2 *The Resistance of the Local*

On Sunday morning most of the French who live in old Avignon pay a visit not to church but to Les Halles. In this cramped market at the center of the city, they meet their neighbors, co-workers, their dentists and doctors, friends in from the country, their children's teachers, and, later on, the priest. The food sold here is mostly local—mushrooms and cheese from the Luberon, truffles and some boar in season, seafood from Marseilles, mounds of fruits and vegetables from the Rhone valley. The few imports are fruit from Italy, Israel, and Morocco, English jellies and canned goods. There are no organically modified foods, no Coke, no fast food, no logos, no chains, no advertising, and few tourists. The language of the vendors is French, spoken with *tu-vous* distinctions and the singsong intonation of commercial custom. Many customers reply in Provençal, a few in Occitan. I would not be understood in English. Many stall owners are third or fourth generation, and at least one traces his lineage back to a *fournisseur* of Clement, one of the "black" popes.

There are comparable scenes all over the world. Once we can *see* this local resilience, resistance to globalization is everywhere. Yet critics like Jameson see not resilience but fragility: "Each national culture and daily life is a seamless web of habits and habitual practices, which form a totality or system. It is very easy to break up such traditional cultural systems, which extend to the way people live in their bodies and use language, as well as the way they treat each other and nature. Once destroyed those fabrics can never be recreated."[1] In fact, it is not "very easy to break up such traditional cultural systems." And his colleague Sherif Hetata's notion that "the spread of global culture is the corollary of a global economy" is just a bad metaphor.[2] Culture does not work by corollaries—it is not math—and it is only partly rational or economic. Culture is local. It is incredibly durable, and I detail some, but hardly all, of the reasons why in this section. One of the major reasons for local resistance, as Dusan Kecmanovic has explained, is that the global economy itself raises insecurities that intensify regionalism, ethnocentrism, and nationalism—in short, the global economy intensifies local culture. Even if nation-states disappeared, Kecmanovic argues, ethnoregionalism would endure. This is not hard to understand: from infancy onward, customs of food, language, gender, use of space, education, work patterns, cleanliness, thrift, religion, racism, honesty, and regard for authority overwhelm the individual. These forces truly create us. Any individual who could escape the formative grasp of his or her early acculturation to adopt "globalized culture" would be quite extraordinary.

Most of what we call "culture" is formed in infancy. Mountains of scholarship exist that document the predisposition for early cultural imprinting; these show that infants acquire much of a culture before they can speak. As children, they learn foods, languages, spatial systems, gender relations, and family structure long before they are ever exposed to anything commercial, much less "globalized." They are initiated into educational patterns, religion, a culture's approach toward work, toward honesty, and toward authority. Attitudes toward race, foreigners, mechanization, and migrants follow. As sociologists Geert Hofstede and Ronald Inglehart have shown in large pan-national studies, these cultural attitudes have proved extremely obdurate to globalization. Let's examine just a few of these features.

Language

Language acquisition is the subject of an immense literature, but it can be bowdlerized by stating that there is no language like *la langue maternelle.* The language learned in infancy is not only the one learned best, but also the one that structures an individual's expression most importantly, even in speaking other languages. Only professional translators and those who have grown up truly bilingual have full command of a second language. To give but one example, the subtle shift in English meaning caused by a change from the indefinite article *a* to the definite article *the* escapes the first notice of nonnative speakers even after decades in the United States. Comparable difficulties exist in the other languages that I know (French, Spanish, German, and Japanese). Most multilingual people speak their second language in a patois, missing prepositions or liaisons or postpositional markers. The rising and falling intonations of Asian languages, the reshaping of the interior volume of the mouth required in Arabic and some African languages, the various *th* sounds of English—these escape even university professors who spend decades acquiring their second or third languages. To get the accent right, researchers say, we must learn a language before twelve. My point is simply the primary-ness of *la langue maternelle.* Second languages are spoken with an accent, a limited vocabulary, and deficiencies in the cultural weight of specific words and concepts.

La langue maternelle structures experience in a particular way through its vocabulary, word order, verb tense system, and method of pluralization. I am not dusting off Sapir and Whorf, Chomsky, or any other crusty linguist here. Languages have these structures to habituate speakers to the world views of the concomitant cultures. Japanese, for example, has no formal future tense, yet the Japanese obviously think about the future—they use extra present tense and future time markers. But they do not have anything comparable with future anterior or future conditional tenses in English, modes that make hypothesizing about future possibilities much clearer and easier. On the other hand, a pronoun-addicted language like English lacks the necessity of close attention to group context, which Japanese requires. If everyone seems to be on the same page in Japan, it's because everyone has to pay close attention to understand anything. The languages vary according to the cultures they express. The Romance languages gender every noun, and while one wouldn't want to make too much of that these days, that has an effect on the speaker's world view. English lacks the sense of agentless action connoted by reflexive verbs in Spanish. Japanese has levels of politeness that are almost parallel languages, dwarfing the *tu/usted/vosotros* distinctions of Spanish, to say nothing of a certain language in which everyone is "you." Recent attempts to eliminate this *keigo* Japanese, on the theory that American-style "you"-speak would lead to more innovation, have proved mostly futile. Workers interviewed by the *New York Times* spoke of sweating profusely when forced to address the boss as "Kubota-san" instead of "President Kubota-san." Japanese distinguishes between subtly different states by a plethora of nouns—rice in the field is *kome,* rice in the pot is *gohan,* and foreign rice is *raisu.* While the Japanese language doesn't determine how the Japanese people *think*—at an abstract level they know that rice is rice—the language provides a particularly close embrace of small differences in states of being, which is part of the culture.

So the idea that English or any lingua franca is going to displace *la* *langue maternelle* and its value-laden embrace of reality is just nearsightedness. If all parents in the world spoke English to their children from day one, communication between different nations would still take place only in a *pidgin* English, because other cultural factors are so deeply implicated in human communication.

Ways of reading a language, for example, are also embedded early. Japanese is traditionally read vertically, right to left. Some Chinese and all Hebrew are printed and read from right to left. Some languages are read from the back of the book to the front. There was an uproar in 2002 when Chinese newspapers in the United States changed from the traditional system to the left-to-right, horizontal system used in mainland China. Counting and measuring systems have remained impervious to globalization. Why do Americans, the most globalized people on earth, refuse to give up measurement by Fahrenheit, gallons, miles, and inches? The French retain their nonsequential house numbering and *bis* addresses. These systems have their own histories and pace of development. In Austria stairways, as well as buildings, are numbered. The Japanese *ku* and *cho* system (streets are usually not named) defies Western logic. Then there are the twenty-plus shape and type counters that Japanese suffixes to countable objects. Money systems are similarly integrated into local languages in myriad slang, and woe to the next bureaucrat who introduces a two-dollar bill or a Susan B. Anthony dollar. Some Asian and Middle Eastern nations use different calendars.

Global technologies have also put the means of promoting and preserving *les langues maternelles* within reach of every culture. As noted in chapter 1, radio and television in local languages have become the norm. Audiotapes, videotapes, and CDs offer children's fare in languages from Inuit to Farsi. These are easily copied and passed from household to household. *Sesame Street* broadcasts in a gamut of tongues from Catalan to Swahili and Cantonese. Photocopying and cheap printing permit children to read local lore and textbooks in languages that did not even have written forms fifty years ago. The Soviet Union abolished the Chuvash language fifty years ago, but due to technology and ethnocentrism it is today spoken throughout the republic of Chuvashia.

Communicative Distance

On the island of Bali, an infant's feet never touch the ground until the child is several months old. Babies are carried constantly, by a variety of community members. In Senegal too, infants are passed around and tended by an extended family that may number eighty members. In the United States, there is no carrying around at all. Children as young as twelve months are dropped at day-care centers at 7 a.m. and retrieved at 6 p.m. In France, where single mothers abound, grandmothers are still very active in child-care. In Japan, an estimated 1 million young men, dealing with emotional or academic defeat, have shut themselves into their bedrooms and refuse all communication, a phenomenon called *hikikomori.* They sometimes stay there for years. Americans feel their "personal space" invaded when Spaniards and Italians move up close to talk.

These are all examples of "communicative distance," which is the intimacy or formality of speech context, the friendliness or aggressiveness of speech acts, and the expectation of speech frequency. Among other things it governs the expectation that one speaks differently to different types of people or the same way to all people, a cultural category called *particularism* by sociologists. Communicative distance is established at the same time as speech, and it endures throughout a lifetime. Even after mastering a second language, most bilingual adults are unable to achieve its communicative distance without conscious modeling and practice. One would have to study, as did Davide Sesia, the director of Prada in Japan. He learned that when he negotiates, maintaining a humble posture, proper distances, and delaying Japanese verbs to the ends of sentences "gives me extra time to react to indirect facial expressions and even to reverse the entire meaning of a sentence."[3] By studying Japanese communicative distance, he has managed to secure great store locations without the down payments usually required of foreigners.

Examples of communicative distance are legion. While many cultures shake hands, nowhere outside the United States does its back-slapping, chest-bumping, high-fiving macho male behavior appear. In fact, men do not embrace nearly as much in cultures outside the United States, although they may kiss intra-*familia,* as in France, or hold hands, as they do in much of Africa. Kissing is one of the most overt French communicative distance habits; another is the use of *tu* versus *vous* address. Japanese communicative distance is much different. Physical touching exists only in the immediate family, between lovers, and in contact sports. But Japanese infants are touched and handled a great deal, mostly by their mothers. Rather than learning to wash themselves, children are washed until school age. They learn about human separateness through the ideology of cleanliness, as mothers explain that contact spreads disease. So while Japanese are acculturated to close proximity with others, they avoid contact except with intimates. On crowded subway cars the Japanese try not to touch anyone else; this is one reason those famous "packers" are needed. Even drunk Japanese salarymen tend to maintain appropriate communicative distance. On the other hand Poles and Russians, who are equally reserved in daily public life, discard traditional communicative distance when drunk. In France it is considered proper form to pause before leaving a bus to say "Au revoir" and "Merci" to the driver, but unassimilated North African immigrants don't, which causes social friction.

There are other cultures where immediate intimacy is the norm. Despite population densities similar to Japan's, strangers in Thailand are touched, taken into close speaking proximity, and addressed familiarly. In West Africa boys walk with their arms around each other. Visitors to Italy notice the scant distance between speakers immediately. In Japan, they notice that the distance has been lengthened. And the bowing, which is an art unto itself! In the United States men gaze at women, but in Brazil the women gaze at the men. These features in aggregate have thousands of small repercussions for daily life, and they are endlessly transmitted by radio, television, and film in a way that confirms and reproduces them for children.

A failure to understand communicative distance has dogged the U.S. efforts in Iraq. "'Welcome' is probably the most widely used English word here," wrote John Tierney in the *New York Times*. "Even if his kitchen has just been destroyed by a car bomb, an Iraqi host will apologize to a visitor for not offering the ritual cup of tea. But Americans often do not know how to reciprocate politely. They routinely offend Iraqis by plunging into business instead of paying respects to the host and asking questions about his well-being and that of his family."[4] Their translators tell the Americans that "You can't ask that question here." To spare everyone embarrassment they simply ask a different question in Arabic.

Communicative distance shows no sign of changing because of globalization. In fact, a great deal of newly created wealth is dedicated to maintaining it. Ronald Inglehart cites Saudi businessmen who spend small fortunes building relationships with *individuals* from Western companies. They will deal only with those people, as their traditions dictate. Their American counterparts experience extremes of isolation and physical contact, moving to suburbia to be alone but driving to urban sports stadiums and discos, where they are in intimate contact with hundreds or hundreds of thousands of people. Riders commuting to and from New York City on the Long Island and New Jersey railroads will stand or sit in the aisles rather than use the middle place in three-across seating. The Japanese build capsule hotel rooms, where for thirty to fifty dollars a night they can cocoon in a one-piece plastic berth measuring 150 by 200 centimeters—and remain closer to work. Americans prefer to commute long distances to sleep in their own enormous beds. The British use their new wealth to travel abroad extensively, but the French do not—60 percent of Frenchmen have never left France. In the United States and France, children usually leave home by their early twenties, but in Italy more than 33 percent of those thirty to thirty-four years old live with their parents, preferring home comforts and their mothers' cooking. Wal-Mart in Japan cannot get employees to adopt its American guideline of asking any customer within ten feet "How can I help you?" That is so far beyond normal communicative distance in Japan that it's like shouting across a football field in the United States. Besides, in Japan clerks should be passive, not speaking until spoken to.

Cultures also deploy new technology to reinforce traditional communicative distance. Cell phones are an example. Japan and Finland have more subscribers, the highest usage rates, and the most sophisticated cell phones in the world. But these phones replicate and intensify some traditional aspects of Finnish and Japanese communicative distance. Movement in trains, buses, and cars is a constant of modern Japanese life, but phones permit the Japanese to be in contact with family, business associates, friends, and lovers while in movement. They replicate the information sharing, consensus building, and obligation creation that were achieved through social visiting, gift exchange, *omiyage*, and consultation in the past. A young woman thinking of buying a computer, for example, calls her father and her friends for recommendations and ideas, rather than checking the ratings, as an American might. Anecdotal information and recommendations return to the young woman, reduced to a consensus, as well as the names of people to contact. But the highly educated Finns, almost laconic on the phone, rarely use them for consensus building and make far fewer calls per capita than the Japanese or than neighboring Swedes and Norwegians.

Communicative distance has been measured by social scientists on the scales of universalism versus particularism (Inglehart), as low context versus high context (Edward Hall), and earlier as U-type and G-type (Kurt Lewin). These measures distinguish between cultures in which people engage with others only in specific areas of life or only at single levels of personality, as opposed to cultures in which people communicate across all areas of life and personality (see fig. 2). Americans are very specific, very low context. In the workplace they may be on a first-name basis with the cleaning crew, but they don't socialize with them. The

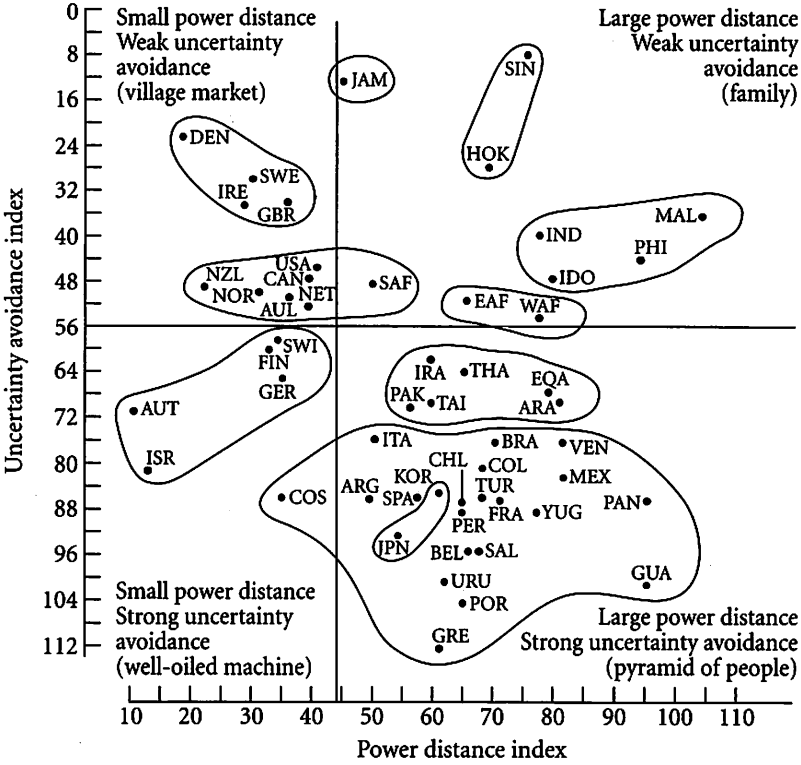

Figure 2. Using interviews of thousands of IBM employees, Geert Hofstede mapped the "uncertainty avoidance" and "power distance" of people in fifty nations and three world regions. He showed not only how enduring basic cultural attitudes can be (the United States, Canada, New Zealand, Australia, Britain, and Netherlands cluster together in the upper left quadrant), but also how different even prosperous countries of the same region can be: Japan appears in the lower right quadrant, while Singapore and Hong Kong are in the upper right.

Source: Geert Hofstede, "Uncertainty Avoidance and Power Distance in 50 Countries," in *Cultures and Organizations: Software of the Mind* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1997), 141 (fig. 6.1).

French and the Germans are medium specificity, high-context cultures: they greet the *femme de ménage* enthusiastically on the street or in a bar, but remain *vousvoyer* in address and restricted in topic range. Japan is a high-context communication society, where almost everything is already implicit in the social context. One hardly ever talks to the cleaning people. As Hofstede notes, Japanese business contracts can be half the length of American contracts, because both sides already understand the "what-ifs." Until 2000 there were only a few thousand lawyers in the whole country, though more are now being trained, to deal with intellectual property and piracy.

Food

"It is probably in tastes in *food* that one would find the strongest and most indelible mark of infant learning," Bourdieu writes, "the lessons which longest withstand the distancing or collapse of the native world and most durably maintain nostalgia for it. The native world is, above all, the maternal world, the world of primordial tastes and basic foods."[5]

These tastes begin at the breast. In Norway 99 percent of mothers breast-feed their children initially. In the United States the figure is 70 percent, in France only 50 percent. In some parts of Africa and Asia, the figure is less than 30 percent. French infants are fed yogurt and other manufactured milk products at an early age, but in Japan, as Ruth Benedict long ago reported, infants are nursed to eight months, sometimes until "they can understand what is said to them," and then moved right to the family table where they "are fed bits of food."[6]

But that's the end of milk in Japan, as children are weaned to rice water and then a rice gruel called *okayu.* Japan has many forms of rice: rice cakes, rice candy, rice puffs. The young are encouraged to focus on the texture and mouth feel of rice. "Good" rice has granularity but also sticks together for ease in handling. It is never mushy, never chewy. Good rice has a mild nutty flavor, a slight aroma, but no aftertaste: it invites you to keep eating it. John Dower writes in *Embracing Defeat* that rice had to disappear completely during World War II before the Japanese would consider eating barley or potatoes. Even expatriated Japanese in the United States start their babies on rice gruel at two months and whole rice at five months. In contrast, anthropologist Sidney Mintz tells us that Americans have traditionally gotten two-thirds of their carbohydrates from potatoes and wheat.

French children also get their culinary indoctrination early. *Blé,* a finely milled form of wheat, is sometimes added even to infants' bottles, to provide the ballast to get them to sleep through the night. Grocery shelves are crowded with *blé* products produced by Nestlé, Bledina, and HIPP, such as Bledi lait, P'tit Biscuit, and Lait et Céréales Cacao. "Gôuter aux flocons de blé" advertises one product, while another claims to mix *blé* with "p'tit mouliné légumes a la Provençal." Yogurt is introduced at five to six months, and children learn to respond to a wide variety of milk products, from flavored yogurts and *crème fraîche* to those cheese triangles of La Vache Qui Rit. Bits of French bread are torn off and fed to infants as soon as teeth appear; in fact, bread crusts are a favored teething tool. In contrast to the situation in the United States, there are relatively few protein-rich French baby foods: no eggs or meat or fish, and only a few with chicken. The French infant grows up with *blé* and moves to the *baguette.* Sour tastes, ranging from olives, pickles, and sour chewing gum to wine (served in diluted form at the family table) arrive at around age ten. Children are introduced to the seasonal rotation of foods at home and in the school *cantine,* where there is usually professional cooking, as well as dressed salads and *sauce blanche* (although lots got left on the plate in my children's experience).

Infants off the bottle in the United States, on the other hand, graduate to fruit juices and soft drinks. Sugar, in short, which as Sidney Mintz has argued, is a kind of populist methamphetamine. Early foods include applesauce, strained plums or apricots, sweetened carrots or squash. Early protein, from chicken to beef, is also sweetened. The "mouth feel" of U.S. infant foods is made smooth not only by straining and blending but by emulsifiers. These two sensations—smoothness and sweetness—become the base of American eating habits, which recent studies show are set before age two. Two-year-olds already eat 30 percent more calories than they need, and 30 percent eat no vegetables. One-quarter of U.S. children over age one eat hot dogs, sausage, or bacon daily. French fries are the most common vegetable consumed by American children fifteen months and older. Lives there an American three-year-old who has not tasted ice cream, birthday cake, or a hot dog? Study on study has shown that Americans don't like low-fat products. Innovative new foods like water buffalo, with its low-fat, low-cholesterol meat and rich milk, consistently fail in the U.S. market.

A child growing into a culinary system learns to use utensils. We are told that one-third of the world eats with knives and forks, one-third with chopsticks, and one-third with bare hands. This is no small factor in local food culture or in the persistence of local taste. "Subsystems usually set the terms against which these [food] meanings in culture are silhouetted," writes Mintz.[7] Certain foods are more easily eaten in these modes, and we become adept at a particular technique. Most Westerners refuse to try or are grossly incompetent with chopsticks: the Japanese and Chinese don't like each other's chopsticks (wood vs. plastic). Rice that sticks together is favored in chopstick and hand-eating cultures. Peas and applesauce are not. Indonesians make do with a fork and serrated spoon.

By eight or nine a Japanese child has eaten a variety of unsweetened, unemulsified rice products such as rice cakes, *mochi*, and *sembei*, with a strongly contrasting spice system: the bitter, sour, astringent, and hot tastes of *umeboshi*, *nori*, *tsukemono*, and *shichimi*. There is a special vocabulary for describing these flavors, such as *shio-karai* (salty-hot). Asian children are also introduced early to astringent drinks, such as *ocha* (green tea), *kocha* (black tea), and *mugicha* (barley tea). Tea practices vary greatly. The Japanese are connoisseurs of green tea, but the Chinese sometimes use it to wash their bowls. The net effect of Asian food training is to develop familiarity along the neutral-to-sour axis of taste. The Japanese can tell Thai from American rice, and many prefer rice from specific provinces within Japan. Various noodles, from different regions and manufacturers, prepared in different styles, have Asian partisans as fierce as Italian pasta lovers. Traditionally the Japanese consume soup for breakfast: this *miso* is fish-based, slightly sour, and contains cubes of tofu or vegetables. Has globalization ended these practices?

No, but it has made *miso* a fast food available at Mister Donut. It has put *ocha* and *ramen* in vending machines. The persistence of the soup meal, in particular, can be seen among Asian students worldwide, who microwave instant *ramen* any time, anywhere. Noodles, ranging from *ramen* noodles to the whole-wheat *soba* and thicker *udon* were among the first solid foods they ate as infants.

Elsewhere in the world the basic starch comes from beans, yams, potatoes, cassava, or bananas, for other peoples build taste systems just as elaborate and enduring as those in Japan. One does not acquire a taste for marmite (Britain), fish sauce (Southeast Asia), *kimchi* (South Korea), or lichee nuts, turtles, and eels (China) except in infancy. Marmite is a foul-smelling, evil-looking yeast extract, which the manufacturer's own research shows that if an infant does not eat it by age three, the adult is unlikely to ever consume it. But 24 million jars a year are sold, and Marmite is exported to expatriates in thirty-three countries. As for eels, I saw children of four or five in the night markets of Nanning, China, who were already pulling them from the "live tanks" because they were so tasty. Nor as it turns out can we be reprogrammed to do something as simple as drink water while walking around, if we did not grow up doing it. In Italy, Nestlé has found it extraordinarily difficult to sell walk-around bottled water, despite the fact that each Italian drinks 189 liters of bottled water a year, the most in the world—the image-conscious Italians consider it rude and unsightly and they just won't do it. *Che maleducato!*

Is it surprising, then, that American fast-food restaurants have to modify their products extensively in order to sell them overseas? After all, Cantonese restaurants in the United States sell fat-laden, sweet-tasting "sweet and sour pork" that no one in Guangzhou would recognize. Tacos are served in the United States with a dollop of sour cream and grated cheese that make Mexicans laugh. American *sushi* chefs put not only cream cheese but *lettuce* in their products. Starbucks sells a lot of green tea *frappuccino* in Japan and Taiwan. The tastes learned in the high chair—oops! that's American baby furniture—are so important that all imported cuisines must lean toward them. In Japan, Italian restaurants are judged on the variety and quality of their noodles—spaghetti, linguini—and their sauces. These dishes never have the fat or morsels of meat, peppers, and tomatoes that Americans demand of "rich Italian sauces." The most popular fare in the French restaurants of Japan are Provençal dishes—fish, garlic, and vegetables—modified to Japanese taste—no *tapenade, patés* or *fromage de chèvre.* Cheese, especially strongly flavored cheese, has never caught on, although green-tea-flavored ice cream has. Häagen-Dazs is available but is treated as candy. The Portuguese introduced bread in the late 1600s, but the Japanese crossed it with the more familiar Chinese bun. The resulting *pan* is a white, spongy, eternally fresh product similar to America's Wonder Bread. The Japanese can eat their *miso* and *pan* breakfasts at many fast-food venues.

In France there are stronger seasonal variations in food than in the United States or Japan. Truffles and mushrooms appear in the fall. The first *radi* (radish) of spring is an event. The chestnut crop is reviewed on the radio. Was there *Beaujolais Nouveau* at your Thanksgiving dinner? Globalization has made November's *vin nouveau* into an international event, with thousands of crates sent by airfreight to Japan and the United States. The French *primeur* system, which prizes the earliest and the best of cheese, ham, wine, olive oil, mushrooms, truffles, beef, clams, apples, and beer, among other items, bears an uncanny resemblance to the Japanese fetishization of large, perfect fruits, the annual winter consumption of *fugu* (poisonous blowfish), and the appreciation of subtle differences in *tempura* or *uni* (sea urchin) and *unagi* (eels). The French also have distinctly different regional cuisines, some of them resolutely antimodern. Two types of potatoes from the 1800s were making a comeback when I last lived in Avignon.

Foreign cuisines falling in the midrange of the French taste system do not catch on. There is no appeal in German or Hungarian food. The French prefer not Mexican tacos, but American chili (lots of tomatoes and red peppers). They have virtually invented a Vietnamese dish they call *nem,* in which a deep-fried spring roll is wrapped in mint leaves and Romaine lettuce, then dipped in a sweet-sour sauce. Now *nem* exists in Vietnam, but it is very different. Nor can we find this version of *nem* outside France. Spain is a near neighbor to France, but little of its cuisine has caught on, perhaps because it is based on *arroz* (rice), potatoes, *chicharos* (chickpeas), and *alubia* (a bean and meat stew). Only Basque cooking has straddled the border. Morocco and Algeria are neighbors who have sent millions of migrants to France, but *cous-cous* and *kifta* remain immigrant specialties.

National-taste systems are reinforced by grocery stores. In every country that I have visited, "foreign foods" are rigorously segregated and they cost more. There is a food taxonomy called the "foreign foods aisle," where we are presumed to be either foreigners or looking for a foreign eating experience. Say a bottle of wine is our object. In a French Géant Casino, foreign beer and wine are stocked not with the general beer and wine, but in the foreign foods section. We must browse the respective shelves of the United States, Australia, and Chile. We find American wine cheek-by-jowl with peanut butter, Uncle Ben's rice, and corn flakes. Even jams, cookies, teas, and canned goods are arranged by nationality. On the Japanese shelf (next to the American shelf), Sapporo beer and Kikkoman soy sauce sit together with three kinds of instant *ramen*. They are the only Japanese products in this Géant Casino. The Italian shelves are well stocked, and there are a variety of Vietnamese products. For rice, there is Thai balsamati and Uncle Ben's, but no quality Japanese or American rice, such as Kokuho Rose. In the produce section, there are few imported vegetables, and those that appear have been given French names. Even Asian pears have a French name: *nachis*. There are no German or Spanish foods except some canned meats and olives. All coffees are French brands, most coming from former colonies in Africa. The teas are all packed by Tetley or Nestlé, and there is no real green tea, only *pamplemousse* flavored.

In Japan the segregation of foreign food (*yoshoku*) from native (*washoku*) is even stricter. The Co-op grocery in Nishinomiya sells no foreign vegetables except Chinese cabbages and only a few imported fruits, such as oranges and bananas. The only American foodstuffs are breakfast cereals, jams, peanut butter, pancake mix, and catsup; the only French, a few cheeses and wines in the gourmet section. In the big supermarkets, such as Daiei, we can find these products plus the ingredients of Tex-Mex cuisine, spaghetti sauces, and Pillsbury cake and instant mixes. There are a few British products (no Marmite), French Ma Mère preserves, various expresso coffees, and European chocolates. Budweiser, Gallo, and Guinness are for sale in the beverage section. This selection varies little, whether the supermarket is in the countryside or in Tokyo. Of course, if we disdain Daiei, we can find, at a price, anything we want in Tokyo.

Global merchants such as Unilever, Nestlé, Carrefour, and Procter & Gamble have found entering the overseas grocery business rough going. In Japan, consumers expected Carrefour to be "French." When they found it selling the same goods as Daiei at similar prices, they stopped coming. There were no deals on L'Oréal or cognac. In Hong Kong, Carrefour could not meet the local obsession with super-fresh produce and had to retreat. Nestlé does not sell *blé* in Japan but rice cakes, made in China, that undercut the price of Japanese-made rice cakes. In China, Carrefour now stocks a wide variety of *miantiao* (noodles) and soybean products, which China must import to meet the demand for soy.

Foreign food companies took a beating in China until they learned that the Chinese believe in "cooling" and "warming" foods, the yin and yang of cuisine. Lemon is a cooling flavor, so if we are Frito-Lay and want to sell potato chips in summer, we have to add a lemon flavor. But Frito-Lay (part of Pepsico) spent years trying to sell spicy flavored potato chips in the summer—duh! If Chinese want to cool off, they don't grab a soft drink—they eat lichee nuts. To warm them up in winter, KFC now sells a spinach, tomato, and egg soup.

The ways that people purchase and transport food also vary. Only in a few nations do people buy large quantities of food and drive it home. Even those French or British or Japanese who buy at supermarkets and transport by auto will purchase smaller quantities than Americans. At Géant Casino in France, I rarely saw purchases of more than twenty items, and at Daiei in Japan about eighteen to twenty items were usual. Refrigerators and storage space are limited. Almost no one has a deep freeze. People take their food home on foot, and they shop several times a week, if not daily. Some Japanese groceries deliver.

Magnus Pike, in a sober article on "The Influence of American Foods and Food Technology in Europe," wrote back in the early 1970s that "foods widely consumed in America have not been accepted in Europe and have made no impact there. . . . Only when an innovation from America fits, in some way that it is not possible to foresee in advance, into the social context of Europe, will that food or food process exert a significant influence there."[8] And foods are so basic to local culture that thirty years later that assessment is still valid.

Gender

Workers in the *maquiladoras* along the United States–Mexico border are predominantly female. When I asked why he hired only women, one Mexican manager responded "because they are better with their hands." It is tempting to focus on the sexual stereotype in his remarks, but they also reveal the stubborn perseverance of gender roles. Residents of the *maquiladora* zone are clearly globalized. They did not grow up on the border but migrated from poor, traditional states of the interior, such as Zacateca. Such migration is a feature of globalization, as is employment of women in light industry.

But globalization hasn't broken the primal patterns of gender. Gender identity, the individual's self-conception as male or female, is not fixed at birth, according to most scholarship. However, as the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* notes, "Basic gender identity—the concept 'I am a boy' or 'I am a girl'—is generally established by the time the child reaches the age of three and is extremely difficult to modify thereafter . . . gender identity develops by means of parental example, social reinforcement, and language. Parents teach sex-appropriate behavior to their children from an early age, and this behavior is reinforced as the child grows older and enters a wider social world. As the child acquires languages, he also learns very early the distinction between 'he' and 'she' and understands which pertains to him- or herself."[9] In Zacateca, women did all the work inside the house, while men worked outside. At the age of four or five, girls began to sew, cook, and clean. Boys went to the fields to learn about hoeing, animals, and irrigation. By age twelve boys might be working as cane cutters or coffee pickers, or clearing brush. Gender roles are so ingrained that when outside employment dries up in a Zacateca town, the *men* leave to find *outside* work elsewhere, even if there is local inside work available. This usually means they go north of the border. There are so many Zacatecan men in the United States that they have their own clubs and Internet pages. They send hundreds of thousands of dollars back every year in remittances, funding houses and clinics and schools back home. Globalization has simply made available a *different way* for them to fulfill a traditional gender role.

But there is a second class of Zacatecan families, headed up by single or deserted women, or poor and landless families who lack mobile male labor. Moving to the *maquiladora* zone, where the women become the principal breadwinners, represents a break with some traditions, but it retains the most basic gender role: women are good with their hands, and they work inside. As Hofstede notes,

> Men are *on average* taller and stronger, but many women are taller and stronger than quite a few men. Women have *on average* great finger dexterity and, for example, faster metabolism, which makes them recover faster from fatigue but some men also excel in these respects. . . . 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. . . . 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.[10]

Gender constructions remain stubbornly local. In the Chinese countryside, peasant women have worked outside planting rice paddies, even plowing with water buffalo, especially since the Cultural Revolution. They also work inside the house, and in the market and in shops. Men work outside and inside, as cooks, merchants, tailors, and metalworkers. Neither the Cultural Revolution of Mao Zedong nor the Great Leap into globalization have changed gender roles much. In the Guangxi province in 2003, I found a husband-and-wife blacksmith team, repairing an agricultural tool. She swung the heavy hammer, a task requiring some strength, while he turned the object and tapped the edges with a light hammer. Women also worked on construction sites, tended buffalo, and killed chickens in the market. Globalization didn't appear to change gender roles greatly.

But in Chinese cities and Taiwan, young women work in great numbers in manufacturing, which has led feminist critics to conclude that globalization has fomented a new form of "patriarchal enslavement." Although clearly sympathetic to these claims, scholar Aihwa Ong, in her exhaustive survey of the literature on gender and labor in Asia, ultimately arrives at the conclusion that "changes in the working daughter's status, with its mix of (and tension between) family obligations and growing personal autonomy, must modify sweeping assertions that pre-existing East and Southeast Asian 'patriarchy' alone is to blame for the construction of unequal industrial relations." Hong Kong daughters receive greater family support in return for their "filial" conduct: "As new workers," Ong writes, "young women engage in activities that violate traditional boundaries (spatial, economic, social, and political) in public life, forcing a redefinition of the social order." It's not "Fordist production" or "despotic regimes," she concludes, but "local milieux constituted by the unexpected conjunctions of labor relations and cultural systems, high-tech operations and indigenous values."[11]

In Iraq the *New York Times* found that feminists, including the Harvard-educated minister of public works Nasreen Barwari, supported polygamy and unequal inheritance laws. The paper pointed out that women are 55 percent of the population and that male-female relationships outside marriage are frowned upon, so becoming a second wife has practical advantages. As for inheritance, it is always men, not women, who are called upon to help their relatives, so they need resources.

Even in a more "American" situation, local traditions dictate gender roles. Thirty-year-old Madhauri Varik has an M.A. and works selling chemicals to biotechnology labs in Bombay. With her husband Gautam, she earns five times the national average. But when they attend Water Kingdom outside Bombay, she rents a bathing costume that covers her from neck to ankle—she doesn't own a bathing suit and shudders at the mere thought of a tank suit, much less a bikini. "Our culture doesn't allow that," she told the *New York Times.*[12] Park owner Ashok Goel says, "The swimming gear has been tailor-made for the Indian psyche. You can cover from the wrist to the ankle." The appearance of women at such a venue represents globalization, to be sure, but the women come in groups. And they all cover up.

In his essay "Algeria Unveiled," Marxist Frantz Fanon long ago pointed out the resistance of the local through clothing. The French colonists had mobilized "their most powerful and most varied resources," in Fanon's view, to remove women's veils and to westernize Arab society. In his hyperbolic account, the French were "committed to destroying the people's originality and under instructions to bring about the disintegration, at whatever cost . . . of the status of the Algerian woman."[13] In the ensuing battle (which the French lost), the colonized "displayed a surprising force of inertia." Were Fanon still alive, he might take satisfaction that fifty years later, neither globalization nor the French have made a dent in Arab gender roles, not even when Arabs resettle in France.

Western feminists cannot understand why Japanese women, in the world's second largest economy, do not push harder for an equal share. But Japanese feminists have responded, "Who wants those jobs—commuting two hours each way, working 10 hours, and attending business dinners night after night?" They point out that Japanese women control the purse, doling out allowances to their husbands, even buying and selling cars and houses without consulting their husbands. The situation of the Japanese "office lady," or OL, who is often college educated, has seemed particularly disgraceful. Japan's tabloid press noted that many OL's lived at home and spent their incomes on Gucci handbags and travel to Hawaii or Club Meds in Jamaica. The so-called Yellow Cab phenomenon (OL's who were sex tourists) was a national embarrassment. But as Karen Kelsky has demonstrated, there was less than met the eye. The traveling OL simply extended an unendearing Japanese custom of patronizing foreign sex workers. And the tradition of *mitsugu*—"giving financial aid to one's lover"—had been around since the fifteenth century. To glimpse the cultural essentialism at work here, we need only read *Beddotaimu Aizu* (Bedtime Eyes), by Eimi Yamada. Her protagonist explains that "[the foreigner's] smell seemed to assault me, like some filthy thing. But it also made me feel, by comparison, clean and pure. His smell made me feel superior."[14] In fact, all of the female sex tourists interviewed by Kelsky intended to wed Japanese men.

The gender roles of other cultures also baffle the big international retailers. The French luxury conglomerate LVMH took the success of its Vuitton handbags as a sign that its perfumes would succeed in Japan. It opened a flagship Sephora store in Ginza in 1999 and planned forty more nationwide by 2004. But its Chanel and Clinique brands attracted few buyers, and LVMH had to close the stores in 2001. "Japan is a skin care market," said a competitor, "not a fragrance market. The Japanese woman does not want to smell."[15] Gap and DKNY likewise found the popularity of their heavily logoed clothes among Japanese women short-lived. Instead, women flocked to the no-brand, post-logo simplicity of Japan's Uniqlo, whose simple, cheap outfits never go out of style. Japanese women "resent their bodies being used as advertising billboards," says President Tadashi Yanai.[16]

The most sensational topic in the gender and globalization debate is the sex trade in underdeveloped countries. There are scholarly books on sex tourism in Thailand and journalistic exposés on the Philippines and Indonesia, not to mention Michel Houellebecq's panegyrics. Their common theme is the guilt of the West (or flouting it, in Houellebecq's case). These critics are especially guilty of ignoring the local wellsprings of gender roles. In Thailand, the usual narrative is that Phuket and Pattaya were developed as R&R centers, with attendant prostitution, by the U.S. Army during the Vietnam War. But Thai prostitution is much older, as David

Lehney has shown: "The Bowring Treaty of 1855 . . . opened Thailand to foreign laborers. Most immigrants were young men from rural south China, planning to earn money for their families by mining tin in Phuket. A large number of Chinese prostitutes accompanied the men, establishing the largest sex centers Thailand had experienced at that time. . . . A 1909 law to prevent the spread of venereal disease effectively legalized prostitution."[17] Thai women ousted Chinese women from this lucrative business, manifesting a very different culture of communicative distance and an economic nationalism. Suffice it to say that many Asian cultures have traditions of bodily service. The blind are masseurs in some nations, while temple monks do this work in others. Sex work is paid well relative to other work, especially manual labor, which is always available. In Thailand women own stores and are managers, but even here sex work pays more, and some uneducated young women from the provinces enter it expressly to earn enough to return home and set themselves up in business. Others are runaways, "sold" by parents, or abducted by brothel owners. Without underestimating the viciousness of the sex trade, especially in eastern Europe and Africa, we should also see that economic self-interest and local gender constructions play a significant role. Women can always work for less money in tourist restaurants, in hotels, in boutiques, as guides or artisans.

Globalization did not create the sex trade, in short. Rather prostitution has been modernized by technology, just as food and clothing have. Air travel, tourism, media, and the Internet have changed the production and consumption of all three. There are more sex workers in the United States than in any foreign country, but they advertise in tabloids and on the Internet, and they operate through cell phones and pagers. They accept credit cards and schedule using Palm Pilots. As John Burdett writes, "the sex industry in Thailand is smaller per capita than in Taiwan, the Philippines or the United States."[18] But it's on the street and visible in Thailand.

We may feel that the spread of literacy, availability of education, improvements in health and communication and technology should make sex work evaporate. But in reality there is a tight embrace between gender, local culture, and a worker's return on effort that trumps our idealism. In the United States, a culture dominated by the Protestant ethic, educated women of marrying age patronize fitness clubs, but in Asia women take diet pills and sit in electrostimulation machines that zap them with a mild current. The fit bodies of young American women look too "working class" in Asia. For that matter, few Asian or European men seek the muscles (or avoirdupois) of their American brothers. This difference in body image is indicative of the links between local culture, work, and gender. Even in the effort to "look good," there are different local equations for effort and result.

So gender roles change as a result of globalization, but not essentially. In developed nations men are still steelworkers, repairmen, heavy-equipment operators, farmers, concrete and stone masons, yardmen, lumberjacks, and garbage collectors. Women compose most of the secretarial and clerical class, most of the elementary school teachers. Women are still the principal providers of child-care. What has changed is that educated women have accessed the professions in developed nations, becoming lawyers, doctors, engineers, architects, and professors. This change is most pronounced in the United States and Europe, but less visible in Japan, Taiwan, South Korea, or Singapore. Changes in this segment of the labor force may accompany globalization in some cultures, but are they particularly "American"? Inglehart says that "development of effective birth control technology, together with unprecedented prosperity and the welfare state, have eroded the functional basis of traditional norms."[19] Beyond this primary cause, he notes, the most influential secondary influence on gender roles has been the "historically Protestant" orientation of American culture, aligning it with Canada, Denmark, Sweden, and Switzerland. It is in these nations that gender roles have shifted somewhat.

With the dilution of the Protestant work ethic, though, things may not be changing at all. Between Ronald Inglehart's 1981 and 1990 surveys for *Modernization and Postmodernization,* almost every nation showed an increase in the number of people agreeing with the statement "a woman needs to have children to be fulfilled." The rate of agreement in countries such as the United States and Finland, which had been only 18 percent and 12 percent in 1981, increased to 20 percent and 19 percent in 1990. In France and Japan almost 80 percent of 1990 respondents agreed with the statement. These results contradicted Inglehart's prediction that postmaterialist societies would shift to a matrix of "self-satisfaction" factors. But some of the nations most dramatically globalized in recent decades, such as Hungary and South Africa, increased their rate of agreement with the women-children criterion by more than 10 percent between the surveys. Inglehart vouches only that "in sexual norms and gender roles, we find a continued movement away from the rigid norms that were a functional necessity in agrarian society."[20] Gender roles have been changed by modernity, certainly—by the presence of television and washing machines and cars. But globalization's impact seems to vary in accord with older, deeper gender templates, facilitating many cases of innovative adaptation and even some cases of return to traditional gender roles.

Education

Children see us working, or not, and begin to imitate us. We encourage them to read, to help with planting, to watch television, or to hang around the shop. By the time they arrive at kindergarten, *crèche,* or preschool, national educational systems are already different, as childhood historian Roberta Wollons has argued.

In Japan, there is a standard national curriculum, and few private schools. Teachers are highly trained, and families support education wholeheartedly. Most mothers stay home to raise children, some falling into the *kyoiku mama* syndrome—total involvement in the child's success or failure. By age three a majority of Japanese children are in preschool. As Joseph Tobin and Merry White have separately pointed out, the Japanese classroom appears surprisingly chaotic. Japanese teachers think their most powerful tool is children's view of them as benevolent providers. They maintain order indirectly, by encouraging the children themselves to deal with classmates' disorder. Tobin details the case of Hiroki, a boy who liked to pull out his penis in class. Waves of social pressure wore him down, from the little girls who scolded him to the boys who would not play with him to the principal who gave him a good talking to. Teachers encouraged other children to take responsibility for correcting Hiroki's behavior, but he never sat in the corner for a "time out," as he would in the United States. Exclusion from the group is too severe a punishment in Japan.

Among the assumptions of Japan's system is a profound egalitarianism. There are no gifted or slow students. There is no attention deficit disorder. Everything is a matter of applied effort. As Tobin writes, the Japanese have a "distaste for the notion of inborn abilities" because "the identification of children as having unequal abilities would inevitably lead to an unequal allocation of educational effort, resources, and opportunity."[21] "Intelligence" is associated with morality, obedience, and good behavior. Teachers did not think Hiroki was brilliant and bored. If he were more intelligent, they reasoned, he would behave better.

The Japanese educational system is the site of an enveloping conformity. In addition to the concepts just mentioned, its tools are ridicule, shunning, and bullying by other children. Any deviations from the norm are noteworthy, and the student's mother is the all-important coach. She must include exactly the right foods in the *bento* (lunch) or her child will be teased. As Susan Chira has shown, citizens of Korean descent learn not to send Korean foods. By five or six, Japanese children have fully absorbed this system; they ridicule the accents, clothes, and habits of returning students whose parents have been posted overseas. Students of the same sex, age, and school form extremely tight coteries, which remain important for the rest of their lives.

Ninety-nine percent of Japanese children attend elementary school, and 98 percent finish high school, even though attendance is required only to age fifteen. Children attend school 240 days a year, compared with 180 in the United States and 160 in France. Until May 2002, Saturday was a full school day. The change to a five-day school week was widely denounced, and all schools are still open on Sunday for clubs and sports. The involvement of Japanese mothers in PTAs is legendary, and they are often at the school and in the classroom helping out. They purchase an average of three books or magazines per month per child. As work becomes more complex, some mothers attend *mamajuku,* private schools that keep them ahead of their children so they can tutor them. Homework starts in first grade, and Japanese high schoolers spend more time on homework than students in any country except Taiwan, according to Thomas Rohlen. There is a core curriculum that focuses on language and math early, adding social studies, English, and the arts later. Everyone takes calculus and learns two musical instruments. Everyone takes gym, and a high proportion of students are involved in sports. Female involvement in sports is exceptional, comparable with that of the United States and Scandinavia. While 65 percent of American high school seniors spend less than five hours a week on homework, only 8 percent of Japanese seniors do.

The momentum achieved by this system dominates Japanese life. Since there are no "gifted" or "slow" individuals, everything depends on personal effort. "Seven times fall down, eight times get up," say the Japanese. Class assignments are usually made to groups, called *han.* Chosen by the teacher, the *han* includes a range of individuals and a *hancho,* or leader, whose job is to plan the work, encourage the slower members, and report to the class (this is the origin of the English "honcho"). Though individual talent is noticed, it is the value of a member's contribution to the *han*'s work that weighs most heavily. This system is carried to the lab, the office, even the factory floor, where all workers can read blueprints and perform higher math.

The American occupation after World War II affected the Japanese educational system only slightly. Five years of English are taught, in deference to the need for a lingua franca. But a powerful national teachers' union and involved parents have protected the system from four recessions in fifteen years. This system does not "reflect" Japanese culture; it *is* Japanese culture—local and impervious. When the European Economic Community commissioned a report on Japanese education—"how do they do it?"—the study concluded that Japan was a nation of willing workaholics, "masochistic," and willing to live in "rabbit hutches" without complaint.

Interestingly, the French system starts out similarly. Infants are coddled and rarely punished. The French ideal, increasingly rare, is the stay-at-home mother, but many children of three or four are taken to the *crèche* or *école maternelle,* usually a warm, colorful place that seems to enact the educational theories of Jean Piaget. My children attended elementary schools in the Vaucluse department, none of which had formal music, art, or physical education facilities. At my daughter's school, gym class consisted of running lengths of the town's soccer field. Art and music were taught in the main classroom; all students had to buy and to master the recorder. My son's school in Avignon had a separate *cantine,* where hot daily lunches were cooked by unionized culinary workers, but at my daughter's in the village of Lourmarin hot lunches were prepared by parent volunteers and served outside in good weather, or in the *rez chausée* in bad.

The French teacher reigns supreme in the classroom. Until 1998 parents had no legal right to enter their children's classrooms, unless requested by a teacher. When I attended the first parents' night that year, several people remarked that they had not been inside the school building since they attended classes there. Students were separated by sex for education until the mid-1970s. Schools are officially nondenominational but observe all Catholic holidays.

The French teacher does not orchestrate social conformity, however, but disciplines verbally. At the extreme she or he will call a student an *idiot,* an epithet likely to be repeated on the playground or to parents, and thus widely feared. Almost as bad are *bête* and *crétin.* Parents rarely use these words with their own children, instead doting on *sage* (wise), as in the often heard "Soi sage" (be good). But the teacher's authority to use harsh language is unchallenged. So too is his or her power to designate exceptional or slow students. France is, according to Hofstede, among the highest "power distance" societies in Europe, once run by royalty and since then by equally distant authority figures whose power one would never question. When I attended that parents' night, the teacher actually said, "At your homes, you rule. But in this room I rule." The parents nodded their heads in agreement.

Unlike the Japanese teacher, who may have several group activities going on at once, with parent helpers assisting, the French teacher presents a single subject to the whole class. When my son attended fourth grade in Avignon, his whole class studied the French Revolution and Jeanne d'Arc. They read difficult texts, some written in the *passé simple.* They were required to write in ink on block, not lined, paper. Math problems had to be solved in neat grids on lined paper in ink. Presentation was very important. Geometric drawing, using a compass, was another aspect of the fourth-grade curriculum; students were to render three-dimensional drawings of cubes, cylinders, and pyramids.

When French students enter *collège* (junior high school in the United States), studies become more difficult and an inegalitarian weeding out begins. The French do not recognize attention deficit disorder either, and they posit a degree of *génie* (genius) as the base of a child's abilities. The French are more disciplined than Americans about effort and practice, but *génie* is not something one develops. This view, combined with the end of mandatory attendance at fifteen, persuades many students, particularly from immigrant families, to drop out after *collège. Lycée* (high school) is quintessentially academic. It does not offer auto mechanics, home economics, ceramics, typing, or industrial arts. Newer *lycées* have physical education, but most female students contrive to avoid active participation. The lack of school sports for women is in striking contrast to the Japanese and American systems.

Those who continue on face the BAC, a national graduation test. The BAC is legendary, rivaling the Japanese university entrance exam. A nationwide, government-sponsored exam, the BAC takes place over several days and covers many subjects. Today there are several versions of the BAC, but they retain the commonality of being more philosophical and more dependent on written expression, even written neatness, than exams in the United States or Japan. Students headed for the same profession will answer the same questions in Brest, Strasbourg, Marseilles, or even in Dakar. Years later, people who took the exam in the same year find themselves discussing their answers. The BAC is not only the capstone of the French secondary education system, but a unifying national experience, so successful that versions have been exported to other European nations, to the underdeveloped world (where the French *lycée* system is sometimes the only real education), and to the United States, under the rubric "international BAC."

In the schoolyard, French education is also different. French students do not wear uniforms like the Japanese. They aim for the casual look, but there are no sweatpants, and the beauty standard is high. There is more racial mixing than in the United States: students of "Magreb" origin who make it to *lycée* are more socially accepted. Asians are also well integrated, Africans less so. Teachers do not generally interfere in fights or disputes, even though the schoolyard is a domain of petty theft, lying, and *tricher* (cheating). This reinforces a traditional French distinction between public, institutional behavior and private behavior.

There are few sports at *lycée,* and nothing remotely resembling Japanese baseball or American football for school spirit. Rather France's gifted soccer, basketball, swimming, and track stars all develop through private clubs. Because athletics is early disconnected from the high school scene, the "jock" does not really exist. Events like the *randonnée,* the school field trip, become more central than "the big game." In good weather, teachers take students on walking visits to museums or historic sites. In Avignon, my son went to the Palais des Papes. In the village of Lourmarin my daughter's trips were walks in the countryside during which local plants such as *tilleul* and *menthe* were gathered. This breaks up the strict age group cohorts that exist in the Japanese and American systems, for there is constant interaction across age groups. It also reinforces the weekend practice of *se ballader,* or walking about, and the intense intra-France tourism of the French.

The French school year contrasts strikingly to the American and Japanese. Students attend school all day Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday, and half days on Wednesday and Saturday. The French explain that the half days are necessary so that children can recover from the intensity of the two previous days; officially, the Catholic Church is supposedly providing religious instruction on Wednesday afternoons. After the third grade the school day begins at 8 a.m. and ends at 5 p.m. However the lunch or recess break is two hours, and there are usually two thirty-minute or longer breaks, so the school day is only six hours long, like the American one. School begins around September 6, and there are long vacations for Toussaint, Christmas, Easter, and numerous saints' days and national holidays. The net effect of this calendar is a rhythm of intense effort followed by frequent vacations. This calendar meshes with the French life-style of frequent short vacations to *la campagne* or *la mer.*

The idea of months upon months of uninterrupted hard work is utterly foreign.

Despite quirks and dissent, the French education system is enormously popular, and it has been exported all over the world. French students not only *do well* in foreign universities but in the world job market. French engineering, business, and medicine rank with the best. Globalization has not changed or even nicked the quality or reputation of the French education system. And it has in no way "Americanized."

Work

One would expect work patterns to change drastically because of globalization. As far as point-of-sale scanners and cash machines go, we'll see in chapter 3 that work has changed. But *ways* of working and *attitudes* toward work have proved remarkably resilient. In separate surveys of thousands of subjects worldwide, Inglehart and Hofstede reveal just how culturally embedded "work" remains. "Scarcity has prevailed throughout most of history," writes Inglehart, but then "industrial society developed the belief that scarcity could be alleviated by individual achievement and economic growth."[22] New value systems arose, with shifts in attitudes toward "power distance" and "uncertainty avoidance."

> The root *cause* of the Postmodern value shift has been the gradual withering away of value systems that emerged under conditions of scarcity, and the spread of security values among a growing segment of the publics of these societies. This, in turn, grows out of the unprecedented high levels of subjective well-being that characterize the publics of advanced industrial society, as compared with those of earlier societies. In advanced industrial societies, most people take survival for granted. Precisely *because* they take it for granted, they are not aware of how profoundly this supposition shapes their worldview.[23]

But even as scarcity abates, the attitudes that it shaped endure, as Hofstede showed (see fig. 2). In general the "small power distance," "weak uncertainty avoidance" cultures have prospered (Denmark, Sweden, Ireland, Britain) and the "large power distance," "strong uncertainty avoidance" cultures have stagnated (Panama, Greece, Guatemala).

In both Inglehart's and Hofstede's emplotments, Japan and France share some of the latter qualities, but they have done well. Their stan-

TABLE 4

Hours Worked in the Industrialized World

Nation	Annual Hours Worked	Weekly Hours Worked	Number of 40-Hour Weeks / Year
United States	1,979	38	49.5
Japan	1,842	35	46.0
Canada	1,767	34	44.0
Britain	1,719	33	43.0
Germany	1,573	28	39.3
France	1,556	27	39.0

SOURCE: Steven Greenhouse, "U.S. Growth Industry: Workdays," *International Herald Tribune*, September 3, 2001.

dards of living are close to that of the United States, making a comparison of their work habits interesting.

As shown in table 4, Americans lead the industrialized world in average annual hours worked, at 1,979 hours. The Japanese are second at 1,842 annual hours. The French are farther down. On average Americans worked three and a half more weeks than the legendary Japanese in 2000. We might suppose that if vacation and holidays were added to the right-hand column, the figure would total fifty-two. Two and a half weeks of vacation and holidays sounds right for Americans. But do Germans have nearly thirteen weeks of leisure? The Germans take four weeks in the summer, plus a week at Christmas and another at Easter. With assorted minor holidays (workers can take off their birthdays in many cultures), the German total is closer to seven weeks, like the French. Another difference is that government-imposed work weeks of thirty-five to thirty-eight hours, designed to spread the available work around and especially to create entry level jobs for young people, strictly limit the hours spent in shop, office, or factory. Attempts to increase the hours worked per week, due to globalization, were among the reasons the French voted against the EU constitution in 2005, according to analysts.

The U.S. worker is more productive, generating $54,870 in 2000 (in constant 1990 dollars). The Belgian worker was second at $53,370. However, if we look at productivity per hour worked, the French worker leads ($33.71) followed by the Belgian ($32.98) and then the American ($32.84). The French worker is 2.6 percent more productive per hour. This is not the impression of Americans visiting Paris and waiting for café service, of course. But if we think back on the *lycée* system, with its weekly rhythm of intense work followed by rest, its relegation of sports and extracurricular activities to the side, its mechanical drawing, and the fear of being labeled an *idiot*, we get some clues. The French education system required conformity to French standards of presentation, style, and hierarchy, but that simplifies work life—the result is greater productivity per hour with more free time. However there are side effects. There is not much part-time work available to youth, unemployment is often high (10–12%), and good jobs are hard to find. But when people find them, they tend to stay, so that average job tenure is much longer than in the United States. Thus less training has to go on, and employees know their work in greater detail.

What about the legendary Japanese? In Japan, part-time jobs for young people are plentiful; every high school and college student seems to have one. Most of these jobs are in retail sales, food, and service, but other students tutor or give music, language, *ikebana*, or computer lessons. None of these jobs has benefits, and most produce only minor income. Yet the Japanese hold in high regard students who perform well in *arbeito*. Countless aphorisms tell the benefits of early hard work, even failure, so that one appreciates later success. Many aspects of these jobs are highly ritualistic, such as always arriving on time, addressing customers in the appropriate *keigo*, providing fast service, knowing details of the items for sale, and standing motionlessly at a work station when unoccupied. To watch these young cashiers, waiters, or gas station employees during a peak period is to witness total focus.

The intensity of this experience prepares the young Japanese for the experience of finding and holding an adult job. Government statistics placed the jobless rate at 5 percent in 2001, when I lived in Japan, but that was meaningless, since part-timers were counted as "employed," while the underclass of *kojiki* (beggars) and *homoresu no hito* (homeless people) were not counted at all. Figured on American principles, unemployment in 2001 was probably 10 to 12 percent. Obtaining a real job is difficult and time consuming, a process that college students begin in their junior year. They change their hair, their clothes, and their habits, disappearing on two- and three-day interview trips to distant cities.

The first real job is a momentous event, comparable with the university entrance exams or marriage. Although all Japanese know that lifetime employment is *not* guaranteed today, the enormous investment in finding the job and the structure of the job itself make staying with it the logical thing to do. Most people remain at their first jobs for fifteen to twenty years. In Japan I knew a young man, Kenji, who had just found a place in a bank. His boss chose a residence for him, which was a dorm where he roomed with three other new bank employees. He rose at 6 a.m. to study banking for an hour before work. He arrived at work by train at 8 a.m. He had no desk. All day long he stood at the beck and call of senior employees, who assigned him to empty ashtrays, to retrieve files from the basement, or to check long lists of figures. He worked until 6 p.m. Two nights a week he practiced with the company soccer team for two hours. Other nights he was required to go out eating and drinking with his seniors, often until 11 p.m. or midnight. At dinner he was required to sing songs and to explain company policies, and ridiculed if he made mistakes. After two years, he would become a junior-grade official with a desk, joining the upward march on the salary scale, which is rigidly geared to age and years on the job. Having made such an investment, he would be loath to change jobs.

When I visited his bank, workers sat at desks side by side and facing one another, more than fifty in one room, without partitions or anything between them except computer screens. Cubicles would have been luxurious. Personal effects were limited, the work space was cramped, and customs—who makes the *ocha,* who greets visitors, who opens or closes the office, even who goes first through a door—were rigidly observed. Progress through the ranks, the minor perks that come with it, are very visible to a work force that ranges from twenty-one-year-olds to retirees of sixty or sixty-five. This behavior is highly *inefficient,* and Japan's banks, unlike its auto companies, are not known for their streamlining. Like society, the bank was highly structured, and my young friend felt that he *must* reproduce that structure. Service to the company became almost a filial obligation, and he even adopted the archaic habit of his elders of referring to the bank as *san,* the honorific suffix for humans.

In Japan productivity at work is achieved through a culturally reproduced atmosphere of group-think and artificial scarcity. Japanese banks are not limited by space; they could have large offices. They don't need to maintain written files in the basement; everything could be on line. They don't need dorms, soccer teams, or nightly dinners. "Organisms," Richard Lewontin has written, "in the course of their evolution as a species do not *adapt* to environments; they construct them. They are not simply *objects* of the laws of nature, altering themselves to the inevitable, but active *subjects* transforming nature according to its laws."[24] The culture of Japanese banking explains Japan's ATMs, which are open only from 7 a.m. to 11 p.m.—that's when there are suitable things to buy.

In contrast to the Japanese, according to both Inglehart and Hofstede, the Americans and the French are "postmodern" in their work culture, but in different ways. Take AOL America and AOL France. According to the *New York Times,* AOL America epitomizes geek chic, from the work attire of sandals, ponytails, tie-dyed T-shirts, and backpacks to the desks covered with Legos and Star Wars figurines. AOL's American programmers eat Szechwan, sashimi, and microwaved burritos at work, are used to a very low power distance, tend to be purists (Unix, C++, Apple), and expect not only complete freedom to innovate, but that their inventions will drive the entire business and that they will be rewarded generously. They will work twenty-eight hours straight, or knock off after four hours to go surf.

But at AOL France the programmers wear suits or sport coats. They start at 8 a.m. and leave exactly at 6 p.m. They all take the same lunch hour and eat at the same table in the cafeteria. Jacques Sireude, technical product manager for AOL France, says, "The job is a job. We are here to work. You are not at home."[25] Earlier Sireude worked for a software firm in Santa Barbara, California, where he went body boarding when he finished a project. "It was very cool," he said. "Developers were at the same level as product managers—even the director." But he moved back to France because he preferred French social customs, the emphasis on more and longer vacations, and the quality of life outside work. According to Steven Riou, an AOL manager in Europe, the work habits of software developers are different in each nation. Fine business suits, good haircuts, and first impressions are the norm in Italy. In Germany "major technical decisions will be taken over by marketing people—even if we know the limitations of the problem. They just want it to work." German software developers feel less connection between their work and the company's direction or profits, he said. British software developers were very reserved, rarely asking questions, and typically lifting only a finger when they wished to speak.

Land Use

Local land use has been surprisingly resistant to globalization. The persistence of historic agrarian patterns, when farming is in decline and cities are growing, is impractical and irrational. But land use patterns are anchored not only in economic stages of development or physical needs but in cultural ideologies.

The American suburban model of land use has been thoroughly documented by urban historians. It developed out of independent, individual transportation, beginning with the horse. Then streetcars and auto-