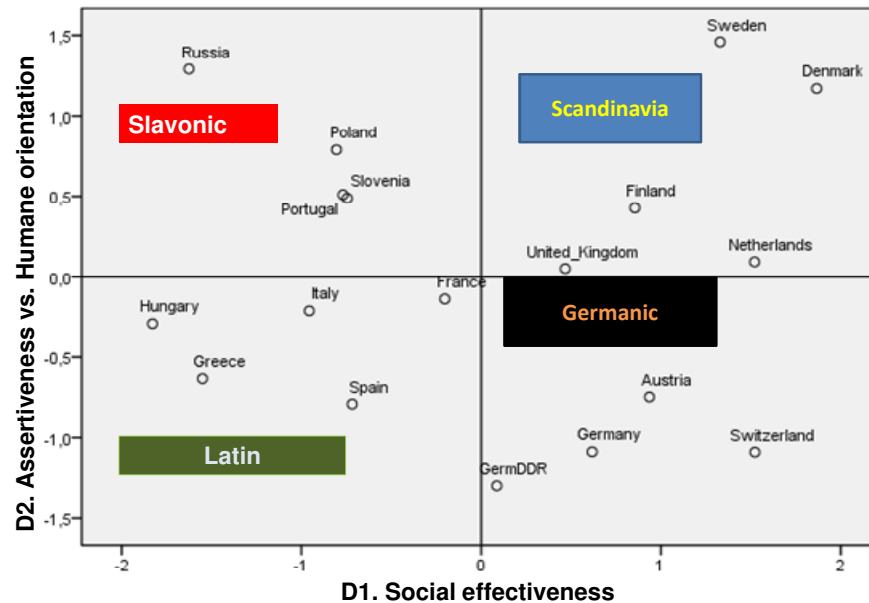


Figure 1

GLOBE Dimensions of Social Effectiveness and Humanism for European Countries

Social ineffectiveness in Polish cultural context

The bottom line of this context is expressed in a simple and very popular Polish saying “*Jakoś to będzie*”, which loses much of its sense when translated to English or other languages; vaguely it means “*things will somehow turn out OK by the end*”). This popular manifesto of naïve philosophy is blended of many beliefs:

- a gift of improvised creativity attributed to Poles;
- ability to heroic reversal of high magnitude adversities (also seen as typical of Poles);
- good luck; and
- divine providence.

Essential elements of such cultural construction are: short perspective for planning of scheduled activities; tolerance for imprecision (in measures of goals, means, accomplished outcomes, and their timing); and a sense that arrangements are binding “but only to an extent”, and can always be bent owing to unpredictable circumstances. In a culture so designed, much liberty is left to playing with reality which is considered as unpredictable, and much beyond control, so as are individual/group plans. As was already said, task activity has a component of heroic struggle rather than meticulous advancement on achievement path towards goals set up before.

Humanism

Humanist orientation will be given in depth analysis and definition later on. Here we take it from the reanalysis of GLOBE pancultural data as sensitivity to, and caring for other people, coupled with understanding and proclivity to forgive. Hospitality shown by Polish family to their American guest is definitely a good example of this orientation, and it functions as a general cultural directive.

The main conclusion from this analysis is that the position of Poland on the cultural map of Europe (and more broadly, of the world) offers a contextual explanation both for Bill Morgan's innocent adventures in Warsaw. This constellation will also serve as explanatory framework for the tragic crash of the presidential aircraft on April 10, 2010.

Presidential air crash of April 10, 2010: Cultural analysis of a tragic event

There may happen single-day, unexpected (momentary) events, which turn the history of a country (and beyond) in quite a dramatic way. There is no doubt that September 11 terrorist attack on the U.S. in 2001 had such dramatic impact for Americans and the world at large, during the last decade.

Polish recent history offers a shocking example of its own class. Here, it is known as April 10, 2010, presidential airplane crash. All ninety six persons, passengers and crew members onboard were killed at the aborted approach to landing at the Smolensk *Severnyj* airport in Western Russia. Never in the world since WWII, was there any accident of such proportions that a current head of state, all top military commanders, ministers, parliamentarians, and accompanying persons died instantaneously on board of a plane *en route* to another country for a state visit. Why am I invoking an event like this in a paper, which has neither political, nor aviation or juridical claim? – The reason is, that similar to the mundane *Bill Morgan's Visit in Warsaw*, this catastrophe reflects some important cultural aspects of the two countries involved: Poland and Russia².

Proximal causes and circumstances³

On the approach to landing, weather conditions on that fateful morning were extremely difficult. Thick fog limited visibility to 300-400 meters, the base of clouds hung 50m. above the runway. The pilots were informed about bad weather late, only 28 min. before landing (by Belarus air-controllers and by Polish colleagues, who had luckily landed before with a crew of journalists, while another Russian airliner did not venture, just avoiding crash). It was established, that the pilots used erroneously, the radio- instead of baric- indicator of altitude, and the aircraft's real position at the moment of a "pull-up" decision (some 10secs.

² For the second year and many more ahead, I am using this example when lecturing students on Polish and Russian cultures.

³ All the information comes from the report of Polish ministerial commission, *Komisja Millera*, responsible to investigate the causes and circumstances of the tragic accident (August, 2011). The report covers only technical and organizational aspects of the air crash and is independent from another investigation conducted by prosecution.

before the crash) was in fact lower than they thought; the difference between apparent 91 and real 39 meters above the runway level was substantial. The attempt to pull-up was made too late and on autopilot which did not work at the airport which was not equipped with the ILS (Instrument Landing System). Not only was the airport technologically and logistically unfit, but also information from Russian air-controllers about the altitude, and approach path were incorrect. Finally, the “horizon” warning command from control tower was emitted too late. During the last five seconds the aircraft cut a birch tree with its left wing, lost its stability, turned over and hit the ground bottom-up.

Distal circumstances

The chain causes for occurrence of any event may extend in time considerably, and also it may cover domains which are not directly related to the outcome. Some facts before the take-off on the fatal day should be mentioned: lack of precise meteorological forecast; lack of list of airports for emergency landing; misses in information about approach to *Severnyi*; absence of Russian navigator on board, who would be familiar with the airport and could communicate with the air controllers; and the airport being technologically and organizationally unfit for international air traffic.

Next, the report documented poor crew preparation in skill acquisition, and for this particular flight; the pilots were inexperienced in flying together, the first pilot alone could communicate in Russian. Flight organization did not meet the criteria of international HEAD instruction (for transport of VIP). It should be also noted, that the basic standards for not assembling so many top civilian and military officials on board of one airplane were severely violated. Polish security agents and aviation experts did not check the conditions of *Severnyi*, which had a status of military airport. This airport would simply not meet the criteria for landing of international flights with head of state on board.

Presidential visit had a special aura: it was to commemorate the 70th anniversary of murder on 22,000 Polish officers, prisoners of war, in a nearby forest of Katyń (and in other Soviet locations) by the order of Stalin and his communist PolitBuro members. Russians held Germans responsible for that murder for fifty years.

As the 70th anniversary was approaching, there was a competition between the Prime Minister and President, current Polish political antagonists, who of them should be in charge of these celebrations. The prime minister was invited by V. Putin, his Russian counterpart, and that visit took place three days earlier. The presidential delegation was considered as “private”, “unofficial”, which justified a low key profile of preparations, internally and internationally⁴. That visit looked like an improvised “let’s go” event.

A commonsense argument asserts that tragic airplane accidents happen everywhere in the world, so this one could have occurred with any president and at any international

⁴ When president Obama was to come to Poland for the funeral memorial, five days before a special airplane brought his limousine and all necessary equipment. Federal security agents were checking all details of his planned whereabouts. Finally, there was a volcanic eruption in Iceland and the flight of Airforce 1 was canceled.

flight, even if there was no such precedent in the history⁵. Against this argument there are statistics which show that tragic accidents are not distributed evenly across the world. And if so, then there should be some cultural factors to explain such events.

Especially the low levels of social effectiveness in Poland and Russia have generated circumstances contributing to such tragic accidents. Two reports from State level authorities: (a) the before mentioned Ministerial Commission to explain the April 10 catastrophe; and (b) Supreme Chamber of Control have clearly indicated long lists of irregularities in planning of governmental visits and their execution by special military aviation unit. It was rule rather than exception that such flights were “last minute” occasions, with violation of elementary precautions.

It is less evident to pinpoint the elements of humanist forgiveness or lack of assertiveness in the context of Smolensk airplane crash. With an accident of such proportions, one could assume that determined actions would be taken to explain all the details and to find those responsible for what happened. In Poland, it was only sixteen months later, that Minister of Defense (the flight was classified as military, thus under his authority) tendered his resignation to Prime minister (and this was followed by a decision of his successor to dissolve the military unit responsible for VIP transportation). Shortly, these consequences have been minimal.

Internationally, the wreckage of the airplane is still rusting at the Smolensk airport, and the black boxes plus other pieces of vital information are in hands of Russian agencies. The role of Polish authorities and specialists in the investigation leading to explanation of catastrophe was secondary to that of Russian agencies, and totally depended on their will to share the information. Altogether, it indicates the lack of assertiveness, which is the other pole of vertical dimension on fig.1⁶.

On historical origins of Humanism and Low Social Effectiveness

The more cultural-psychological analysis moves to remote past, the more it becomes risky, in the sense that our conclusions become far-fetched rather than well-documented and proven *beyond reasonable doubt*. Still, when we call some of the currently existing cultures *Confucian* or *Christian*, this implies the recognition of their roots some 2000-2500 years ago, and transmission process which has took 80-100 generations. In our case, the period in which Polish culture has been shaped is “only” of about 500 years.

Social effectiveness

Social effectiveness indicates that public life machinery works:

⁵ A similar argument would hold that terrorist attack on New York World Trade Center towers, could have happened in any big city with its skyscrapers or any important buildings.

⁶ Such situation is probably unimaginable to citizens and authorities of many states of the world. Americans, for instance were determined to catch Osama bin-Laden who was held responsible for the 9/11 terrorist attacks. The operation took 9.5 years and was conducted on the territory of third countries, and without any legal documents specifying the rights and conditions.

- laws are enforced
- transportation is predictable and on time
- offices respond on time and are accountable
- contracts and agreements are kept to the letter
- building constructions progress as scheduled
- safeguards keep natural or technological disasters under relative control, so that their effects can be minimized, etc.

Four historical reasons have contributed adversely to societal effectiveness in Poland (and other countries of the region).

Anarchic freedoms over laws and order

There is much of historical evidence dating back to the Renaissance *Golden Age* period, indicating that observers were able to notice dangerous symptoms of anarchy and public life disorganization in Poland.

It mainly had to do with weak central power of the elected kings which was a worldwide unique constitutional arrangement, protecting nobility against a threat of absolutist and dynastic monarchy. The rules of *Golden Freedoms* or *Nobles' Democracy* had been increasingly strengthening the position of the 10% privileged members in society of the epoch. Individual freedoms and inefficient administration led to a situation when everyone was a master of his fate in her/his land domain, but no larger projects had any chance for being introduced and implemented. It was in the XVIIth century when large water-projects had been conducted, regulating rivers on the territory of today's France and Germany. They were the forerunners of today's highways. Interestingly, Wisła (Vistula) is until today the only large river in Europe (over 1000 km. long) which is not regulated. Polish highways trail behind the EU standards. Current problems have remote roots indeed!

Coming to power from earlier obscurity, Prussia masterminded the partitions of Poland by the end of XVIIIth century. King Friedrich the Great (1712-1786) who was the main personality pushing for this process, was of opinion that Poland was the case of an unruly state where laws were not respected, taxes not collected, public life chaotic and marked by presence of women(!). Such country deserved to be dismembered by its neighbors on moral grounds, the monarch declared.

Historical discontinuity and uncertainty due to wars

The landscape in many western and southern countries in Europe is spotted by well preserved historical architecture: castles, churches, city halls, etc. In Poland, the landscape offers ruins, symbols of many wars which devastated the country for 350 years, since the *Swedish Deluge* in mid XVIIth century to WWII. Cultural stability and continuity facilitate planning and predictability in human action. Discontinuity and dramatic turns in individual, family, and community existence shift attention to basic survival skills and

obstruct societal effectiveness. Sweden and Switzerland – leaders in Societal Effectiveness in Europe -have not experienced wars for generations.

Rural-agricultural life

Third important root cause of low societal effectiveness is linked to centuries long rural-agricultural life. Even today, 39% of population lives in villages, and 23% are actively involved in agricultural production (census information); still in mid XXth century 70% were peasant-farmers. The other side of the coin was the low degree of urbanization combined with high proportions of city dwellers who were non ethnic Poles: first Germans, and later Jews. There is ample evidence that urban activities and life styles create the conditions for what is called societal efficiency: depersonalized interactions regulated by more universal and binding rules. In rural settings time is managed by natural processes; clocks and watches are city-life inventions.

Religion

Last (but not least) condition for low societal effectiveness in countries like Poland or Russia has to do with religion. When we consult Figure1 again, countries high on this dimension are historically protestant. With the reformed religion, traits such as conscientiousness, accountability, and trustworthiness, rose to the status of personal virtues, creating what later was called *Protestant ethic* (Weber, 1904), achievement motivation (McClelland, 1961) or impersonal task orientation (Sanchez-Burks, 2002). In contrast, Catholic cultures would advance closely knit, intense and diffuse (vs. domain specific) interpersonal relations.

Humanism and its cultural roots

There is another linguistic expression that is as much essential and lost in attempts to translate it from Polish to other languages. *Być ludzkim człowiekiem* can at best be rendered as *To be/To act as/ a human(e) human being*⁷. It also implies the opposite phrase (*to jest nieludzkie*), which conveys the meaning of *treating others/being treated/not in a human way*. The last connects us directly to what some social psychologists call *infrahuman* emotions (Leyens *et al.*, 2007) or dehumanization. On purely linguistic grounds the problem with this phrase is that it juxtaposes the word *human* in two senses: one is descriptive categorical (*homo sapiens*) and the other is ethical/evaluative (possessing or not possessing some moral qualities restricted to humans).

The expression and its various versions appear in common language, both in private and in public spheres. The contexts are either comments that someone has treated someone else in an *in-/human way* or as an appeal that self or another person be treated *in a human way*. For instance, medical patients are treated *nie po ludzku* by our health

⁷ As is often the case, there are numerous versions of this phrase: *Po ludzku/mieć ludzkie uczucia* = to feel in a human way; or *treat others/respond in a human way*.

care administration when they try to cash prescriptions for refundable drugs at pharmacies, but some pharmacies treat them *po ludzku* (i.e., they are not turned down, or they are not required to pay full market price). Either as a statement or appeal, the phrase to be a human(e) human being means: showing heart, understanding, sympathy, compassion, leniency, clemency or mercy.

When a student asks for a human treatment, s/he expects to be given another chance from the teacher, calling for an understanding of his/her difficult personal situation. Thus, expectation for a human treatment is often addressed to people who are in a power position (e.g. to a police officer) and may suspend punishment for a misdemeanor or should regard the case as special due to circumstances. The petitioner often has a status permanently lower than the recipient, but this difference may also be transient. If shortages, for example, occur on the market or tickets are sold out, you may ask for a special (human) favor, pleading your case with a cashier (*I need them for "important foreign guests"*, etc).

But *human feelings* are also self-reported. When a politician makes it public : "*it hurt me in a human way*", that person means that s/he was let down by someone whom they trusted or expected loyalty from.

There is no question that expectations of humanity occur in psychologically difficult situations and when someone else can help, though it may require the benefactor to veer off the normative course of action. The essential element which differentiates *human treatment* from other prosocial behaviors is that costs on the side of the benefactor are counted not in her time or energy units, neither in physical danger, but consist of bending the existing normative regulations and giving the plaintiff the credit of exceptionality, even if that person is responsible for his/her trouble. This may pose risk that the prosocial actor may be charged with partiality (*why a special treatment for this person and not someone else?*) and even corruption or nepotism.

Consequently, the acts of human treatment are not recognized as heroic neither awarded with distinctions (medals). They are kept low key by both sides, with an intention "to forget it". The benefactor wants to stay off the limelight to avoid possible questioning why did s/he do it, while the feelings of relief and gratitude on the recipient's side may be mixed with self-blame or repentance.

Catholicism

Humanist orientation as conceptualized above has clear cultural roots in Catholicism and its distinction needs to be emphasized again.

The most important intention which led Martin Luther to hang his theses on the doors of the Wittenberg cathedral in 1517 was to protest against the absolution of sins, which in his times could be rather easily obtained as a monetary transaction from greedy priests. Today, such excesses are not reported but plenary indulgence is still available for the faithful, and can be obtained in a relatively easy way. The operating mechanism is presented in figure 2.

It starts with the basic dualities inherent in European culture. One of these dualities consists of attributing two qualities to God: the source of moral order (e.g. Ten Commandments) but also of mercy towards imperfect human beings. The other duality has to do with the nature of humans: who are endowed with moral judgment and conscience (to differentiate between good and wrong) but at the same time are prone to moral transgressions because of their immoral temptations.

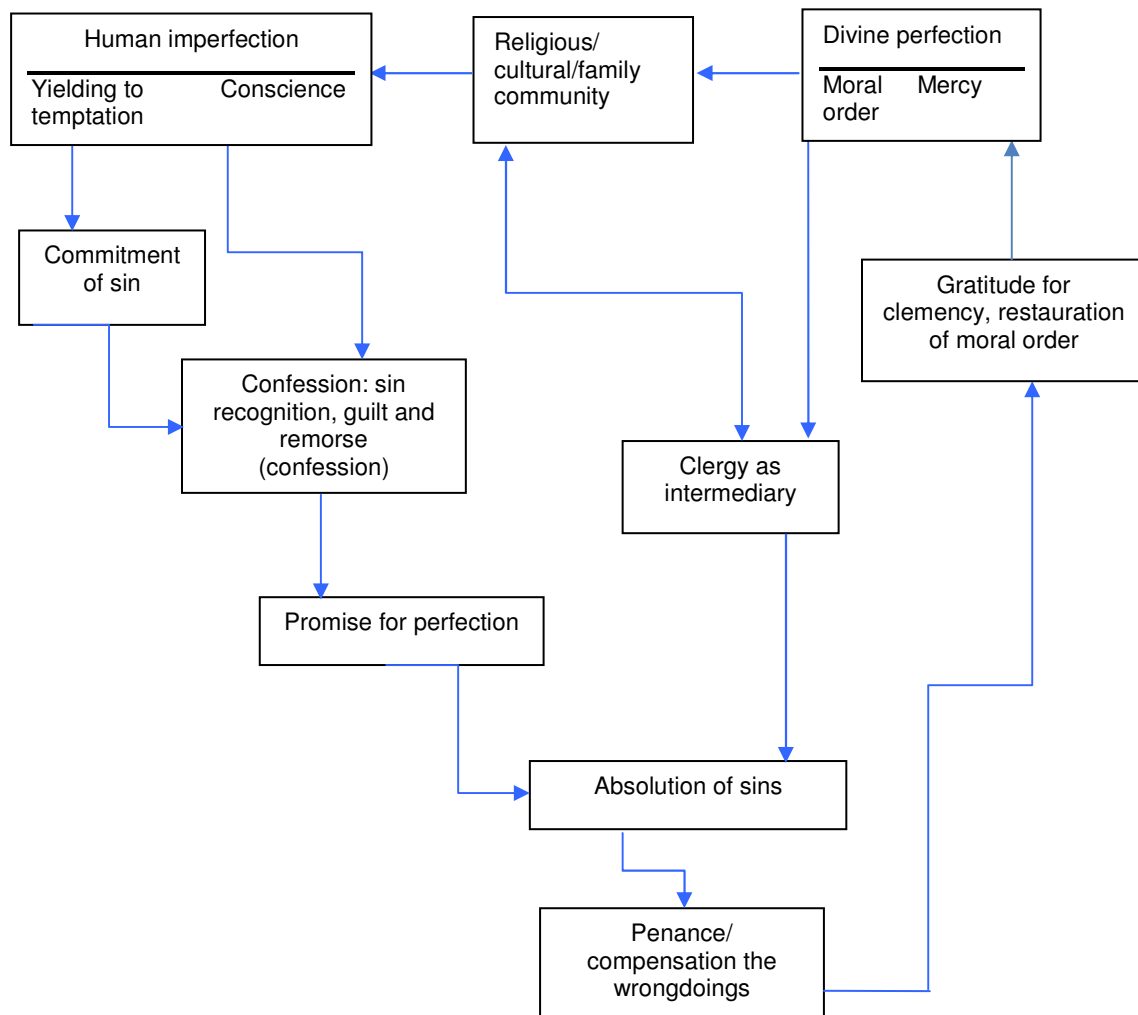


Figure 2
Flow Chart from Recognition of Sin to Repentance (in Catholic tradition)

Moral transgressions are recognized by the inner voice of conscience, feelings of guilt and remorse. These are institutionalized by the practice of confession. Here God acts through his intermediaries, priests, on whom the power of forgiveness has been bestowed (to which Luther objected). If the sense of wrongdoing is judged as sincere and in conjunction with the resolution for self-improvement, than absolution is granted, accompanied with penance (to compensate for the sins committed). Finally, a feeling of gratitude (to God) is supposed to be engendered and moral order is restored.

In Poland about 90% of children of age 8-9 learn this mechanism when they prepare for the first Communion. What is most important, once acquired in childhood, it becomes well installed also for those who become religiously neutral and belong to church non-goers later in their lives. Psychology of sin, remorse and forgiveness may function in perfectly secular context, without any direct reference to transcendental God. For a national culture to be called Catholic (or Protestant, etc.) it is not only or mainly important what is the actual percentage of church goers but at least of equal relevance is the operation of psychological mechanisms which are of religious origin (even without people being aware of it). Whether motivated by direct or indirect religious intentions, requests for mercy, forgiveness, or human treatment become over-learned as cultural scripts and are often activated. We expect others to be human and they deliver; the prospect of having a reputation of *inhuman human being* is definitely a negative incentive.

Societal (in-)effectiveness and humanism: Separate but linked

Figure 1 demonstrates orthogonality of these two cultural dimensions. Yet on the plan of within culture and individual level analysis, they are related. Let me first illustrate this idea with another example.

E-learning is more and more used as a learning device, supporting lecture courses. I make use of it to ensure interactions with students, and among themselves during the week separating two classes. Also, my students may receive up to 25% of their final grade for the assignments which are placed on the internet platform. During the spring semester of year 2011, I had 136 students in my classes. The e-learning component was introduced in syllabi, and widely accepted. To prepare each of 10 consecutive assignments, students were given one week periods. When the time is set for submitting assignment within the e-learning platform, it becomes rigid. If you are 1 sec. late, it won't be accepted. It is a culture of planning and high uncertainty avoidance.

With the first assignment I received a group requested to extend the deadline. Since it was the first time, I complied. Towards the end of the semester, such requests were becoming individual but even more intensive. It was the same plea each time: "*Please professor, let me finish the assignment a day (or two) later. Please, I could not be on time*" (for one reason or another). – Vast majority of students acted this way, and I would usually agree (to have the course go).

In this example, incompetence in being on time (low task effectiveness) goes hand in hand with acting on the humanist script of leniency and understanding. One could say, that humanist as defined in this work, would not be needed, had the students acquired skills of time effectiveness earlier in their life, or had they not learned on many other occasions that expectations of leniency would be rewarded. They attended secular elementary and high schools, led by teachers programmed by the culture of mercy and forgiveness. Research evidence on scriptic behavior in Polish schools supports this idea (Rybałtowska, 2007).

Humanism vs Materialism: Catholicism and the non-economic mind

In my contribution to the first edition of the *Online Readings in Psychology and Culture* (Boski, 2002), and in a related paper which appeared in an edited collection *Indigenous and Cultural Psychology* (Boski, 2006), humanism was contrasted with materialist orientation. This line of cultural interpretation is not abandoned here; and I will summarize its main points.

The best known of causal linkage {religion → economic activity and growth} is Max Weber's theory in which he traced the rise and growth of capitalism to protestant ethics which emerged in Europe in 16th and was later transmitted to North America (*Die Protestantische Ethik und der Geist des Kapitalismus*, 1904/1958). As was already discussed, Protestants postulated that divine grace manifested itself not in mercy and absolution but in providence which might be inferred from earthly material success. This belief led to a dramatic world-view reorientation, where responsible diligent work, rational investment, and thrift-ascetic conduct became essential virtues for a member of congregation. The theory was later elaborated by McClelland (1967) who found in need for Achievement (nAch) the missing psychological link between protestant culture and economic growth. According to the author of *The Achieving Society*, socialization in protestant culture/religion (compared to Catholic) facilitates higher level of achievement strivings and prepares psychologically towards undertaking entrepreneurial challenges.

Catholic doctrine was strongly opposed to the spirit of business on ethical grounds. Profit-making was considered incompatible with Christianity, or simply sinful. Human greed of early capitalism and profit-making business activities of modern market economy have been alien to the teachings of Roman Catholicism including the most recent encyclicals by John-Paul II (the Polish Pope).

In Poland, these norms took even stronger measures by pushing business activities beyond the ethnic-religious boundaries: it was unacceptable (or even illegal) for a Polish noble Catholic; contrary to Jews and city dwellers of German origin who were traders and ran commercial activities. The rules of capitalist economy did not access mentality of our forefathers. The concepts of *profit, loans, interest, banking* were foreign to them and kept in disrespect; activities of this type may have brought moral-religious sanctions, even banishment. An honorable citizen could not give an interest-bearing loan to another nobleman, nor could he get directly involved in any business venture. The best novels of national literature of 19th and beginning of 20th centuries portrayed those images of Polish

mentality⁸; they still remain today the required classics for high school students, shaping mentality of successive generations. It is safe to propose, that business world-view was absent among Poles through the centuries, till the end of communism in 1990. A mixture of cultural, religious, and external political factors (lack of sovereignty in 19th century, communist experience in second half of 20th century) stood behind this interesting phenomenon.

If protestant culture was psychologically transmitted into need achievement and entrepreneurial spirit, then what were the psychological consequences of Catholicism (other than deficit of those characteristics)? - Humanism is our answer again: a premium given to close personal relations with disregard for utilitarianism of business reality.

Table 2
Humanism-Materialism scale (HUMAT)

Humanism	Materialism
Offering selfless sympathy and helpful hand	Always trying to tease out some profit or advantage
Caring for life-long friendships	Upward mobility: buying better homes as personal incomes grow
Keeping memories of those who passed away and heroes of the past	Becoming a successful business person as a life ideal
Standing up to defend people against injustice	Happiness when deposits on bank accounts and other financial assets grow
Forgiveness and mercy for those who went wrong	Public affairs of interest only as much as personal well-being at risk
Patriotism- concern and commitment to one's country well-being	Business-like relations with other people: Quick, on time, and to the point
Equality of races and nations in laws and in practical treatment	Your personal worth is equal to what you possess
Fantasy, romanticism and heartedness in human relations	Feeling most comfortable in modern technological world, free from old ties and traditions
Kindness and courtesy towards others (women, in particular)	Always count money and control your expenses
Interest in world events and in high arts/culture	Final years to be spent in senior citizen home

⁸ The best examples of these *oeuvres* are: *Lalka (The Doll)* by Boleslaw Prus (1889); *Ziemia Obiecana (The promised land)* by Wladyslaw Reymont (1899); *Rodzina Polanieckich (The Polaniecki family)* Henryk Sienkiewicz (1995) ; *Noce i Dnie (Nights and Days)* Maria Dabrowska (1931-34). Sienkiewicz and Reymont were Nobel Prize winners in literature. All those novels were cast as feature films and TV serials.

Studies on Humanism – Materialism: Twenty Five Years of Research

Current contribution marks twenty five years of empirical research on humanism in Polish culture and in comparative perspective. It is obvious that during that length of time there have been changes in conceptual formulations and in measuring methods. Theoretical elaboration presented on previous pages of this text is novel, and it did not guide the first studies conducted in 1980s. Those initial studies were conducted in a specific context of Polish immigrants' acculturation in North America (in the period of 1985-80). Humanism – Materialism (HUMAT) emerged as the central dimension along which cultures on both sides of the Atlantic differed respectively. The HUMAT scale based on those studies was presented in a number of papers (Boski, 1988, 1991, 1992, 1994. As a bipolar construct, HUMAT is presented in table 2.

Methodology in these studies adopted measures related to self, and positive/negative prototypes of Polish and Canadian/American prototypes, considered as identity figures for participants. Figure 3 presents the scores of these five objects of the HUMAT scale.

As can be seen, Self and Positive Polish prototype (who was predominantly a worker involved in "Solidarność" anti-communist activities of the time) were rated at the same level and significantly higher than Polish negative and the two American prototypes, $F(4, 290) = 111.55, p < .001, \eta^2 = .34$. What is important here, the HUMAT polarizes identity

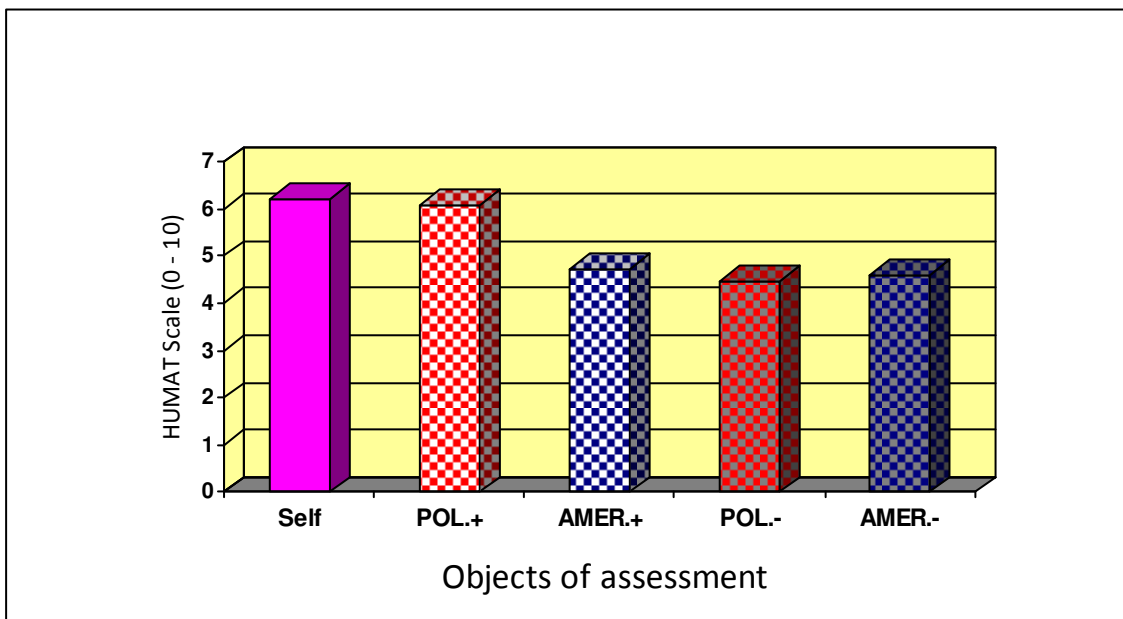


Figure 3
HUMAT Scale in Self, Polish and American Prototypes of Positive and Negative Evaluation

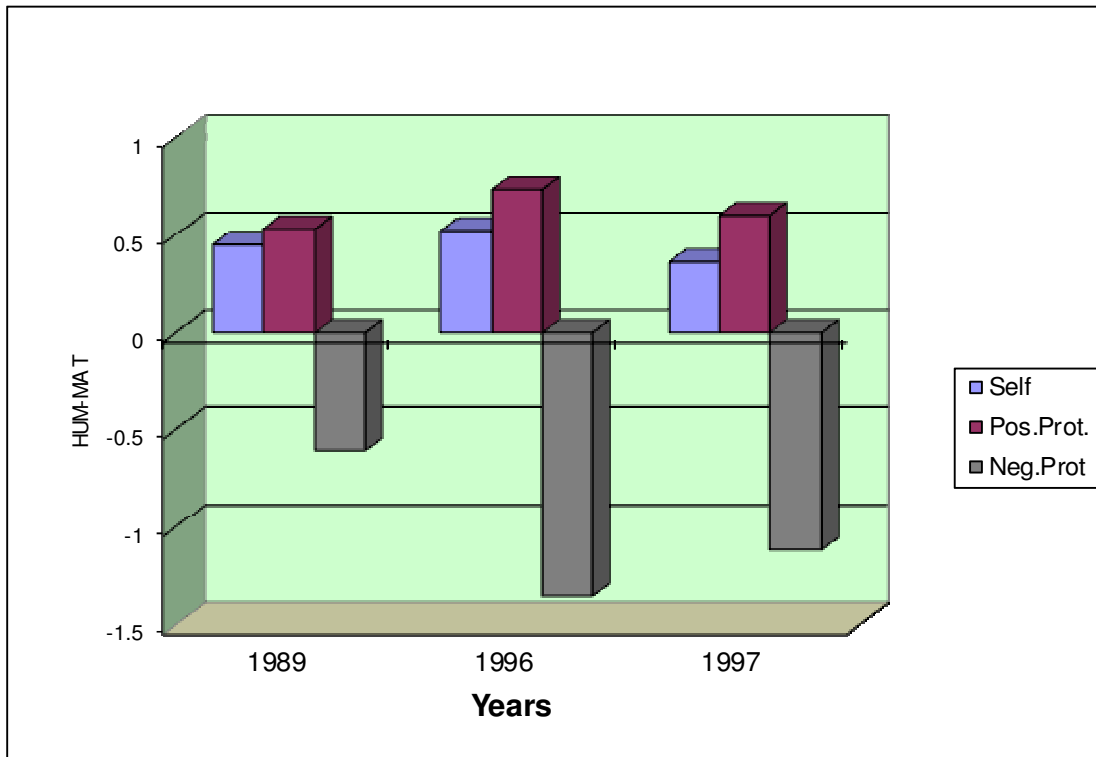


Figure 4
HUMAT During the Period of Polish-political Transformation (z-scores)

figures within Polish culture, whereas American prototypes are not distinguishable on this measure; it supports the contention that Humanism is a central dimension in Polish but not in American culture. A similar conclusion should be drawn from studies comparing HUMAT among Poles in the country and the prototypes they generated, during the period of economic-political transition from communism to market democracy.

Here, self and positive prototype remain close with their elevated humanism, while negative cultural prototype is characterized by increasing tendency towards materialization, $F(2, 384) = 478.63, p < .001$ (see Figure 4).

Humanism and national heroes

Positive prototypes are “private identity figures”, that is they appeared in our initial studies as personal constructions and not as real historical characters. But, as Hofstede (2001) rightly observed, such real heroes are depositories of cultural values, and knowing whom people honor and keep in high respect, we come to know their culture. All rankings of “most important Poles” in recent times (20th century), find Karol Wojtyla or Pope John-Paul II the most popular among his compatriots. In a survey of PENTOR Research Institute of December 2004, 83% of respondents declared that they largely approved the Pope’s world-views, ideas and his conduct; 62% further asserted that he was the most influential source of their personal opinions in important matters (the next person on that list enjoyed identification of 4%). Anita Gluszynska (2006) conducted her study on perception of John-

Paul II and feelings towards him among young Poles and Italians (in Rome, where he was the bishop), in the weeks after his death on 2005. She found the level of humanism attributed to the late Pope extremely high (on a 1 to 7 scale), but still higher among Polish participants: $M_{PL} = 6.38 > M_{IT} = 5.77$, $F(1, 130) = 27.01$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .173$; also, Poles scored higher than Italians on their own humanism, $F = 9.89$, $p < .01$, $\eta^2 = .071$), and correlation between self and the Pope's measures was significant for Poles $r(66) = .323$, $p < .01$ but not for Italians, $r(65) = .159$, ns., although the difference between the coefficients was not significant.

Humanism vs other value dimensions

The first part of reported findings brought empirical evidence supporting cultural validity of humanism considered as a value dimension. I will now turn to the questions of theoretical validity: HUMAT convergence and divergence with other scales.

First of all, there exists conceptual and empirical affinity between humanism and benevolence in Schwartz's (2007) circular theory of values. *True friendship* and *Forgiving* which fall into the value type benevolence are also items in our humanism scale. Yet, humanism has more of prosocial orientation and not necessarily in close relations. It should be noted, that benevolence appears as panculturally by far most important *guiding principle of life* (Schwartz & Bardi, 2001). It implies that its centrality may not be a Polish phenomenon.

Humane orientation (HO) is one of culture level dimensions of values and practices in the GLOBE project, discussed at the onset of this paper. Sample items which measure HO practices are: *In this society, people are generally very concerned about/very sensitive toward/others*. As was demonstrated in Figure 1, Slavic cultures score high on the vertical dimension of which HO is an integral part.

The last important theoretical reference for our conception of humanism is Kagitcibasi's (2005, 2007) theory of self and family. Similarly to Schwartz, who abandoned, in this theory of values, the division of cultural world into collectivism and individualism (Schwartz, 2004), Kagitcibasi too, considers this dichotomy as too simplistic. Instead, she has proposed a twofold taxonomy of self in family context, along the axes of: 1) *Agency*, which assumes positions of *autonomy* vs. *heteronomy*, and 2) *Interpersonal distance*, dichotomized as *relatedness* vs. *separation*. The argument is that autonomy of self need not correspond to separation from others which is what individualism presumes (Triandis, 1994, 1995); and relatedness with others need not be heteronomous (which is habitually considered as a characteristic of collectivism).

These two conceptual axes should be viewed as independent (orthogonal), rather than equating autonomy with separation and relatedness with heteronomy. Based on affective bonds, modern families, where the value of children becomes predominantly psychological (rather than economic or social as in traditional societies), create an environment favorable for development of autonomous and relational self.

This brings us very close to the idea of humanism which combines *I-as-subject* with pro-social orientation. Thus, humanism is very close to autonomous relatedness⁹. This proposed taxonomy of value orientations is presented in table 3. By deconfounding the sense of agency: *I vs. not-I*, from the type of interest (value orientation): *Me vs. Others*, we have conceptual space of four separate mentality types.

Accordingly, humanism shares prosocial orientation with collectivism, but is different in agentic self-direction, which – on the other hand – makes it similar to individualism. Humanism and individualism oppose each other in promoting other vs. self-oriented goals, respectively.

Table 3
A Taxonomy of Value Orientations: Humanism and its Alternatives

<i>INTEREST/ ORIENTATIONS</i>	<i>AGENCY/ DIRECTION</i>	
	<i>I-as-SUBJECT</i>	<i>I-as-OBJECT</i>
PRO-SOCIAL	HUMANISM	COLLECTIVISM
SELF (egocentric)	INDIVIDUALISM	ALIENATION

Empirical validity of the model

The model outlined above was tested in mid 90s. In a panel study aimed at investigating the process of Polish political transformation: from communist totalitarianism to democracy. The research sample was drawn from five selected socio-economic categories, residents of two Polish cities: laborers in private and social sectors; teachers; bank employees; and city councilors (regional politicians). There were five waves of data collection, separated by approximately 6 month intervals; and the sample size was rather modest ($N = 160$ participants). A large set of measures was taken in each wave, or several times: the meaning and evaluation of democracy; alienation, individualism, collectivism, humanism; and a host of others, of no direct relevance here.

Findings reported in figure 5 are drawn from the first and last of five waves of measurements on humanism; they clearly demonstrate that humanism differentiates distinctly and predictably between socio-economic groups in Polish society, $F(4, 127) = 7.97, p < .001, \eta^2 = .201$. Among the five socio-economic levels, those with highest scores on humanism are earned by teachers and local community (self-government) politicians; lowest among people employed in banks; they can be seen as successful construct

⁹ It should be noted that the similarity with Kagitcibasi's conceptual framework does not entail a secondary status of my formulations. In fact, the taxonomy presented in table 4 was first published (in Polish) earlier than her work.

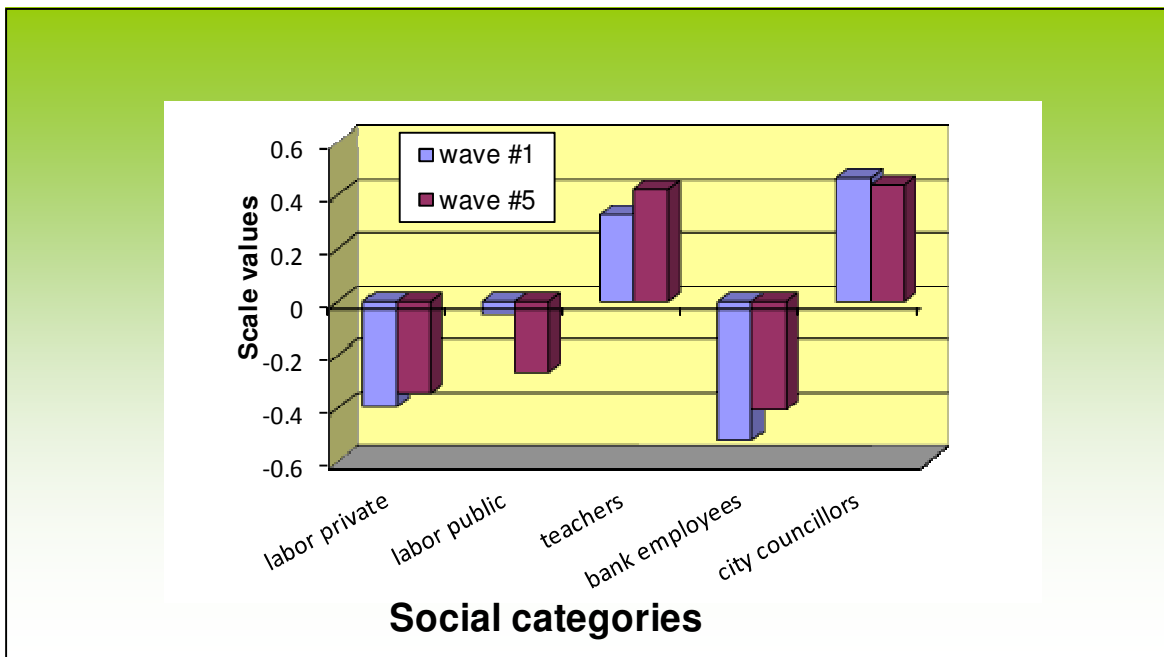


Figure 5

Humanism in Five Social Categories at First and Fifth Waves of Measurement

validation: high levels of humanism characterize people whose work imply taking care of others' personal growth and social problems; materialism is high among those who deal with money.

Research findings have also demonstrated empirical separateness of humanism from measures of collectivism–individualism (see Figure 6). Collectivism strongly differentiates groups along their education and social status: laborers are highest, while city councillors, with their highest scores in humanism, occupy the lowest position, $F(4, 118) = 12.64, p < .001, \eta^2 = .300$. Materialism-oriented bank employees, while also low in collectivism, score higher in individualism than teachers and city councillors, $F(4, 118) = 3.27, p < .05, \eta^2 = .100$. These results add to the construct validity of the humanism scale: social groups which are contrastingly different on this dimension, score similarly on collectivism and are again apart on individualism.

Further, we tested correlations between all four mentality dimensions, which were conceptually defined in table 3, and their predictive power for understanding and preferences of political democracy, which was the main outcome variable in the project¹⁰. Results are reported in Table 4.

¹⁰ Understanding Democracy was measured with a D-scale, designed by Reykowski (1995). The scale consists of 54 items which are considered as possible and normative markers of democracy, as defined in political science. The scale allows tapping both idiosyncratic and normatively correct understanding of democracy. Only the latter was considered in this report.

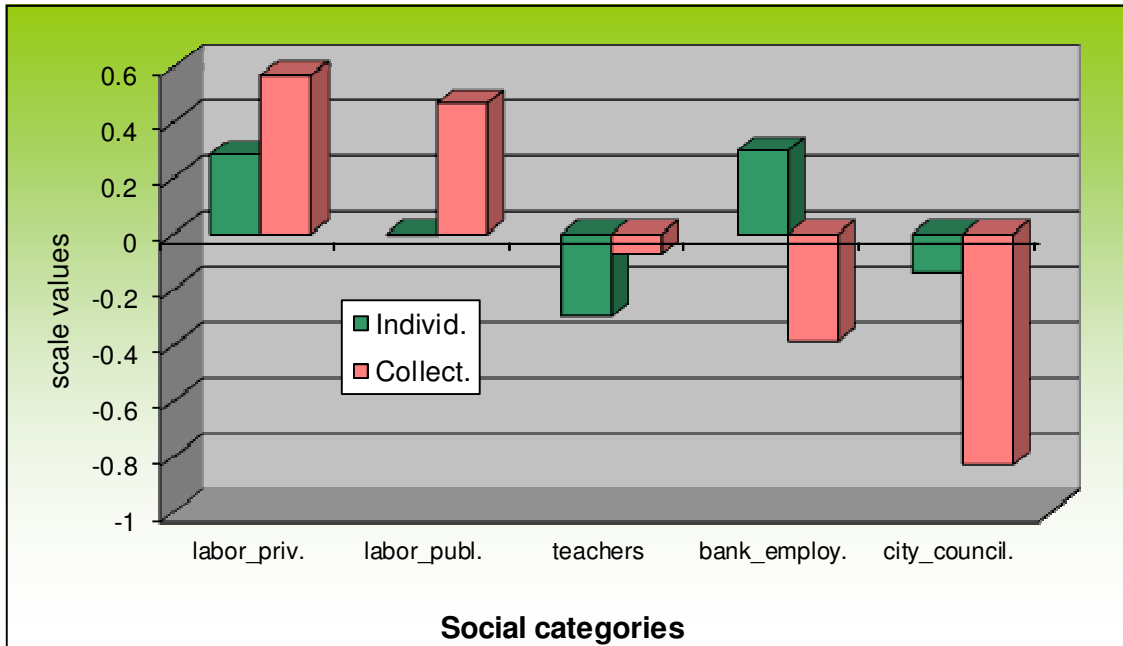


Figure 6
Individualism and Collectivism in Five Social Categories

Interestingly, humanism is negatively correlated with all other three mentality dimensions, and remains the only positive predictor of understanding democracy (see Table 4). Thus, our taxonomy of four mentality dimensions, theoretically derived from self-direction (agency) and social orientation (self-transcendence), gets a sound validation. Humanism has not only cultural foundations but is meaningfully related to other dimensions of subjective culture (mentality), well established in cross-cultural literature.

Table 4
Humanism, three other mentality dimensions, and Understanding democracy: Correlations and regression analysis

	Collectivism	Individualism	Alienation	Democracy	
				r	β
Humanism	-.047	-.410 ^{***}	-.235 ^{**}		.258 [*]
Collectivism		.000	.404 ^{***}	-.383 ^{***}	-.279 [*]
Individualism			.234 ^{**}	-.301 ^{***}	-.136 ⁺
Alienation				-.618 ^{***}	-.498 ^{***}

*** p < .001; ** p < .01; * p < .05; + p < .10

Descriptive and evaluative aspects of Humanism: Cross-cultural comparisons

Values can be measured at individual and/or culture level; as characteristics of a person or population. In Schwartz's approach both levels are present: values are first assessed as life priorities of individuals, and then aggregated to become culture attributes. GLOBE and Inglehart's WVS approaches operate only at culture level (thus, they can be described as sociological approaches).

The existing aggregating methodologies, which combine the same measures at both levels are not quite satisfactory. Schwartz's measures, for instance, cannot escape *reverse ecological fallacy* (Hofstede, 2001, p. 16), which occurs when aggregation of individual scores into a country mean takes place. So far, researchers have failed to treat these two levels of values separately. The solution, which I have been practicing over the years, offers a hope for avoiding the fallacies of confounding the uniqueness of each level. The heuristic of this approach is very simple: **Individual values are measured as personal preferences; cultural values - as population descriptors.**

Research participant indicates, for example, how important for her/him is a *true, long lasting friendship* (which is a preferential aspect of this value) and then s/he attempts an assessment of how important is a *true, long lasting friendship* for people in her/his community/organization/society (which is a value-descriptive aspect). The two aspects are separate, though they may be correlated. Finally, a product of both, i.e. weighting of cultural descriptive markers by their individual preferences is considered as a measure of cultural identity.

This model is particularly useful for the purpose of two-cultural comparisons, whereby bicultural individuals may provide simultaneous, cross-sectional descriptors of their two familiar realities. Table 5 and Figure 6 present a format of value distribution, descriptive of two cultures, A and B. Based on this format, the final section, will demonstrate comparative findings on humanism.

Table 5a
Comparing Cultures on Distribution of Values Set

Culture A	Culture B	
	Yes	No
YES	$\sum a_i b_i$	$\sum a_i \sim b_i$
NO	$\sum \sim a_i b_i$	$\sum \sim a_i \sim b_i$

Note: Each culture, A and B are described on a set of values: some of them they share; some are culture specific subsets; and the remaining sets are out of both cultures' boundaries.

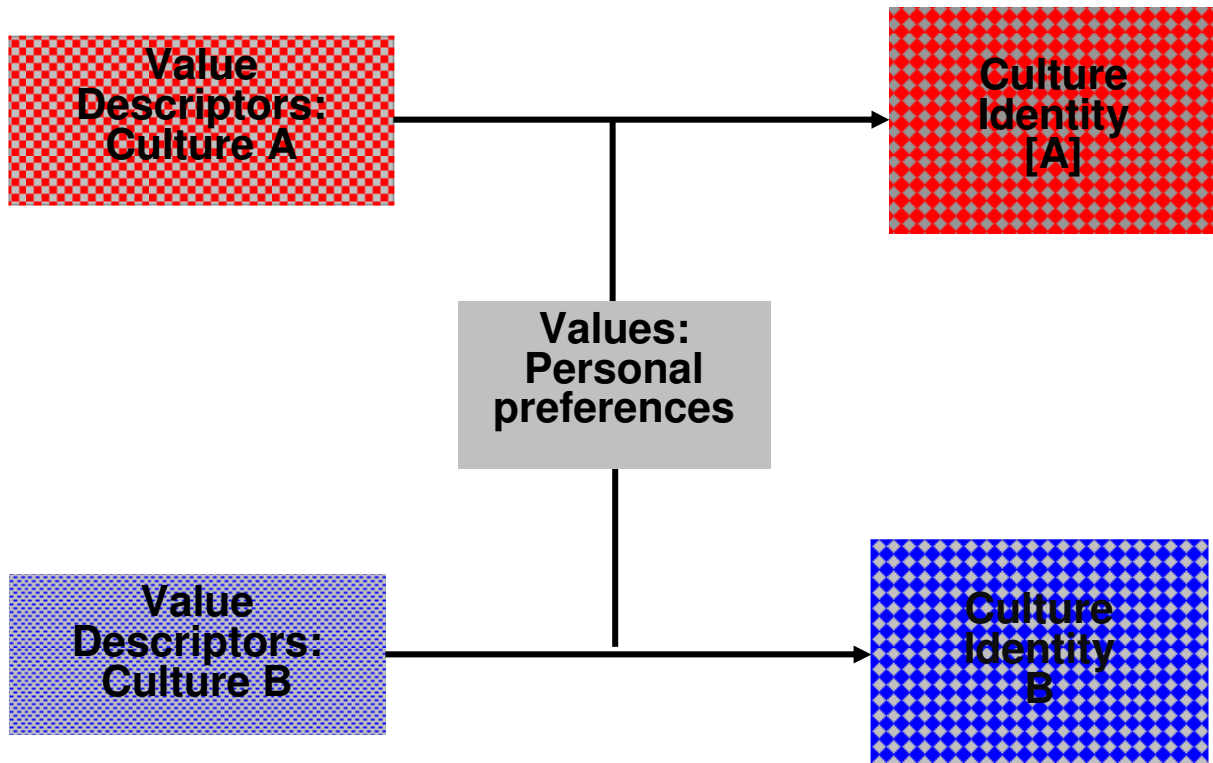


Figure 6

Cultural Identity: A Product of Value Descriptors and Their Personal Preferences

Humanism: Culture level comparisons

Results of a number of studies which employed this methodology will now be summarized by their meta-analysis. The main question to be answered is whether Poles in the country, Polish immigrants, and other nationals attribute more humanist values to Polish culture than to any other which serves as a target of comparison. The list of these studies and results appear in table 6.

1. Polish immigrants and Polish-Americans 2nd and 3rd generations

This study was conducted in the state of New Jersey in 1990 (Boski, 1992, 1994). Participants were direct Polish participants ($n = 26$); 2nd generation Polish-Americans, born of parents who were immigrants ($n = 31$); and 3rd generation Polish-Americans, whose four grandparents were ethnic Poles, while both parents were born of them in the U.S. ($n = 20$). Separate scales of humanism and materialism were extracted from the Values & Cultural Scripts Questionnaire (V&CSQ); see table 2¹¹. Polish-Americans of both generations did

¹¹ Four weights were in a range from 2 to -1, corresponding to item placements as culture descriptors. If an item was a culture specific descriptor (Polish | American), then it carried a weight of 2 as a positive marker or -1 as a negative marker; if it was attributed to both, the weights were +1 for each culture; and if it was out of boundary, weights carried zero-values.

not differ on these scales and were combined into one category. Significant repeated measures effect for descriptive measures of humanism was obtained: Polish > American culture, but qualified by generation. As reported in table 6, t-test values were highly significant for immigrants, but only marginally ($p=.10$) for Polish-Americans; effect sizes (d) correspond to them. Similar pattern of results was found for cultural identity measures (products of descriptors * preferences); they are reported in the last column of table 6.

Materialism was contrasted with humanism in that investigation. Participants of both subcategories attributed significantly less materialist descriptors to Polish than to American

Table 6
Humanism in Polish and in Other Cultures – by Poles, Polish Immigrants and Other Nationals

	Author(s), year	Cultures: Poland vs	PI (des)	Other (des)	t-test d	PL (eval)	Other (eval)	t-test d
1a	Boski (1992, 1994) ; [Polish Immigrants]	USA	1.32	-.11	t(25)= 10.60*** d = 2.08	8.13	-.71	t(25)= 8.99*** d = 1.76
1b	Boski (1992, 1994) [Pol.-Amer. 2 nd , 3 rd generat.]	USA	.86	.71	t(50) = 1.64 ⁺ d = .23	5.12	4.74	t(50)=.69 d = .10
2a	Rymek 2002/2006 [Pol. immigr.]	USA	4.81	.96	t(52)=9.83*** d = 1.35	4.23	1.84	t(80)=10.04*** d = 1.12
2b	Rymek 2002/2006 [Poles, control]	USA	4.72	.53	t(59)=14.62*** d = 1.89	3.85	1.37	t(85)=10.37*** d = 1.12
3a	Lewandowska, 2003/2008 [Poles_immigr.]	UK	4.63 (.88)	2.37 (.03)	t(42)= 3.75*** d = 0.65	1.69	1.27	t(42)= 2.01* d = 0.31
3b	Lewandowska, 2003/2008 [English]	UK	1.60 (.74)	1.20 (.59)	t(29)= .91 d = 0.17	0.83	0.55	t(29)=.99 d = .18
4a	Maloney, 2007 Polish_wives	UK	3.88	1.06	t(49)=6.47*** d = .92	4.06	2.39	t(49)=5.51*** d = .78
4b	Maloney, 2007 Brit._husbands	UK	3.22	1.50	t(49)=4.12*** d = .58	3.04	2.91	t(49)=.39 d =
5a	Nosarzewska, 2004 [Poles]	France	4.15	1.17	t(46)=6.60*** d = 0.96	18.09	4.85	t(46)=6.60*** d = .963
5b	Nosarzewska, 2004 [French]	France			t(46)=5.33*** d = 0.78	13.11	5.91	t(46)=4.64*** d = .684
6	Boski, 2005 [Poles, national sample]	UE	3.42	0.99	t(1091)=31.01*** d = 0.94	1.62	.04	t(1080)=34.09** * d = 1.04
7a	Jędryszczak, 2010 [Polish immigr. in Greece]	Greece	3.05	2.02	t(42)=2.38 ⁺ d = .36	10.23	6.87	t(97)= 3.13 ⁺ d = .32
7b	Jędryszczak, 2010 [Poles in Poland]	UE	4.03	1.34	t(31)=6.44*** d = 1.14	13.76	4.77	t(78)=9.00*** d = 1.01
Z = $\sum Z_j / \sqrt{K}$					10.13			11.43
					6.62			5.77

culture: $d = -.80$ for immigrants, and $d = -1.23$ for Polish-Americans. The two cohorts did not enter in a significant interaction with two culture related measures, though materialist characteristics of American culture were even more pronounced by those participants who were born to it.

2. Poles vs Polish Immigrants (Rymek, 2006)

This work was run as a two generational study among Polish immigrants in the U.S. and a control group of parents and their young adult children in Warsaw (60 participants in each group). We used a 10-item humanism scale, and contrasted culture specific descriptors [Pol. vs. American] from this set. As can be seen from the next two rows, indicated as 2a and 2b, the mean number of Polish descriptors was just below 5.0, while it is below 1.0 in the case of American culture markers. The t-test and d statistics are very high, irrespective of participants' residence or generation. The same pattern of results is repeated for cultural identity data, which indicates that the component of individual value preferences does not contribute to cross-cultural differences.

3. Humanist values at childhood family homes in autobiographic memories of Polish and British friends (Lewandowska, 2008; Lewandowska & Rejmer 2006)

The next study was conducted in United Kingdom (London) among second generation Polish-Brits (their mean age at research time was 44.5 years), born of WWII immigrant/refugee parents. Other than being participants themselves, they were requested to provide with a contact to "a British friend of the same gender from childhood years", and ask her/him to take part in the research too. Using the same questionnaire and method, participants of both categories were characterizing their own and friend's family childhood homes, and their own value preferences as adults. Descriptive and identity aspects of humanism are reported in rows 3a and 3b of table 6¹². With descriptive measures, Polish-British participants found their own family background considerably more humanist than their British friend's homes. For the British counterparts, Polish homes which they visited had an edge in humanism, but results did not show statistical significance. Statistical tests and size effects for humanist culture identity were similar to those on descriptive measures, but of lesser magnitude.

4. Humanist values in mixed marriages of Polish wives and British husbands (Maloney, 2007)

In mixed marriages, two cultures represented by each spouse mix daily in family life, and give perfect research opportunity for a comparative observation. In her study, Maloney

¹² The upper figures are mean numbers of "Polish home" and "British home" humanist items, out of 8. The lower figures (in parentheses) are weighted means of the same items, where humanism attributed to Polish culture has the following weights for Polish/British participants: own/his home = 2, both = 1, none = 0, and British/own home = -1. The weights attributed to British culture for British/Polish participants are the same: 2, 1, 0, and -1. Statistical tests and effects sizes for both types of measures, unweighted, and weighted, are obviously equal.

(2007) had Polish wives and British husbands reporting on value orientations in their own and partner's social environments, which resulted in a {2 * 2} matrix. Like with Lewandowska's study, both husbands and wives saw the Polish value profiles considerably more humanist than those of British spouses. Even here though, the effect size for descriptive facets is considerably larger than for value preferences and cultural identity.

5. French managers and their Polish coworkers (Nosarzewska, 2004)

French business, especially in wholesale and retail stores, banks and automobile services has a strong presence in Polish economy. Managers from these domains, employed in Warsaw (for at least 6 months) were participants in the next study. Control group of their Polish coworkers/employees was matched by socio-demographic characteristics. Research tasks for participants were similar to those in earlier studies: culture descriptive sorting and personal preferential endorsement of values. Results were strong and in line with previous findings: participants from both countries found Polish culture considerably higher than French culture on humanist values.

6. Culture of Poland vs European Union (Boski, 2005, 2009)

This study had the largest sample ($N = 1093$) but was conducted only in Poland. In the wake of their country's access to European Union, representative sample of Poles were interviewed on a number of problems related to the upcoming integration; value descriptions and endorsements were among these issues. The subset of values shared by Poland and EU was the smallest of all four alternatives. Humanism appeared again as distinct for Polish culture and worthy of preservation (as virtue), during the process of unification; the effect sizes were around 1.00 in both cases reported in table 6.

7. Culture of Poland vs Greece (/UE)

This study investigated Polish immigrants in Athens and residents of Wroclaw (Jedrzychczak, 2010) by mimicking the earlier one by Rymek (2006) as it included families with parents and their young adult children. Participants were Polish immigrants in Greece (Athens) and Poles residing in their country (city of Wroclaw). Similar to Rymek's study, descriptive measures were taken only from parents, and served as foundation for individual preferences and cultural identity of both generations.¹³ Obtained results fall into the pattern of findings established in earlier studies: they are stronger from inside the country, than from immigrant's perspective.

To combine results from all seven studies, the Z statistics (after Rosenthal & Rosnow, 1991, pp. 503-505) were computed; these meta-analytic indices can be seen at

¹³ The reason for this methodology was to treat descriptive measures generated by parents as groundwork for cultural values transmission to their children. By this means it was possible to establish the parent-child value similarity in what parents defined as Polish, Greek, etc. values. Obviously, the sample size for descriptive measures was much smaller than the sample size for value preferences and cultural identities.

the bottom of table 6. The Z-values for descriptive and for identity measures are run separately for Poles (upper left; $k = 7$) with other categories (lower right; $k = 6$). The former are considerably higher, but the size of differences between Polish and non-Polish cultures in the latter case is also astounding.

When four categories of participants are created, the order of Z-values on Polish cultural humanism is as follows: Poles in their home-land ($Z = 11.18$) > Polish direct emigrants ($Z = 6.93$) > Foreign nationals ($Z = 5.83$) > Polish immigrants of 2nd and 3rd generations ($Z = 3.49$).

Overall, the meta-analysis of seven studies brings a clear and convincing picture on humanism in a comparative perspective:

- a) Polish culture is more saturated with values which form this descriptive dimension than any other contrasting culture;
- b) the effects are stronger among the samples residing in Poland than among immigrants or natives from the other culture;
- c) the effects for descriptive facets are stronger than for culture identity measures.

Low social effectiveness

The *Values & Cultural Scripts Questionnaire* was not initially prepared to measure this dimension which is a combination of low uncertainty avoidance and low future orientation. Only in its more recent version it had three items which formed the scale:

- A belief that things will get resolved somehow, even if everything is chaotic and there seems to be no way to meet the dead line.
- Being always on time, to the minute, and expecting the same from others
- Every moment of life is planned, well organized, and predictable.

Table 7 presents the results obtained in study #6 (following table 6 notations), where Poles from the representative sample compared their own national culture with that of – broadly defined - European Union, and declared their personal preferences.

These results show again differences of extreme sizes. In all three items the percentages of Poles attributing low social effectiveness to Polish culture are about 20 times higher than those attributing them to UE. Identity measures, on the other hand testify, that Poles demonstrate an idealistic attachment to Western European culture of high social effectiveness and a negative identity with Polish standards in this domain. Also, there appears to be complementary image of one cultural system, which is high in humanism and low in social effectiveness and the other where the order of the two syndromes is reversed. **It remains to be seen if maintaining the two value systems and positive cultural identities psychologically compatible.** At present we observe the zero level correlations between humanist and effectiveness aspects of Polish and European identities.

Table 7
 Comparison of social effectiveness in Poland and in European Union (after Boski, 2005)

Culture	Descriptive aspect of social effectiveness				Cultural identity
	Things will get resolved (%)	Being on time (%)	Life well organized (%)	Scale (3-item)	
POL	68.2	3.8	3.6	.252	-.298
UE	5.4	62.3	61.1	2.139	.701
Statistical tests				t(1091) = 46.81 d = 1.42	t(1075) = 20.57 d = .627

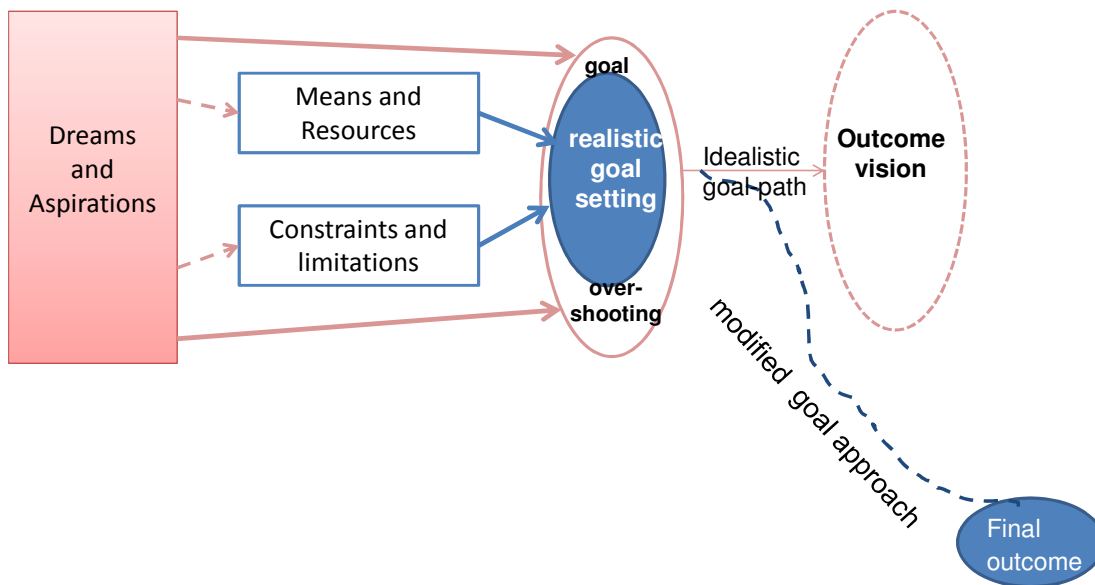


Figure 7.
 Task-orientation in cultures of low effectiveness: Planning, execution, and goal attainment

Conclusion

Teaching and learning about other (foreign) cultures is a very difficult task, which can be compared to acquiring a foreign language: it is debatable, whether you can learn about it without becoming competent how to use it. This is why the text is not just another journal paper on cross-cultural differences but intends to bring the reader closer to the facts of cultural psychology. These facts consist of the mundane interactions that are often enacted automatically and proceed in unreflective way (without *eye blink*) by members of the local culture but prompt surprise or disturbance among the outsiders (Thomas, 2002). With the story of *One day in Bill Morgan's Life*, the intention has been to bring cultural psychology closer to life, and to provide meaning that pure research findings would always miss. Historical perspective has been offered for the similar reason: to broaden the scope of understanding, by showing that certain phenomena – which we observe today – have had continuity over centuries.

This notwithstanding, the chapter raises some questions of more general nature. First of all, we are dealing here with two basic dimensions of individual as well as cultural level of human functioning that have been postulated in the literature. **Social effectiveness and humanism, which are the central terms for understanding Polish culture, need to be subsumed under broader categories of competence (/agency) and morality (/communion)** [Wojciszke, 2011; Schwartz, 2007]. Competence is about the technical quality or skill of performance: *how good you are in doing certain things?* Morality, on the other hand, answers another type of question: *How good you are in considering other people in your life?* As Schwartz (2007) has noticed, certain behavioral qualities or traits, have inherent moral qualities; e.g. *helpful*, or *honest*; while other are morally neutral, e.g. *ambitious*, *daring* or *independent*. Since human reality is not often clearly bipolar, certain behavioral characteristics carry both aspects; e.g. *being on time* (punctual) has a mark of task competence but also of morality: being responsible to other people, respecting agreements, etc. With the last example, it can be argued that the moral aspect of *being on time* is subsidiary to competence which is the ultimate value. Sometimes, a highly physically competent person (a swimmer) may use that skill for moral purposes, like saving life of a drowning person.

With all these restrictions and limitations, the basic distinction remains valid and I find it very useful for end interpretation of this work. **Cultures may be classified as more strongly emphasizing the morality or competence aspects in social life of its members and institutions.** The conclusion to be drawn from this thesis for the whole evidence analyzed in this paper is clear: with its emphasis on humanist values and low level social effectiveness, Polish culture shows preponderance of morality over competence.

Interesting problems and dilemmas emerge from the above statement. Poles have their strong humanist identity component with native culture. But also, they identify with European social effectiveness which they miss at home. They clearly want to take the best of the two systems. These identity components are zero-level correlated, which is good news in the sense that they are not juxtaposed as mutually incompatible. Future

developments are open for speculations. Perhaps Poles will become more and more bi-cultural in the sense of remaining humanist among themselves and acquiring more social effectiveness in broader social market of European Union.

Another important problem which should not be left without comment is the issue of humanism vs. dehumanization. So far, these two threads of theory and research have been relatively separate. Humanist orientation emphasizes the positive aspects of human nature; research on dehumanization (or infra-humanization) traces the origins of human ultimate fall downs (e.g. genocides). The question in this context is this: Will people from a culture of humanism perceive others as less humanist? And, if so, wouldn't it be a kind of ethnocentric dehumanization? If so, we would find ourselves in a contradictory circle: humanism leading to dehumanization. With our findings such disastrous consequences are avoided. Not only ethnic Poles attribute more humanist values to their own compared to other cultures, but foreigners who came into contact with Poland do the same (though to a lesser degree).

The last remark concerns the distinction between individual and culture level of measurement. Our studies have clearly demonstrated the advantage of distinguishing between values as individual preferences and values as culture descriptors, in contrast of aggregating culture level from the scores of individual preferences (Schwartz's approach). Findings on both dimensions leave no doubt that attributing humanist or social effectiveness characteristics to cultures is something different from endorsing values personally. With humanism, individual level differences between Poles and non Poles are much smaller than the differences at culture level attribution. Also, low level of social effectiveness attributed to the native culture does not entail low level of personal preferences.

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About the Author

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Questions for Discussion

1. Imagine you were Bill Morgan on his visit to Poland. What would surprise you most in the situations in which the story has evolved? – What would you like and what would you not? What would make you curious to learn more about this culture? Prepare your likes, dislikes and points of curiosity in a tabulated way for group discussion.
2. Having read *One Day in Bill Morgan's Life*, try to write an essay on a Polish visitor to America. What would be the main points of differences between the two stories? - Try to imagine how would a Polish person feel in some of typically American situations.
3. Discuss the taxonomy of value-orientations (table 3 in the text). In what sense is Humanism different from Collectivism - Individualism, and what makes it similar to them? How would you relate Humanism – Materialism to Schwartz's value structure?
4. What are historical antecedents responsible for societal differences in Humanism and Social effectiveness?
5. Discuss the sense of two Polish indigenous linguistic expressions (a) *Humane human person (ludzki człowiek)?*; and (b) *Things will somehow turn out OK (jakoś to będzie)*. Try to find some proxy meaning in your mother-tongue.
6. Discuss the concept of cultural identity and the way is it measured. What is meant by value descriptive and preferential aspects?
7. Try to find out some students of Polish extraction on the campus, or in the neighborhood. Ask them to fill out the HUMAT scale and attempt an interview based on the items.
8. Discuss the use of cultural psychology and cross-cultural differences/similarities as explanatory tools on accounting for such catastrophes as Polish Presidential Air-plane Crash at Smoleńsk.