

 [IP--Philotimo by Nick Brown](#) by Louise S. [2015, Jan 23]

Hello everybody,

My intercultural interest is principally in the differences within "Western" culture, or perhaps between specific Western cultures. Sometimes I find the term "Western" is used as a synonym for "White middle-class people, probably American", as contrasted with some more "exotic" cultures, as if the differences between people in "Western" societies were too insignificant to be worth bothering about. Having lived for more than 30 years in "Western" cultures other than the one I grew up in, I suggest that in fact we "Westerners" still have a lot to learn about the differences between us!

On this subject, I have recently been asked to become involved in a project which will revolve around the Greek concept of "philotimo". Like many comparable ideas this is hard to describe, but perhaps it's OK to describe it as a way of living, with an emphasis on honour and "doing the right thing" (I'm still learning!). I would be interested in hearing from anyone who has experience of "philotimo" in a psychological context.

Kind regards,
Nick Brown
Strasbourg, France
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 [Comment by Peter Smith](#) by Louise S. [2015, Jan 23]

Dear Nick,

I am not aware of any academic studies of philotimo, but it was discussed by the Greek-born psychologist Harry Triandis in some of his books about individualism and collectivism. I have also touched on it in my textbook Understanding Social psychology across Cultures. I see it as having a good deal in common with other southern European concepts such as Spanish pundonor, and concepts of honour in general. The Turkish social psychologist Ayse Uskul has done several studies of honour in Turkey. I am attaching a recent paper of hers that refers to much of the earlier work in that area.

Best wishes,

Peter

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 [uskul honour CE accepted](#)

 [Comment by Zhipeng \(Simon\) Gao](#) by Louise S. [2015, Jan 24]

In case this is useful to some, here is an article I came across last year that dovetails with Nick's comment on the essence of the western culture:

Delineating Groups for Cultural Comparisons in a Multicultural Setting: Not All Westerners Should Be Put Into the Same Melting Pot

Cheers,
Zhipeng

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 [Delineating Groups for Cultural Comparisons in a Multicultural Setting](#)

 [Comment by Hostetler, Andrew](#) by Louise S. [2015, Jan 26]

Thanks for this, Louise! I taught a course in Greece last summer and we spent a lot of time talking about this!

Andy

 [Comment by Nick Brown](#) by Louise S. [2015, Jan 28]

Hi Louise,

Please pass on, via the group, my thanks to all who responded. I have tried to reply individually to each e-mail, but following my recent enforced absence due to illness, my inbox is somewhat chaotic at the moment!

With yesterday's election results in Greece, it's a fascinating time for me to be involved in this project. I will report back on anything of interest to the task force.

Best,
Nick

PS. For those who could not access the paper sent by Zhipeng (Simon) Gao, here is a link that works:
(<http://www.spresearch.ca/bgiguere/publications>)

 [Comment by Zhipeng \(Simon\) Gao](#) by Louise S. [2015, Apr 05]

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Cheers,
Zhipeng

 [Comment by Nick Brown](#) by Louise S. [2015, Apr 05]

Hallo Simon,

Thanks for that link - I was able to get the PDF from academia.edu and it looks like an interesting read.

Best,
Nick