

Hofstede, Geert: *Cultures and Organizations. Software of the mind. Intercultural Cooperation and its Importance for Survival.* London: Harper Collins Publishers 1991. Hoofdstuk 4. P. 79-108.

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4 He, she, and (s)he

As a young Dutch engineer I once applied for a junior management job with an American engineering company which had recently settled in Flanders, the Dutch-speaking part of Belgium. I felt wellqualified: with a degree from the senior technical university of the country, good grades, a record of active participation in student associations, and three years' experience as an engineer with a well-known, although somewhat sleepy Dutch company. I had written a short letter indicating my interest and providing some vital personal data. I was invited to appear in person, and after a long train ride I sat facing the American plant manager. I behaved politely and modestly, as I knew an applicant should, and waited for the other man to ask the usual questions which would enable him to find out how qualified I was. To my surprise he asked very few of the things that I thought should be discussed. Instead he wanted to know some highly detailed facts about my experience in tool design, using English words I did not know, and the relevance of which escaped me. Those were the things I could learn within a week once I worked there. After half an hour of painful misunderstandings he said 'Sorry—we need a first class man.' And I was out in the street.

Assertiveness versus modesty

Years later I was the interviewer and I saw both Dutch and American applicants. Then I understood what had gone wrong in that earlier case. American applicants, to Dutch eyes, oversell themselves. Their CVs are worded in superlatives, mentioning every degree, grade, award, and membership to demonstrate their outstanding qualities. During the interview they try to behave assertively, promising things they are very unlikely to realize—like learning the local language in a few months.

Dutch applicants in American eyes undersell themselves. They write modest and usually short CVs, counting on the interviewer to find out by asking how good they really are. They expect an interest in their social and extra-curricular activities during their studies. They are very careful not to be seen

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as braggarts and not to make promises they are not absolutely sure they can fulfil.

American interviewers know how to interpret American CVs and interviews and they tend to discount the information provided. Dutch interviewers, accustomed to Dutch applicants, tend to upgrade the information. The scenario for cross-cultural misunderstanding is quite clear. To an uninitiated American interviewer an uninitiated Dutch applicant comes across as a sucker. To an uninitiated Dutch interviewer an uninitiated American applicant comes across as a braggart.

Dutch and American societies are reasonably similar on the dimensions of power distance and individualism described in Chapters 2 and 3 but they differ considerably on a third dimension which opposes among other things the desirability of assertive behavior against the desirability of modest behavior. I will label it: masculinity versus femininity.¹

Genders and gender roles

All human societies consist of men and women, usually in approximately equal numbers. They are biologically distinct and their respective roles in biological procreation are absolute. Other physical differences between women and men, not directly related to the bearing and begetting of children, are not absolute but statistical. Men are *on average* taller and stronger, but many women are taller and stronger than quite a few men. Women have *on average* greater finger dexterity and, for example, faster metabolism which makes them recover faster from fatigue but some men also excel in these respects.

The absolute and statistical biological differences between men and women are the same the world over, but their social roles are only partly determined by the biological constraints. Every society recognizes many behaviors, not immediately related to procreation, as more suitable for females or more suitable for males; but which behaviors belong to which gender differs from one society to another. Anthropologists having studied nonliterate, relatively isolated societies stress the wide variety of social sex roles that seem to be possible (Mead, 1962). For the biological distinction this chapter will use the terms *male* and *female*; for the social, culturally determined roles *masculine* and *feminine*. The latter terms are *relative*, not absolute: a man can behave in a 'feminine' way and a woman in a 'masculine' way; this only means they deviate from certain conventions in their society.

Which behaviors are considered 'feminine' or 'masculine' differs not only among traditional but also among modern societies. This is most evident in the distribution of men and women over certain professions. Women dominate as doctors in the former Soviet Union, as dentists in Belgium, as shopkeepers in parts of West Africa. Men dominate as typists in Pakistan

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and form a sizeable share of nurses in the Netherlands. Female managers are virtually nonexistent in Japan but frequent in the Philippines and Thailand.

In spite of the variety found there is a common trend among most societies, both traditional and modern, as to the distribution of social sex roles. From now on this chapter will use the more modern term *gender roles*. Men are supposed to be more concerned with achievements outside the home— hunting and fighting in traditional societies, the same but translated in economic terms in modern societies. Men, in short, are supposed to be assertive, competitive, and tough. Women are supposed to be more concerned with taking care of the home, of the children, and of people in general; to take the tender roles. It is not difficult to see how this role pattern is likely to have developed: women first bore the children and then usually breastfed them, so at least during this period they had to stay close to the children. Men were freer to move around, to the extent that they were not needed to protect women and children against attacks by other men and animals.

Male achievement reinforces masculine assertiveness and competition; female care reinforces feminine nurturance, a concern for relationships and for the living environment. Men, taller, stronger, and free to get out, tend to dominate in social life outside the home: inside the home

a variety of role distributions between the genders is possible. The role pattern demonstrated by the father and mother (and possibly other family members) has a profound impact on the mental software of the small child who is programmed with it for life. Therefore it is not surprising that one of the dimensions of national value systems is related to gender role models offered by parents.

Masculinity-femininity as a dimension of societal culture

Chapter 3 referred to the set of 14 work goals in the IBM questionnaire: 'Try to think of those factors which would be important to you in an ideal job; disregard the extent to which they are contained in your present job.' The analysis of the answers to the 14 work goals items produced two underlying dimensions. One was individualism versus collectivism: the importance of 'personal time', 'freedom', and 'challenge' stood for individualism, the importance of 'training', 'physical conditions', and 'use of skills' stood for collectivism.

The second dimension came to be labeled masculinity versus femininity. It was associated most strongly with the importance attached to: for the 'masculine' pole:

1. *Earnings* Have an opportunity for high earnings.
2. *Recognition* Get the recognition you deserve when you do a good job.

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3. *Advancement* Have an opportunity for advancement to higher level jobs.
4. *Challenge* Have challenging work to do—work from which you can get a personal sense of accomplishment.

For the opposite, 'feminine', pole:

5. *Manager* Have a good working relationship with your direct superior.
6. *Cooperation* Work with people who cooperate well with one another.
7. *Living area* Live in an area desirable to you and your family.
8. *Employment security* Have the security that you will be able to work for your company as long as you want to.

Notice that 'challenge' was also associated with the individualism dimension (Chapter 3). The other seven goals are only associated with masculinity or femininity.

The decisive reason for labeling the second 'work goals' dimension 'masculinity versus femininity' is that *this dimension is the only one on which the men and the women among the IBM employees scored consistently differently* (except, as will be shown, in countries at the extreme feminine pole). Neither power distance nor individualism nor uncertainty avoidance showed a systematic difference in answers between men and women. Only the present dimension produced such a gender difference, with men attaching greater importance to, in particular, the work goals (1) and (3) and women to (5) and (6). The importance of earnings and advancement corresponds to the masculine, assertive, and competitive social role. The importance of relations with the manager and with colleagues corresponds to the feminine, caring, and social-environment oriented role.

As in the case of the individualism versus collectivism dimension, the eight items from the IBM questionnaire do not totally cover the distinction between a masculine and a feminine

culture in society. They only represent the aspects of this dimension represented by questions in the IBM research. Again, the correlations of the IBM country scores on masculinity with non-IBM data about other characteristics of societies are needed in order to grasp what the dimension encompasses.

Based on all the information about the distinctions between societies related to this dimension, it can be defined as follows: *masculinity* pertains to societies in which social gender roles are clearly distinct (i.e., 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); *femininity* pertains to societies in which social gender roles

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overlap (i.e., both men and women are supposed to be modest, tender, and concerned with the quality of life).

A *masculinity index* (MAS) score was computed for each of the 50 countries and 3 regions in the IBM data. Like the individualism index, MAS was based on factor scores for each country which were automatically produced by the statistical procedure used (factor analysis). Scores were achieved in a range from about 0 for the most feminine to about 100 for the most masculine country by multiplying the factor scores by 20 and adding 50.²

MAS values were computed not only by country but also separately for men and women within each country. Figure 4.1 shows in simplified form the relationship between masculinity by gender and masculinity by country, and reveals that from the most 'feminine' (tender) countries to the most 'masculine' (tough) ones the values of both men and women become tougher but that the difference is larger for men than for women. In the most feminine countries, Sweden and Norway as will soon be shown, there was no difference between the scores of men and women, and both expressed equally tender, nurturing values. In the most masculine countries, Japan and Austria, the men scored very tough but also the women scored fairly tough; nevertheless the gap between men's values and women's values was largest for these countries. From the most feminine to the most masculine country the range of MAS scores for men is about 50 percent larger than the range for women. Women's values differ less between countries than men's values do.

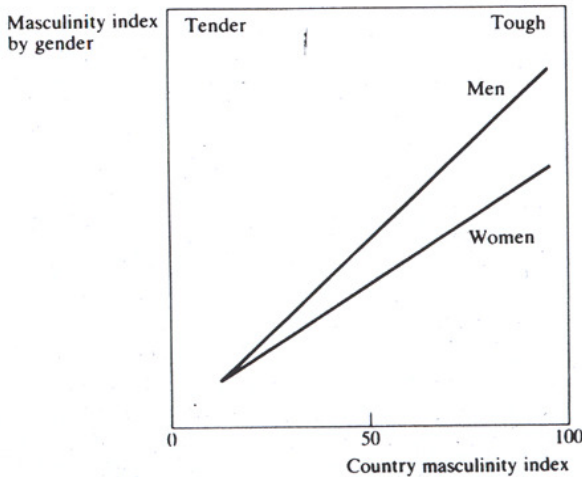


Fig. 4.1 The relationship between masculinity index scores and gender of the respondents

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Table 4.1 Masculinity index (MAS) values for 50 countries and 3 regions

Score rank	Country or region	MAS score	Score rank	Country or region	MAS score
1	Japan	95	28	Singapore	48
2	Austria	79	29	Israel	47
3	Venezuela	73	30/31	Indonesia	46
4/5	Italy	70	30/31	West Africa	46
4/5	Switzerland	70	32/33	Turkey	45
6	Mexico	69	32/33	Taiwan	45
7/8	Ireland	68	34	Panama	44
	(Republic of)		35/36	Iran	43
7/8	Jamaica	68	35/36	France	43
9/10	Great Britain	66	37/38	Spain	42
9/10	Germany FR	66	37/38	Peru	42
11/12	Philippines	64	39	East Africa	41
11/12	Colombia	64	40	Salvador	40
13/14	South Africa	63	41	South Korea	39
13/14	Ecuador	63	42	Uruguay	38
15	USA	62	43	Guatemala	37
16	Australia	61	44	Thailand	34
17	New Zealand	58	45	Portugal	31
18/19	Greece	57	46	Chile	28
18/19	Hong Kong	57	47	Finland	26
20/21	Argentina	56	48/49	Yugoslavia	21
20/21	India	56	48/49	Costa Rica	21
22	Belgium	54	50	Denmark	16
23	Arab countries	53	51	Netherlands	14
24	Canada	52	52	Norway	8
25/26	Malaysia	50	53	Sweden	5
25/26	Pakistan	50			
27	Brazil	49			

The MAS scores for the 53 countries and regions (men and women combined) can be read from Table 4.1.³ Like the scores for power distance and individualism, the masculinity scores represent *relative*, not absolute, positions of countries. Unlike individualism, masculinity is unrelated to a country's degree of economic development: we find both rich and poor masculine and rich and poor feminine countries.

The USA scores 62 on the masculinity index (rank 15) and the Netherlands score 14 (rank 51), so the two countries which appeared in the story at the beginning of this chapter are really far apart. The four most feminine countries (ranks 53 through 50) are Sweden, Norway, the Netherlands, and Denmark; Finland comes close with rank 47. Some of the Latin countries score strongly to moderately feminine: Costa Rica (rank 48/49), Chile (46), Portugal (45), Guatemala (43), Uruguay (42), Salvador (40), Peru (37/38), Spain (37/38), France (35/36), Panama (34). The other countries on the

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feminine side are Yugoslavia (48/49), Thailand (44), South Korea (41), East and West Africa (ranks 39 and 30/31, respectively), Iran (35/36), Taiwan (32/33), Turkey (32/33), and Indonesia (30/31).

The champions of masculinity are, first, Japan (rank 1) and some continental European countries: Austria (2), Italy (4/5), Switzerland (4/5), and West-Germany (9/10). Also a number of Latin American countries, mainly the larger countries around the Caribbean: Venezuela (3), Mexico (6), Colombia (11/12), Ecuador (13/14) but, at some distance, also Argentina (20/21). Moderately masculine scores are all Anglo countries: the Republic of Ireland (7/8), Jamaica (7/8), Great Britain (9/10), South Africa (13/14), USA (15), Australia (16), New Zealand (17), Canada (24). Finally the Philippines (11/12), Greece (18/19), Hong Kong (18/19), India (20/21), Belgium (22), and the Arab-speaking countries (23).

Gender cultures

One of the levels of culture introduced in Chapter 1 is the *gender level*. Figure 4.1 clearly illustrates that a particular part of our mental programs depends (in most countries) on whether we were born as a girl or as a boy. Like nationality, gender is an involuntary characteristic: we were not asked before being born, in which country and with what sex we wanted to appear. Because of this the effect of both nationality and gender on our mental programming is largely unconscious. Although both nationality and gender cultures are learned, not inborn, we learned their consequences so early that we never knew anything else, and we are usually unaware of other possibilities.

Figure 4.1 shows that, on average, men have been programmed with tougher values and women with more tender values but that the gap between the sexes varies by country. Even in countries at the feminine extreme of the MAS scale, like Sweden and Norway, men's values and women's values need not be identical in all respects, only they do not differ along a tough-tender dimension. Any country is likely to show cultural differences according to gender. These are again statistical rather than absolute: there is an overlap between the values of men and those of women so that any given value may be found both among men and among women, only with different frequency.

Individual women can learn to function in a masculine way and individual men in a feminine way. Where men are together a masculine culture is likely to dominate; where women are together, a feminine culture. Calling these differences 'cultures' stresses their profound and emotional nature. The feminine culture is alien to most men, as the masculine culture is alien to most women. Exposure to another culture leads initially to culture shock, which is a nonrational 'gut' feeling. We readily experience other cultures as

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wrong, ridiculous, or frightening, and such feelings can be detected between the genders within the same society. The males in virtually all societies dominate in politics, in the community, and at the workplace; so the subcultures of politics, community affairs, and work are relatively masculine. The subcultures of the family and the school vary more from one society to another. The differences among countries illustrated by Fig. 4.1 have mainly resulted from different gender roles and socialization processes in the family and at school, as described below.

Masculinity and femininity according to occupation

Power distance indices could be used for comparing countries as well as occupations; individualism indices could only be computed for countries. A dimension of masculinity versus femininity, like power distance, *does* appear when we compare occupations, so it

makes sense to call some occupations more 'masculine' and some more 'feminine' in terms of the values of those who exercise them. Not surprisingly, the masculine occupations are the ones usually filled by men, and the feminine occupations are the ones usually filled by women. However, the differences in values associated with the occupations are not caused by the gender of the occupants. Men from the IBM population in 'feminine' occupations held more 'feminine' values than women in 'masculine' occupations.

Within IBM 38 occupations could be divided into 6 groups from the most 'masculine' to the most 'feminine' as follows:

1. Salesmen (professional and nonprofessional)
2. Professional workers (engineers/scientists)
3. Skilled workers/technicians
4. Managers of all categories
5. Unskilled and semiskilled workers
6. Office workers

The salesmen (rarely saleswomen) in this case were paid on commission, in a strongly competitive climate. Scientists, engineers, technicians, and skilled workers in IBM focus mostly on individual technical performance which calls for masculine values. Managers deal with both technical *and* human problems, in roles with both assertive *and* nurturing elements. Unskilled and semiskilled workers have no strong achievements to boast but they usually work in teams, so cooperation is important to them. Office workers also have few achievements but their jobs tend to involve even more human contact, also with outsiders.

Masculinity and femininity in the family

The family is the place where most people received their first cultural programming. The family contains two unequal but complementary role

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pairs: parent-child and husband-wife. The effects of different degrees of inequality in the parent-child relationship were related to the dimension of power distance in Chapter 2. The prevailing role distribution between husband and wife is reflected in a society's position on the masculinity-femininity scale.

Figure 4.2 plots country PDI scores (from Table 2.1) against country MAS scores (from Table 4.1). In the right half of the diagram where PDI values are high, inequality between parents and children is a societal norm. Children are supposed to be controlled by obedience. In the left half, children are controlled by the examples set by parents. In the lower half of the diagram where MAS scores are high, inequality between fathers' and mothers' roles (father tough, mother less tough) is a societal norm. Men are supposed to deal with facts, women with feelings. In the upper half both men and women are allowed to deal with the facts and with the soft things in life.

Thus the lower right-hand quadrant (unequal and tough) stands for a norm of a dominant, tough father and a submissive mother who, although also fairly tough, is at the same time the refuge for consolation and tender

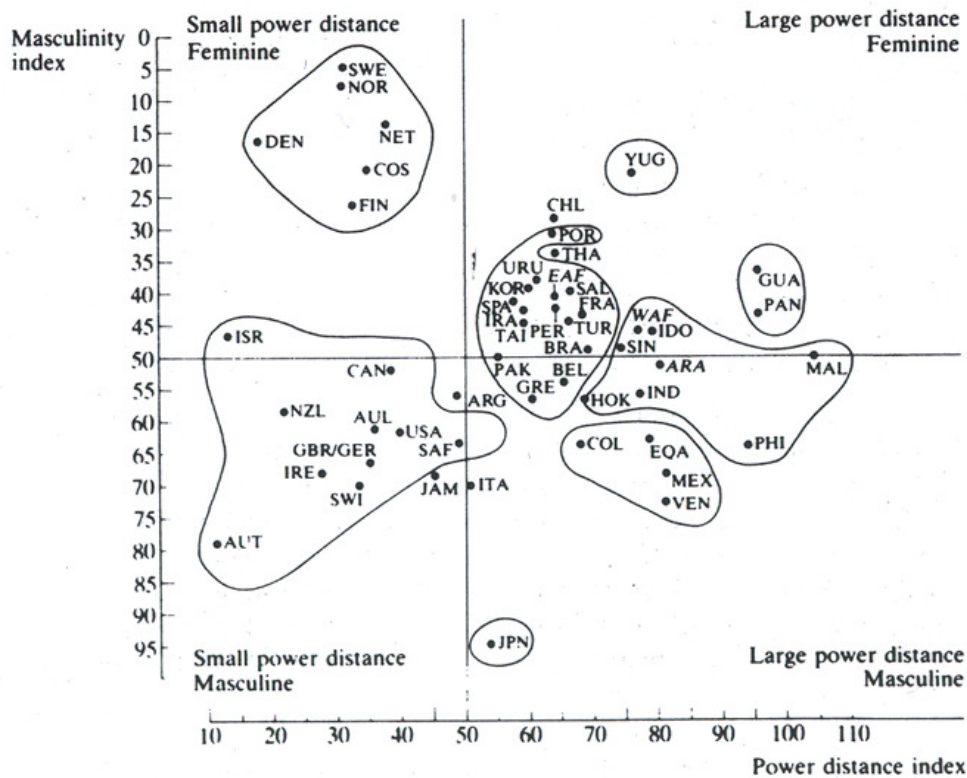


Fig. 4.2 Power distance versus masculinity index scores for 50 countries and 3 regions (for country name abbreviations see Table 3.2)

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feelings. In the Latin American countries in this quadrant the internationally understood term 'machismo' has been coined for the attitude expected of men. Less known is the corresponding term 'marianismo' for women, a combination of near-saintliness, submissiveness, and sexual frigidity.

The upper right-hand quadrant (unequal and tender) represents a societal norm of two dominant parents, sharing the same concern for the quality of life and for relationships, both providing at times authority *and* tenderness.

In the countries in the lower left-hand quadrant (equal and tough) the norm is for nondominant parents to set an example in which father is tough and deals with facts and mother is somewhat less tough and deals with feelings. The resulting role model is that boys should assert themselves and girls should please and be pleased. Boys do not cry and should fight back when attacked; girls may cry and do not fight.

Finally, in the upper left-hand quadrant (equal and tender) the norm is for mothers and fathers not to dominate and for both to be concerned with relationships, with the quality of life, with facts *and* feelings, setting an example of a relative equality of gender roles in the family context.

The above typology has the weakness of all typologies that no real-life situation entirely fits its descriptions. Also, what is the 'family' context depends strongly on the country's position on the dimension collectivism-individualism. In a collectivist society, the 'family' is the

extended family, and the center of dominant authority could very well be the grandfather as long as he is still alive, with the father as a model of obedience. Ultra-individualist societies contain many one-parent families in which role models are incomplete, or in which outsiders provide the missing roles. The typology serves to stress the importance of a society's role distributions in the family with regard to the values that are transferred from one generation to the next.

Gender-related values and behaviors are programmed into us in subtle ways and from a quite early age. A comparative study (Otaki *et al.*, 1986) of the behaviors of mothers and three-to-four-months-old babies in Japan and the USA showed among other things that the Japanese baby boys were significantly noisier than the Japanese girls while the reverse was true for the US babies. It is extremely unlikely that a difference like this is inborn. It must be due to the mother's conditioning of her child which differs according to the child's sex and to the nationality of the mother. She encourages or soothes the child according to the expectations in her society about the behavior of boys and of girls. Whoever has seen groups of travellers from both countries will have noticed that *adult* Japanese men are also noisier than adult Japanese women and that the reverse holds for adult Americans.

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The masculinity-femininity dimension does not just affect how families develop role differences between boys and girls. Figure 4.1 shows that both men *and* women hold tougher values in masculine countries and more tender values in feminine ones. In masculine countries both boys and girls learn to be ambitious and competitive, although the ambition of the girls may be directed towards the achievements of their brothers and later of their husbands and sons. A common image from US motion pictures shows the girls as cheerleaders for the football matches played by the boys. Popular movies are to modern society what religious myths were to traditional ones: they express models for behavior.

In feminine countries both boys and girls learn to be nonambitious and modest. Assertive behavior and attempts at excelling which are appreciated in masculine cultures are easily ridiculed in feminine ones. Excellence is something one keeps to oneself. My own country, the Netherlands, is a case in point; it is the third most feminine in Table 4.1. The Dutch language expresses its feminine stance in an untranslatable expression '*doe maar gewoon, dan doe je al gek genoeg*': something like 'just behave like everybody else, you're ridiculous enough anyway'. This attitude can be called 'leveling': pulling everyone back to a modest average. The Dutch have been described by a visiting French writer as '*un peuple jaloux qui a un curieux penchant pour tout ce qui est terne*': 'a jealous people who are curiously attracted by everything that is dull.' (Baena, 1968, pp. 13, 65).

In masculine cultures children learn to admire the strong; popular fictional heroes created in the USA are 'Batman' and 'Rambo'. In feminine cultures children learn sympathy for the underdog and the anti-hero. Small and friendly 'Rasmus Klump' (called Petzi in translations) is a Danish comic hero; 'Ollie B. Bommel' (Mr Bumble), a clumsy and naive anti-hero, has become a national personality among Dutch intellectuals.⁴

Whereas gender roles in the family strongly affect the values about appropriate behavior for boys and for girls, they do not have immediate implications for the distribution of gender roles in the wider society. As was argued earlier in this chapter, men, being on average taller and stronger and free to get out, have traditionally dominated social life outside the home in virtually all societies. Only exceptional and usually upper-class women had the means to

delegate their child-rearing activities to others and to step into a public role. If women entered dominant positions in society at all this was mostly after the age of 45 when their mother status changed into grandmother status. Unmarried women were, and still are, rare in traditional societies and are often ostracized.

The much greater liberty of choice among social roles, beyond those of wife, mother, and housekeeper, which women in many industrialized societies enjoy nowadays is a recent phenomenon. Its impact on the distribution of

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gender roles *outside* the home is not yet fully felt. Therefore a country's position on the masculinity-femininity scale need not be closely related to women's activities outside the family sphere. Economic possibilities and necessities play a bigger role in this respect than values.

Masculinity and femininity at school

A Dutch management consultant taught part of a course for Indonesian middle managers from a public organization located all over the archipelago. In the discussion following one of his presentations, a Javanese participant came up with a very lucid comment, and the teacher praised him openly. The Javanese said 'You embarrass me. Among us, parents never praise their children to their face.'⁵

This anecdote illustrates two things. Firstly, how strong, at least in Indonesia, is the transfer of behavior models from the family to the school situation, the teacher being identified with the father. Secondly, it expresses the virtue of modesty in the Javanese culture to an extent which even surprised the Dutchman. Indonesia is a multi-ethnic country; one of those about which Chapter 1 warned that national culture scores may be misleading. Indonesians agree that especially on the dimension tough-tender, ethnic groups within the country vary considerably with the Javanese taking an extreme position towards the tender side. The Dutch consultant said that even some of the other Indonesians were surprised by the Javanese's feelings. A Batak from the island of Sumatra said that he now understood why his Javanese boss never praised him when he himself felt that praise should have been due. In fact, the incident became the occasion for an all-out discussion within the group about inter-ethnic differences in values, a topic which so far had never been brought into the open.

Each semester my university offers a program of European studies to students from the USA. To some of the Americans I give the assignment to interview a number of Dutch students about their goals in life. Invariably, the Americans are struck by the fact that the Dutch seem to be much less concerned with grades than they are. Passing is considered enough; excelling is not an openly pronounced goal. Experiences in teaching abroad and discussions with teachers from different countries have led me to conclude that in the more feminine cultures the *average* student is considered the norm, while in more masculine countries like the USA the *best* students are the norm. Parents in these countries expect their children to try to match the best. The 'best boy in class' in the Netherlands is a somewhat ridiculous figure.

This difference is noticeable in classroom behavior. In masculine cultures students try to make themselves visible in class and compete openly with each other (unless collectivist norms put a limit to this, see Chapter 3). In

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feminine cultures they do not want to appear too eager and mutual solidarity, although not always practised, is seen as a goal.

Interviews with teachers suggest that in masculine countries job choices are strongly guided by perceived career opportunities, while in feminine countries students' intrinsic interest in the subject plays a bigger role.

Failing in school is a disaster in a masculine culture. In strongly masculine countries like Japan and Germany the newspapers report each year about students who killed themselves after failing an examination. In his book *The Gospel According to the Harvard Business School*, Harvard MBA graduate Peter Cohen counts four suicides—one teacher, three students—during his time at this elite American institution (Cohen, 1973). Failure in school in a feminine culture is a relatively minor incident. Some young people in these cultures take their lives too, but for reasons unrelated to performance—like social isolation.

Criteria for evaluating both teachers and students differ between masculine and feminine cultures. On the masculine side teachers' brilliance and academic reputation and students' academic performance are the dominant factors. On the feminine side teachers' friendliness and social skills and students' social adaptation play a bigger role. Corporal punishment in school for children of pre-pubertal age has been associated in Chapter 2 with the power distance between the teacher and the students, but in some schools in masculine cultures with small power distances—like the UK—corporal punishment is considered beneficial for the character development of boys, but less so for girls.

Finally, masculinity-femininity cultural differences affect the subjects chosen by male versus female students at universities. For a range of countries data are available about the distribution of the sexes in each of the following areas of study: education, law, social sciences, engineering, and agriculture. Per country an 'index of segregation (of the sexes) in higher education' has been computed. This index is statistically related to the country's masculinity index, at least for the industrialized countries (in all poor countries, boys are given priority in educational opportunities).⁶ In rich and masculine cultures men and women are more segregated at universities than in rich and feminine ones.

One aspect of segregation in job choice is whether teachers themselves are women or men. In masculine societies women mainly teach younger children and men teach at universities. In feminine societies roles are more mixed and men also teach younger children. Paradoxically therefore, in masculine societies children are exposed longer to female teachers. Their status, however, is often low so that the female teachers will be anti-heroines rather than models for behavior.

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Masculinity and femininity in the workplace

The Dutch manufacturing plant of a major US corporation had lost three Dutch general managers in a period of 10 years. To the divisional vice-president in the US all these men had come across as 'softies'. They hesitated to implement unpopular measures with their personnel, claiming the resistance of their works council—a body elected by the employees and required by Dutch law which the vice-president did not like anyway. After the third

general manager had left, the vice-president stepped in personally and nominated the plant controller as his successor—ignoring strong warnings by the personnel manager. To the vice-president this controller was the only real 'man' in the plant management team. He had always supported the need for drastic action, disregarding its popularity or unpopularity. In his reports he had indicated the weak spots. He should be able to maintain the prerogatives of management, without being sidetracked by this works council nonsense.

The new plant general manager proved the greatest disaster ever. Within six months he was on sick leave and the plant in a state of chaos. Nobody in the plant was surprised. They had known the controller as a congenial but weak personality, who had compensated for his insecurity by using powerful language towards the American bosses. The assertiveness which impressed the vice-president was recognized within the Dutch environment as bragging. As a general manager he received no cooperation from anyone, tried to do everything himself, and suffered a nervous breakdown in the shortest possible time. Thus, the plant lost both a good controller and another general manager. Both the plant and the controller were victims of a culturally induced error of judgment.

This story resembles the one with which this chapter opened. Dutch behavior is often misjudged by Americans and vice versa. Besides the issue of assertiveness versus modesty this second story highlights different ways of handling conflicts in the two countries. In the USA as well as in other masculine cultures like the UK and the Republic of Ireland there is a feeling that conflicts should be resolved by a good fight: 'Let the best man win.' The industrial relations scene in these countries is marked by such fights. If possible, management tries to avoid having to deal with labor unions at all, and labor union behavior justifies their aversion.⁷

In feminine cultures like the Netherlands, Sweden, and Denmark there is a preference for resolving conflicts by compromise and negotiation. The institutional contexts in which this negotiation takes place differ by country. In the Netherlands a works council law makes joint consultation between management and employee representatives compulsory for all but the smallest work organizations. This law gives labor unions a role in submitting

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candidates for the councils and training them; besides, union representatives deal directly with management representatives at the industry level in order to establish collective wage agreements. In spite of the fact that only about 30 percent of Dutch employed persons are unionized few business leaders would prefer a world without unions. They certainly cause problems but they are indispensable for solutions. In France, which scored moderately feminine in the IBM studies, there is occasionally a lot of verbal insult, both between employers and labor and between bosses and subordinates, but behind this seeming conflict there is a typically French 'sense of moderation', which enables parties to continue working together while agreeing to disagree (see d'Iribarne, 1989, pp. 31, 60-61).

Another issue in which the contrast between masculine and feminine societies manifests itself is the place of work in a person's life. A successful early twentieth century US inventor and businessman, Charles F. Kettering, is reputed to have said:

'I often tell my people that I don't want any fellow who has a job working for me; what I want is a fellow whom a job has. I want the job to get the fellow and not the fellow to get the job. And I want that job to get hold of this young man so hard that no matter where he is the job has got him for keeps. I want that job to have him in its clutches when he goes to bed at night,

and in the morning I want that same job to be sitting on the foot of his bed telling him it's time to get up and go to work. And when a job gets a fellow that way, he's sure to amount to something.'⁸

Kettering refers to a 'young man' and not to a 'young woman': his is a masculine ideal. It would certainly not be popular in more feminine cultures; there such a young man would be considered a workaholic. In a masculine society the ethos tends more toward 'live in order to work', whereas in a feminine society the work ethos would rather be 'work in order to live'.

The family within a masculine society socializes children towards assertiveness, ambition, and competition; organizations in masculine societies stress results, and want to reward it on the basis of equity, i.e., to everyone according to performance. The family within a feminine society socializes children towards modesty and solidarity, and organizations in such societies are more likely to reward people on the basis of equality (as opposed to equity), i.e., to everyone according to need. Men in masculine societies are expected to aspire to career advancement; research showed remarkable unanimity in this respect among male US students. For female US students career aspirations were *not* socially compulsory; some had them, some not. The research showed a much wider range in women's answers than in men's answers about the need to get ahead on their own (Hofstede, 1980, p. 51). In feminine societies both men and women may or may not be ambitious and there should be no gender difference in the ranges of the answers of both sexes about the need for a career.

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Many jobs in business demand few skills and cause a qualitative underemployment of people. This has been recognized as a problem in industrialized masculine and feminine countries. The solutions tried vary according to the type of culture. They have all been labeled as 'humanization of work' but what is considered a humanized job depends on one's model of what it means to be human. In masculine cultures a humanized job should give more opportunities for recognition, advancement, and challenge. This is the principle of 'job enrichment' as defended, among others, by US psychologist Frederick Herzberg (1966). An example is making workers on a simple production task also responsible for the setting up and preventive maintenance of their machines, tasks which had previously been reserved for more highly trained specialists. Job enrichment represents a 'masculinization' of unskilled and semiskilled work which, as shown in one of the earlier sections of this chapter, has a relatively 'feminine' occupation culture.

In feminine cultures a humanized job should give more opportunities for mutual help and social contacts. Famous experiments were conducted in the 1970s by the Swedish car and truck manufacturers Saab and Volvo with assembly by autonomous work groups. These represent a confirmation of the social part of the job: its 'feminization'. In 1974 six US Detroit automobile workers, four men and two women, were invited to work for three weeks in a group assembly system in the Saab-Scania plant in Soedertalje, Sweden. The experiment was covered by journalist Robert B. Goldmann who reported on the Americans' impressions. All four men and one of the women said they continued to prefer the US work system. 'Lynette Stewart chose Detroit. In the Cadillac plant where she works, she is on her own and can make her own challenge, while at Saab-Scania she has to consider people in front and behind her' (Hofstede, 1980, p. 298; 1984, p. 209). Of course this was precisely the rationale of the Swedes for having the group assembly system. A Swedish woman worker whom Goldmann interviewed mentioned the interdependence between workers as one of the system's advantages.

Masculine and feminine cultures create different management hero types. The masculine manager is, of course, assertive, decisive, and 'aggressive' (only in masculine societies does this word carry a positive connotation). He is a lonely decision-maker looking for facts rather than a group discussion leader. It does not hurt if he is slightly macho. J.R. Ewing from the TV show *Dallas* is, of course, a culture hero. The manager in a feminine culture is less visible, intuitive rather than decisive, and accustomed to seeking consensus.⁹ Both, however, should be resourceful—believed to be endowed with above average intelligence and drive. A Dutchman who had worked with a prestigious consulting firm in the USA for several years joined the top management team of a manufacturing company in the Netherlands. After a few months he commented on the different function of *meetings* in his

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present job compared to his previous one. In the Dutch situation, meetings were places where problems were discussed and common solutions were sought; they served for making decisions. In the US situation as he had known it, meetings were opportunities for participants to assert themselves; to show how good they were. Decisions were made by individuals elsewhere.¹⁰

Based on their cultural characteristics, masculine versus feminine countries excel in different types of industries. Industrially developed masculine cultures have a competitive advantage in manufacturing, especially in large volume: doing things efficiently, well, and fast. They are good at the production of big and heavy equipment and in bulk chemistry. Feminine cultures have a relative advantage in service industries like consulting and transport, in manufacturing according to customer specification, and in handling live matter such as high-yield agriculture and biochemistry. There is an international division of labor in which countries are relatively more successful in activities which fit their population's cultural preferences than in activities which go against these. Japan is the world leader in high-quality consumer electronics; Denmark and the Netherlands excel in services, in agricultural exports, and they harbor the world's leading companies in biochemistry (enzymes and penicillin).

Although one might expect it, there is no relationship between the masculinity or femininity of a society's culture and the distribution of employment over men and women. An immediate relationship between a country's position on this dimension and the roles of men and women exists only within the home. Outside, men have historically dominated, and only recently in history have women in any number been sufficiently freed from other constraints to be able to enter the worlds of work and politics as men's equals. Lower-class women have entered work organizations before but only in low-status, low-paid jobs: not out of a need for self-fulfilment but out of a need for material survival of the family. Statistics therefore show no relationship between a country's percentage of women working outside the home *per se* and its degree of femininity. There is, however, a positive correlation between a country's femininity score and the participation of women in higher-level technical and professional jobs, as a percentage of all working women in a country) (Hofstede, 1980, pp. 292, 306; 1984, p. 203).

All industrial societies over the past decades have shown a gradual increase in female participation in the work force, including professional and management jobs. This development has not been any faster in feminine rather than masculine cultures. The paradox is that in view of the traditional male dominance in the world of work, women have to be very ambitious to beat their male competitors for higher positions. The IBM study showed that female managers, in comparison with a matched group of male managers,

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Table 4.2 Key differences between feminine and masculine societies.
I: general norm, family, school, and workplace

<i>Feminine</i>	<i>Masculine</i>
Dominant values in society are caring for others and preservation	Dominant values in society are material success and progress
People and warm relationships are important	Money and things are important
Everybody is supposed to be modest	Men are supposed to be assertive, ambitious, and tough
Both men and women are allowed to be tender and to be concerned with relationships	Women are supposed to be tender and to take care of relationships
In the family, both fathers and mothers deal with facts and feelings	In the family, fathers deal with facts and mothers with feelings
Both boys and girls are allowed to cry but neither should fight	Girls cry, boys don't; boys should fight back when attacked, girls shouldn't fight
Sympathy for the weak	Sympathy for the strong
Average student is the norm	Best student is the norm
Failing in school is a minor accident	Failing in school is a disaster
Friendliness in teachers appreciated	Brilliance in teachers appreciated
Boys and girls study same subjects	Boys and girls study different subjects
Work in order to live	Live in order to work
Managers use intuition and strive for consensus	Managers expected to be decisive and assertive
Stress on equality, solidarity, and quality of work life	Stress on equity, competition among colleagues, and performance
Resolution of conflicts by compromise and negotiation	Resolution of conflicts by fighting them out

held more masculine values than the men (the same was not true for female versus male professionals, however). Ambitious women are more frequently found in masculine rather than feminine societies. In feminine societies the forces of resistance against women entering higher jobs are weaker; on the other hand the candidates are less ambitious. These two influences seem to neutralize each other so that women in feminine societies do not enter higher jobs in much larger numbers than in masculine societies. A notable exception is Finland: since the Second World War, which called virtually all men to the army, women have taken leading roles in Finnish society.

Table 4.2 summarizes the key issues from the past sections on which masculine and feminine societies were shown to differ.

Masculinity, femininity, and the state

National value patterns are present not only in the minds of ordinary citizens but, **of course**, also in those of political leaders, who also grew up as children

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of their society. As a matter of fact people are usually elected or co-opted to political leadership *because* they are supposed to stand for certain values dear to citizens.

Michael Hoppe, a German-American management educator, replicated the IBM study on a population of political and institutional elites. Hoppe obtained scores on the questions used among the IBM employees for the alumni of the Salzburg Seminar in American Studies, an institute in Austria which invites to its courses elites (leaders in politics, business, and labor) from mainly European countries. The project supplied scores on the IBM dimensions for elite samples from 19 countries, 18 of them also represented in the IBM studies. For three out of the four dimensions (all except masculinity-femininity) the scores from the elite populations across the 18 common countries were significantly correlated with the scores of the IBM populations. For masculinity-femininity the correlation was significant across 17 countries, except for the score of Sweden. The Swedish elites scored considerably more masculine than those from the Netherlands and the other Nordic countries, while Swedish IBM employees scored similar to those from Denmark, Norway, Finland, and the Netherlands. The reason is either a split in Swedish society or, more probably, a particular selection of the Swedish participants in Salzburg who were all from the employers' association (Hoppe, 1990).

Politicians translate values dominant in countries into political priorities. The latter are most clearly visible in the composition of national government budgets. The masculinity-femininity dimension affects priorities in the following areas:

1. Reward for the strong versus solidarity with the weak
2. Economic growth versus protection of the environment
3. Arms spending versus aid to poor countries

Masculine culture countries strive for a performance society; feminine countries for a welfare society. In criticisms in the press from masculine countries like the USA and Great Britain (MAS 62 and 66, respectively) versus feminine countries like Sweden and the Netherlands (MAS 5 and 14, respectively), and vice versa, strong and very different value positions appear. There is a common belief, in, for example, the USA, that economic problems in Sweden and the Netherlands are due to high taxes while there is a belief in feminine European countries that economic problems in the USA are due to too much tax relief for the rich. Tax systems, however, do not just happen: they are created by politicians as a consequence of pre-existing value judgments. In Sweden it is considered important to establish a minimum quality of life for everybody and the financial means to that end are collected from those who have them. Even right-wing politicians in Sweden do not basically disagree with this policy, only with the extent to

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which it can be realized. In the USA and in the UK, many people believe that the miserable fate of the poor is their own fault, that if they would work harder they would not be poor, and that the rich certainly should not pay to support them.

The difference between the two types of ethos does not date from the Thatcher era. Lord Robert Baden Powell (1857-1941), the founder of the international Boy Scouts movement, wrote a book for Rover Scouts (boys over age 16) called *Rovering to Success*. Its translation into Dutch, dating from the 1920s, is called '*Zwervend op de weg naar levensgeluk*': 'Roving on the Road to Happiness.' To the Dutch translators 'success' was not a goal likely to appeal to young men. The word in Dutch has a flavor of quackery. No youth leader would defend it as a purpose in life.

Masculine cultures are less permissive than feminine ones. The European value systems study which used public opinion polls in nine countries in 1981 has produced an index of permissiveness, according to whether a number of debatable acts were justifiable: such as joyriding, using soft drugs, accepting bribes, prostitution, divorce, and suicide. The national permissiveness index is strongly correlated with femininity. Mother is more permissive than father.¹¹

'Small is beautiful' is a feminine value. Public opinion survey data from six European countries showed that a preference for working in larger organizations was correlated with the IBM MAS scores (Hofstede, 1980, pp. 186, 302; 1984, p. 198).

The report of the Club of Rome on the *Limits to Growth*, which appeared in 1972, has been the first public recognition that continued economic growth and conservation of our living environment are fundamentally conflicting objectives. The report has been attacked on details, and for a time the issues it raised seemed less urgent. Its basic thesis, however, has never been refuted, and in my view at least, it is irrefutable. Governments will have to make painful choices and, apart from local geographic and ecological constraints, these choices will be made according to the values dominant in a country. Governments in masculine cultures are more likely to give priority to growth and be prepared to sacrifice the living environment for this purpose. Governments in feminine cultures are more likely to choose the reverse priority.

The countries of the European Community show among themselves a range of MAS scores from 70 (Italy) to 14 (Netherlands). Issues of growth versus conservation are already causing considerable conflict within the EC. The establishment of an open internal market requires the unification of regulations with regard to environmental protection. The environment will become one of the major stumbling blocks for the EC.

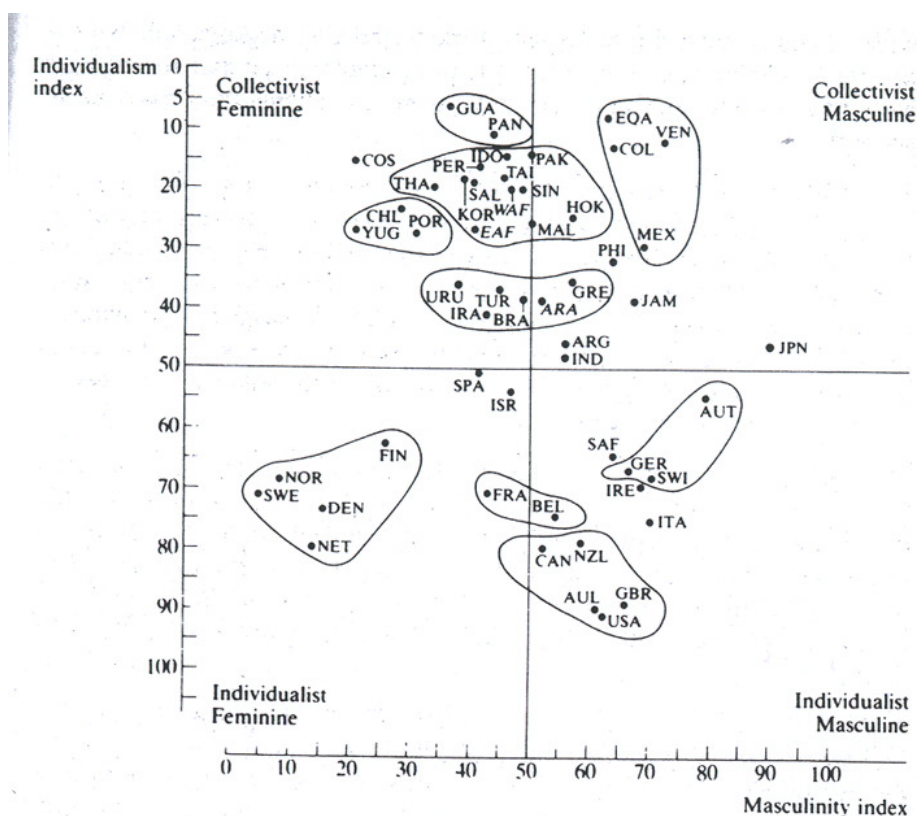


Fig. 4.3 The position of 50 countries and 3 regions on the masculinity–femininity and individualism–collectivism dimensions (for country name abbreviations see Table 3.2)

Figure 4.3 plots the country scores on the two dimensions of masculinity-femininity (from Table 4.1) and of individualism-collectivism (from Table 3.1) against each other. The upper half of the diagram contains the collectivist, that is mostly the poor, countries; the lower half the individualist, that is the rich, countries. Since the late 1950s development assistance money has flown from the rich to the poor countries, that is from bottom to top in our diagram. However, the percentage of the country's gross national product which the governments of the rich countries have decided to allocate to helping the poor ones, varies widely. In 1988, for example, Austria spent 0.24 percent of its GNP, while Norway spent 1.12 percent (*World Development Report 1989*, Table 19), nearly five times as much. This enormous variation in the proportions spent is unrelated to the wealth of the donor countries and also unrelated to their former colonial ties or present trade flows. The only explanation of a high aid quote is a feminine national value system: the statistical correlation between aid in percentage of GNP

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and a country's masculinity index score is strongly negative (high index, low aid quote).¹² Also, with regard to development aid, many people in masculine countries feel that the fate of the poor is in their own hands, that if they worked harder they would not be poor, and that the rich countries certainly should not pay to support them.

Countries which spend little money on helping the poor in the world tend to spend more on armaments: defense spending as a percentage of GNP is *positively* correlated with masculinity. This even applies for the poor countries which receive help from others. 'Don't give the *boys* their toys' is the slogan of a US woman anti-nuclear armament activist. Mainstream US culture is fairly masculine. Recent data from the former Soviet Union seems to indicate that mainstream Russian culture, at least, is rather feminine, but in the Soviet Union decisions about arms investments were not taken by elected politicians but by co-opted ones probably selected on masculine values. If the assumption that for both superpowers masculine values prevail is correct, it helps to explain the irrational overkill in the arms race between the two countries during the Cold War period: it is a mutual show of masculine strength like the behavior of male deer in the rutting season.

Masculine countries tend to (try to) resolve international conflicts by fighting; feminine countries by compromise and negotiation (the same distinction was made at the level of work organizations). A striking example is the difference between the handling of the Åland crisis and the handling of the Falkland crisis.

The Åland islands are a small archipelago halfway between Sweden and Finland; as part of Finland they belonged to the Tsarist Russian empire. When Finland declared itself independent from Russia in 1917 the majority of the 30 (XX) inhabitants of the islands wanted to join Sweden which had ruled them before 1809. The Finns then arrested the leaders of the pro-Swedish movement. After emotional negotiations in which the newly created League of Nations participated, all parties, in 1921, agreed to a solution in which the islands remained Finnish but with a large amount of regional autonomy.

The Falkland islands are also a small archipelago disputed by two nations: the United Kingdom which has colonized the islands since 1833 and nearby Argentina which claims rights on them since 1767 and has tried to get the United Nations to support its claim. The Falklands are about eight times as large as the Ålands but with less than one-fifteenth of the Ålands' number of inhabitants: about 18(X) poor sheep farmers. The Argentinian military

occupied the islands in April 1982 whereupon the British sent an expeditionary force which chased off the occupiers, at the cost of (officially) 725

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Argentinian and 225 British lives and enormous financial expense. Besides, the economy of the islands has been further damaged because it cannot develop without trade relations with the Argentinian hinterland.

What explains the difference in approach and in results between these two remarkably similar international disputes? Finland and Sweden are both feminine cultures; Argentina and the UK are both masculine. The masculine symbolism in the Falkland crisis was evident in the language used on both sides. Unfortunately, the sacrifices have resolved nothing. The Falklands remain a disputed territory needing constant British subsidies and military presence; the Ålands have become a prosperous part of Finland, attracting many Swedish tourists.

One would expect that in countries with a more feminine culture more women would be elected to political office and occupy government posts. This is to some extent true although not as much as reason would suggest. Just as at the workplace, a tradition of male dominance resists the advance of women in more than token numbers to leading political positions. Yet it seems that women advance somewhat more easily in politics than in work organizations. The election processes used in politics react faster to changes in society than the co-optation processes used in business; the latter have to wait for aged gentlemen to retire or die. This presupposes, of course, that the composition of candidate lists for elections is not subject to the same co-optation processes as the composition of boards of management. In some countries candidate lists *are* a matter of co-optation.

Masculinity, femininity, and ideas

In human thinking the issue of the equality or inequality of the sexes is as old as religion, ethics, and philosophy themselves. Genesis, the first book of the Judaeo-Christian Old Testament (which was codified in the fifth century BC), contains two conflicting versions of the creation of the sexes. The first, Genesis 1:27-8, states:

'So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them. And God blessed them, and God said to them , "Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it".'

This text suggests equal partnership between the sexes. The second version, Genesis 2:8ff. (which Old Testament experts suppose to have been derived from a different source document) contains the story of the Garden of Eden, in which God first put 'the man' alone. Then, in Genesis 2:18, it states: 'And the Lord God said "It is not good that the man should be alone: I will make him a help meet for him".'¹³ Then follows the story of Woman made from Adam's rib. This text gives clear priority to the male partner and defines the woman as 'a help meet' (that is, appropriate) for him; it justifies a society in which there is male dominance.

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In ancient Greece, Plato, in the fourth century BC describes the sexes as equal in principle and (apart from their role in procreation) only statistically different. In *The Republic* he offers a design for an ideal state governed by an elite composed of men as well as women. Of course in actual fact the Greek state was male dominated. So was the Roman state; but at least one

Roman writer, C. Musonius Rufus in the first century AD, defended the equality of the sexes and, in particular, the study of philosophy by women and men alike.

Among countries with Christian majorities the percentage of Roman Catholics is correlated with the country's masculinity index.¹⁴ The Roman Catholic church strongly maintains the male prerogative to the priesthood. Plato and Rufus in antiquity came closer to modern feminist positions than the Roman Catholic church does today.

The European value systems study referred to earlier contained a question 'How important is God in your life?' to be answered on a 10-point scale. The mean scores obtained correlate with the countries' masculinity indices: in masculine countries God is felt to be more important. The Christian God is the Father; He is masculine. The importance of God as rated by the respondents to the European value systems study *and* the country masculinity index are both correlated with the claimed observance of the Ten Commandments, but most strongly with the purely religious commandments (no other God, not abusing God's name, and honoring the Sabbath). Masculinity is less correlated with the claimed observance of the sexual commandments (no adultery, do not desire thy neighbor's wife) and least with the claimed observance of the moral commandments (honoring parents, no killing, no stealing, no false witnesses, do not desire thy neighbor's belongings). It is predominantly the emotional meaning of God's name which is more strongly stressed in masculine cultures.

The European value systems study also revealed that women in all countries were more religious than men, but that this applied in particular for women without paid jobs. If the role of the woman changes from a housekeeper to a wage-earner, her attitude to religion moves closer to the attitude of men.¹⁵

The relationship between the strength of feminism in a country and the position of the country's culture on the masculinity-femininity dimension is complex and ambiguous. Apart from the lunatic fringe that wants to do away with men altogether there is a more 'masculine' and a more 'feminine' form of feminism; the former predictably more frequent in masculine, the latter more frequent in feminine, countries. The masculine form claims that women should have the same possibilities as men have. In terms of Fig. 4.1 it wants to move the female line up towards the male line; this could also be achieved by moving the entire society towards a more masculine value position (more towards the right). The feminine form wants to change

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society, men included. In Fig. 4.1 this could be achieved by moving the male line downwards towards the female line, or moving the entire society towards a more feminine value position (more towards the left).

The second form, it seems to me, represents a more authentic women's liberation than the first and an innovation over our present society it allows women to contribute their unique values to society beyond the home—but then I come from a feminine country culture. Simply having women work in the same numbers and jobs as men does not necessarily represent their liberation. It could be a double slavery, at work *and* in the home. Modern Russian stories tell about female engineers or construction workers who after a full working day stand in line at the shops and do the cooking and housekeeping while the husbands watch television. A typical theme in Soviet literature is that mother is overworked and has to be shipped off to a sanatorium. I can see no women's lib which does not permit women to maintain their own

gender culture at work and in politics, but this means men's lib at the same time, because gender roles are interdependent.

In May 1989 Zoya Krylova of the Soviet Women's Council spoke to a Women's Council meeting at Delft, the Netherlands. The 150 Dutch women present created quite an uproar when Krylova defended the woman's responsibility for the children's education, for shopping, and for the

Table 4.3 Key differences between feminine and masculine societies.
II: politics and ideas

<i>Feminine</i>	<i>Masculine</i>
Welfare society ideal	Performance society ideal
The needy should be helped	The strong should be supported
Permissive society	Corrective society
Small and slow are beautiful	Big and fast are beautiful
Preservation of the environment should have highest priority	Maintenance of economic growth should have highest priority
Government spends relatively large proportion of budget on development assistance to poor countries	Government spends relatively small proportion of budget on development assistance to poor countries
Government spends relatively small proportion of budget on armaments	Government spends relatively large proportion of budget on armaments
International conflicts should be resolved by negotiation and compromise	International conflicts should be resolved by a show of strength or by fighting
A relatively large number of women in elected political positions	A relatively small number of women in elected political positions
Dominant religions stress the complementarity of the sexes	Dominant religions stress the male prerogative
Women's liberation means that men and women should take equal shares both at home and at work	Women's liberation means that women will be admitted to positions hitherto only occupied by men

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household. The Dutch women claimed this to be as much a task for the husband and said the wife should, if necessary, force the husband to take these responsibilities (*De Volkskrant*, May 10, 1989). The difference in opinion between the Russian and the Dutch women is remarkable because in Russia many more women have full-time jobs than in the Netherlands. Russian women's organizations have claimed more part-time jobs for women. But behind the two points of view there are two different conceptions of gender roles in society.

Table 4.3 complements Table 4.2 by summarizing the key differences between feminine and masculine societies from the last two sections.

The origins of masculinity-femininity differences

Anthropologist Margaret Mead found in New Guinea very different gender role distributions among adjacent tribal groups. She showed that history and tradition allow the survival of a considerable variety in gender roles. I have not found strong correlations with outside factors which could explain why some countries have dominant masculine and others dominant feminine culture. Feminine cultures are somewhat more likely in colder climates, suggesting

that an equal partnership between men and women improves the chances of survival and population growth in these climates.

The concentration of feminine cultures in north-western Europe (Denmark, Finland, Netherlands, Norway, Sweden) points to common historical factors. The elites in these countries consisted to a large extent of traders and seafarers. In trading and sailing, maintaining good interpersonal relationships and caring for the ships and merchandise are essential virtues. The Viking period in the Scandinavian countries (AD 800-1000) also meant that the women had to manage the villages while the men were away on their long trips; but Vikings did not settle in the Netherlands for any length of time. The Hanseatic League (AD 1200-1500) covered all north-western European countries including the free cities of Hamburg, Bremen, and Lübeck in Northern Germany and the Baltic states. The Hansa was a free association of trading towns and, for the maintenance of such a system, values associated with femininity were functional. Women played an important role in the Hansa:

'Although the wife did not share her husband's legal status, they usually formed a business team. Even in merchant circles, the family was the smallest functional cell of society, where the women and the children had a role to play. This meant that women had a certain degree of emancipation, and their independence and business skills increased. Indeed, some women managed to win the "battle for the trousers" even while their husbands were still alive.'¹⁶

Latin American countries differ considerably among themselves on the masculinity-femininity scale. The small Central American countries—to the extent scores for them are available from the IBM data—are feminine;

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Mexico, Venezuela, Colombia, and Equador very masculine; Peru and Chile again more feminine. One speculative explanation is that these differences reflect the inheritance of the different Indian civilizations dominant prior to the Spanish conquest. Most of Mexico would have inherited the tough Aztec culture, but the southern Mexican peninsula of Yucatan and the adjacent Central American republics would have inherited from the much more sensitive Maya culture. Peru and northern Chile would reflect the Inca inheritance, resembling the Maya.

One of the interesting statistical associations of country masculinity scores is with population growth. The relationship between MAS and the number of children per family (leading to population growth) is negative for the wealthier countries and positive for the poorer countries. In other words, *femininity* stands for larger families in wealthier countries and smaller families in poorer countries. This may be a consequence rather than a cause of feminine values. My interpretation of it is that in feminine cultures the mother has a stronger say in the number of children she will bear and that she adapts this number to the available resources: fewer if the country is poor, more if it is richer. In masculine countries the father determines the family size, begetting (too) large families in poor countries and too small ones in wealthy ones (Hofstede, 1980, p. 292; 1984, p. 203).

The future of differences in masculinity and femininity

At the level of countries no evidence at all exists for convergence on the masculinity-femininity dimension. If at all, research comparing value shifts over a number of years shows masculine countries to have become more masculine and feminine countries more feminine, but this should not be generalized. More interesting is considering how universal

developments in population age structure, in technological developments, and in the state of the environment might affect the values related to this dimension.

The relationship between masculinity and age is quite clear and seems to be universal. It resembles Fig. 4.1 if we write 'older' at the left and 'younger' at the right. Young men (age bracket 20-29) hold strongly masculine (assertive, tough) values. Young women (20-29) hold moderately masculine values. Older men (50-59) hold pronouncedly *feminine* values and so do older women (50-59). From age 25 to 55 both men and women lose their masculine values but the men lose them much faster than the women so that at age 55 no more gender difference in values is noticeable. There seems to be a straight relationship between masculine values and sexual productivity (Hofstede, 1980, p. 367; 1984, p. 248).

This trend, which most of us will follow during our lifetime, fits with the observation that young men and women foster more technical interests (which could be considered masculine), and older men and women more

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social interests. In terms of values (but not necessarily in terms of energy and vitality), older persons are better people managers than younger ones; younger persons are better technical managers.

The demographic development in the industrialized world is towards lower birth rates, so there will be relatively fewer young people.¹⁷ An ageing population will cause a shift towards more feminine values. When birthrates fall, this implies that more women will be both available for and needed in the work force (as there will be fewer young men). In many poor countries birthrates are still very high but in the longer term even these countries will have to follow the above pattern.

Technological and social developments enable even women with young children to participate in society outside the home, along with men. Nowhere is this a fast and undisputed process, but it looks irreversible. In virtually all industrialized countries the number of women in higher level jobs will increase. As their number increases these women will be more able to maintain their own feminine values. They will no longer have to acculturate themselves to the male majority. This increase in the number of women in positions in society hitherto held by men should therefore also shift societies as a whole towards more feminine values.

Technology imposes change on work itself. The information revolution is still going on, eliminating many old jobs and creating new ones. The future is bound to show a further reduction of the jobs that can be sufficiently structured to be subject to automation. What will remain are jobs that, by their very nature, cannot be automated. These are in the first place the jobs that deal with the setting of human and social goals, with defining the purpose of life for individuals and societies. These include all political and organizational top leadership functions. In the second place they are the creative jobs, those concerned with inventing new things and subjecting them to criteria of usefulness, beauty, and ethics. A third and very large category of jobs that cannot be automated are those that deal with the unforeseeable: safety, security, defense, maintenance. Finally, there is a large category of jobs whose essence is human contact: supervision, entertainment, keeping people company, listening to them, helping them materially and spiritually, motivating them to learn. In some of these nonautomatable jobs, computers can be introduced as resources, but they can never take over the job itself.

What strikes one about these nonautomatable jobs is that feminine values are as necessary in performing them as are masculine ones (regardless of whether the job incumbents themselves are women or men). For the last category, in which human contact is the core of the task, feminine values are even superior. Tasks related with achievement can more easily be automated than nurturing tasks. On balance, technological developments are

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more likely to support a need for feminine rather than for masculine values in society.

Finally, the environment poses very serious threats to the survival of mankind. If one species after another of fungi, plants, and animals becomes extinct we should start to worry when it is the turn of the species *Homo sapiens*. Whether we like it or not, we will all be forced to become more conservation-conscious. This development encourages more feminine values and reinforces the other shifts mentioned.

These forecasts may be seen as the wishful thinking of a citizen from a feminine culture country. Possibly I have overlooked important factors which will reinforce a masculinization. I hope not.

NOTES

- ¹ Some reviewers, especially from business administration and from countries which in the IBM data score masculine, have criticized my choice of these terms and called them a misnomer. I believe that these critics hold a shallow view of the roots of human behavior. Sexes and sex roles are one of the most profound facts of human existence. Managers in business are not exempt from the effects of social norms about gender-related behavior. Other reviewers, while recognizing the importance of gender roles, have criticized my calling the soft role feminine and the hard role masculine. They do not like roles to be that way. My choice of the terms is based on what *is* in virtually all societies, not on what anybody thinks should be.
- ² The same applies here as in note 1 of Chapter 3. For computing MAS index values in later follow-up studies an approximation formula has been composed in which the masculinity index value can be computed by simple mathematics from four of the 'work goals' mean scores.
- ³ The percentage of women in the IBM survey population varied from 4.0 in Pakistan to 16.2 in Finland. In Hofstede (1980, p. 279; 1984, p. 189), the MAS scores have been recalculated keeping the percentage of women constant for all countries. The effect on the scores is minimal, also because the percentage of women itself is correlated with the country's femininity.
- ⁴ The author is Marten Toonder. He started the series in the 1930s as a children's cartoon. Over a period of 40 years the stress in his work has slowly shifted from the drawings to the text, and now the adventures of Ollie B. Bommel and his young friend Tom Poes have become a gem in Dutch adult literature.
- ⁵ Dr Jan A.C. de Kock van Leeuwen, personal communication.
- ⁶ (Hofstede, 1980, pp. 307-309; 1984, pp. 203-204) The data on segregation are derived from Boulding *et al.* (1976).
- ⁷ Especially in the USA the relationships between labor unions and enterprises are governed by extensive contracts serving as peace treaties between both parties. The French researcher Philippe d'Iribarne who compared a French, a US and a Dutch manufacturing plant describes these contracts as a unique feature of the US industrial relations scene (d'Iribarne, 1989, p. 144).
- ⁸ From *Coronet*, September 1949, p. 72, quoted by William F. Whyte in Webber (1969, p. 31).
- ⁹ Philippe d'Iribarne considers the need for consensus the key characteristic of management in the Dutch manufacturing plant he studied. See d'Iribarne (1989, p. 234ff).

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¹⁰ Personal communication.

¹¹ (Stoetzel, 1983, p. 37). The Spearman rank correlation coefficient between the permissiveness index and the masculinity index is 0.83, significant at the 0.01 level.

¹² The Spearman rank correlation between MAS and average percentage aid over 1967-1976 is -0.81 (Hofstede, 1980, p. 308); between MAS and percentage aid in 1986, -0.82. Both are significant at the 0.001 level.

¹³ The quotations are from the Authorized Version of the British and Foreign Bible Society (1954).

¹⁴ The first correlation is with uncertainty avoidance; see Chapter 5 and Hofstede (1980, pp. 209, 293; 1984, p. 204).

¹⁵ (Stoetzel, 1983, pp. 92, 98-101) The Spearman rank correlation coefficient between the ratings for the importance of God and the masculinity index is 0.70, significant at the 0.05 level.

¹⁶ From H. Samsonowicz, 'Die Bedeutung des Grosshandels für die Entwicklung der polnischen Kultur bis zum Beginn des 16. Jahrhunderts', in *Studia Historiae Economica*, 5 (1970), 92ff., cited by Schildhauer (1985, p. 107).

¹⁷ From 1987 to 2000 the population of the high-income countries in the world is expected to grow by about 7 percent, the middle- and low-income countries by 28 percent (*World Development Report 1989*, Table 26).