

# Cultural Adjustment - U.S. and Classroom Culture



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# Your Experiences with Cultural Adjustment

- Changing schools
- Visiting family
- Getting a part-time job
- Starting a new hobby
- Participating in online classes
- Others?

Try this...

# The Difficulties in Cultural Adjustment

- Communication

The process of making meaning using verbal and nonverbal cues

How easy is this process?

- Intercultural Communication

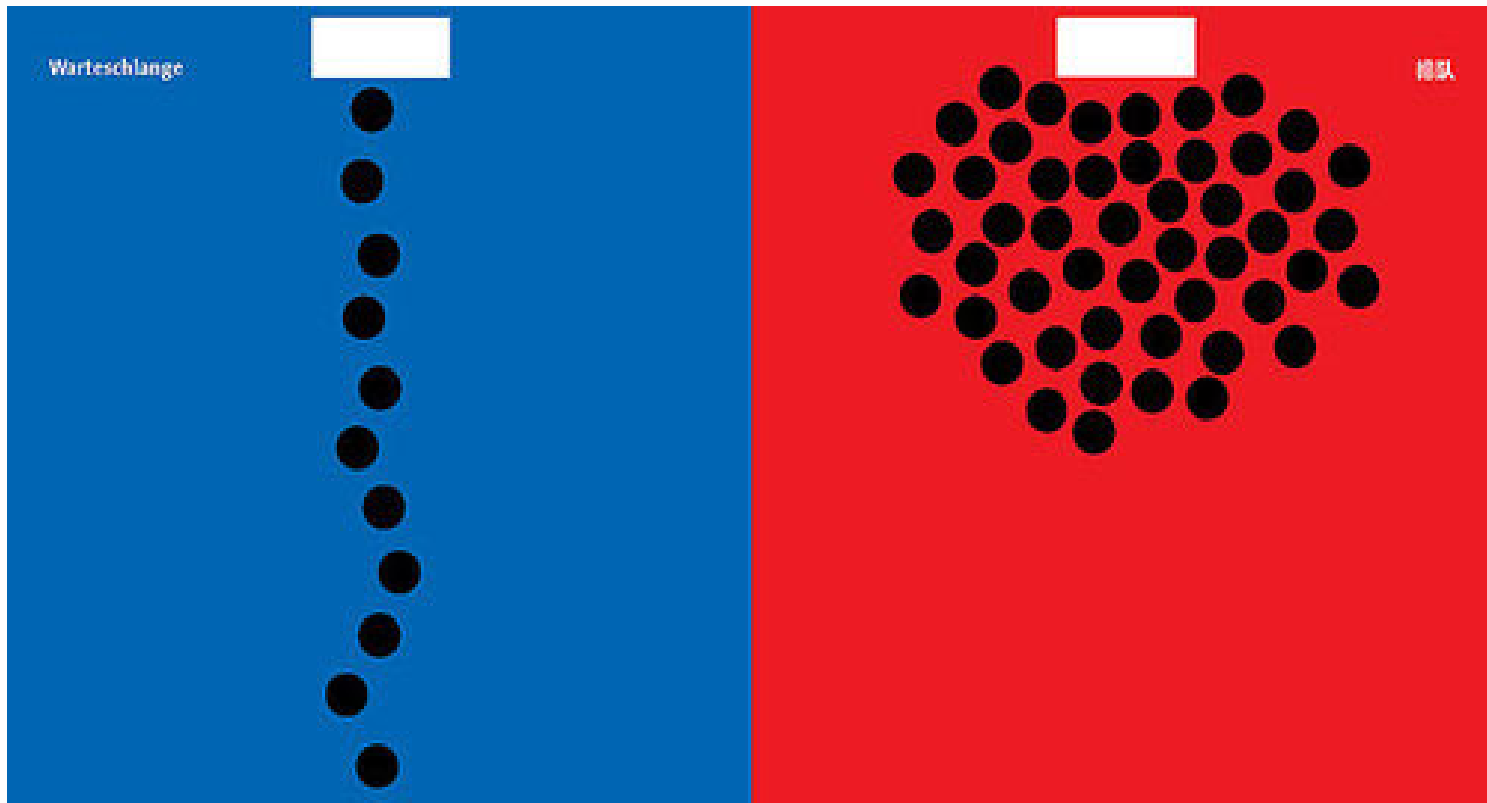
Two or more people, *with different life experiences*, communicating (trying to make meaning)

# Functions of Culture

- Culture helps us to categorize the world around us.
- Culture gives meaning to our observations.
- Culture provides a lens through which we interpret actions, events and interactions.
- Culture allows us to make meaning out of events or give meaning to interactions.

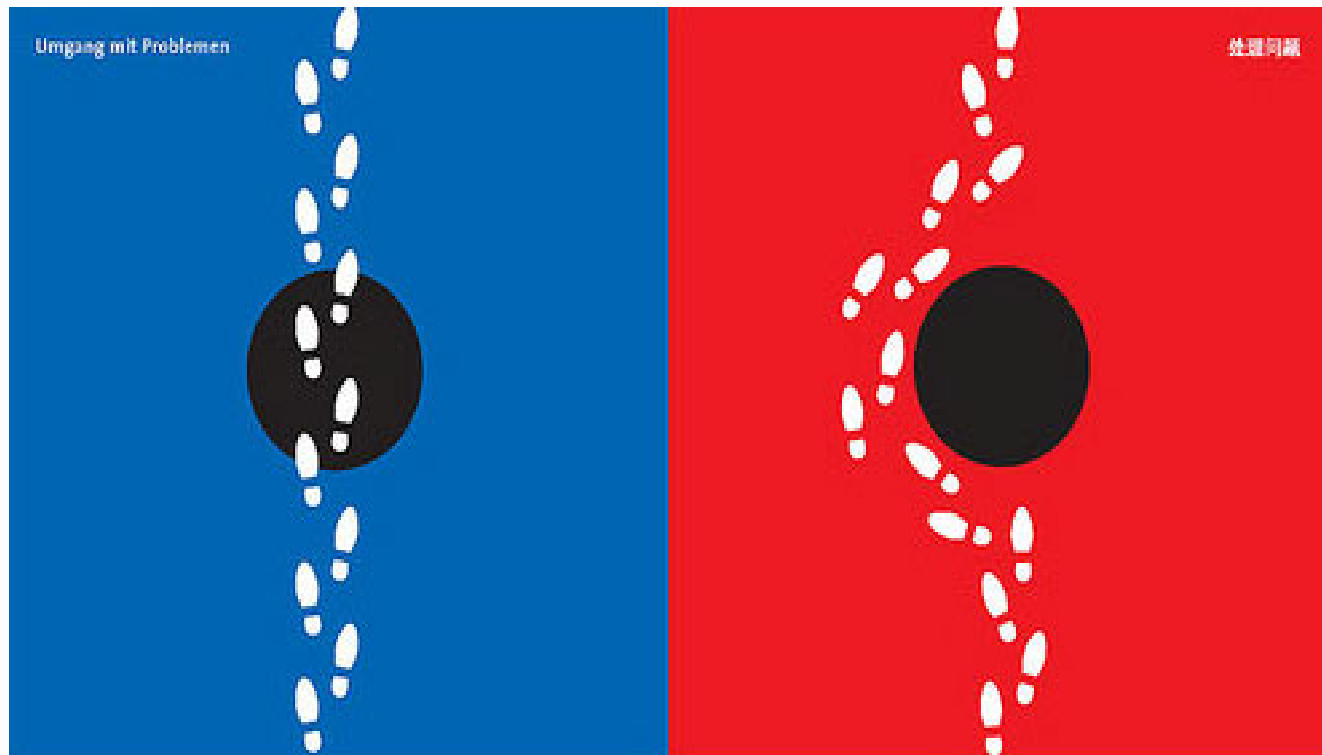
# Line Culture

(Professor Yang Liu, Berlin Technical Art University)



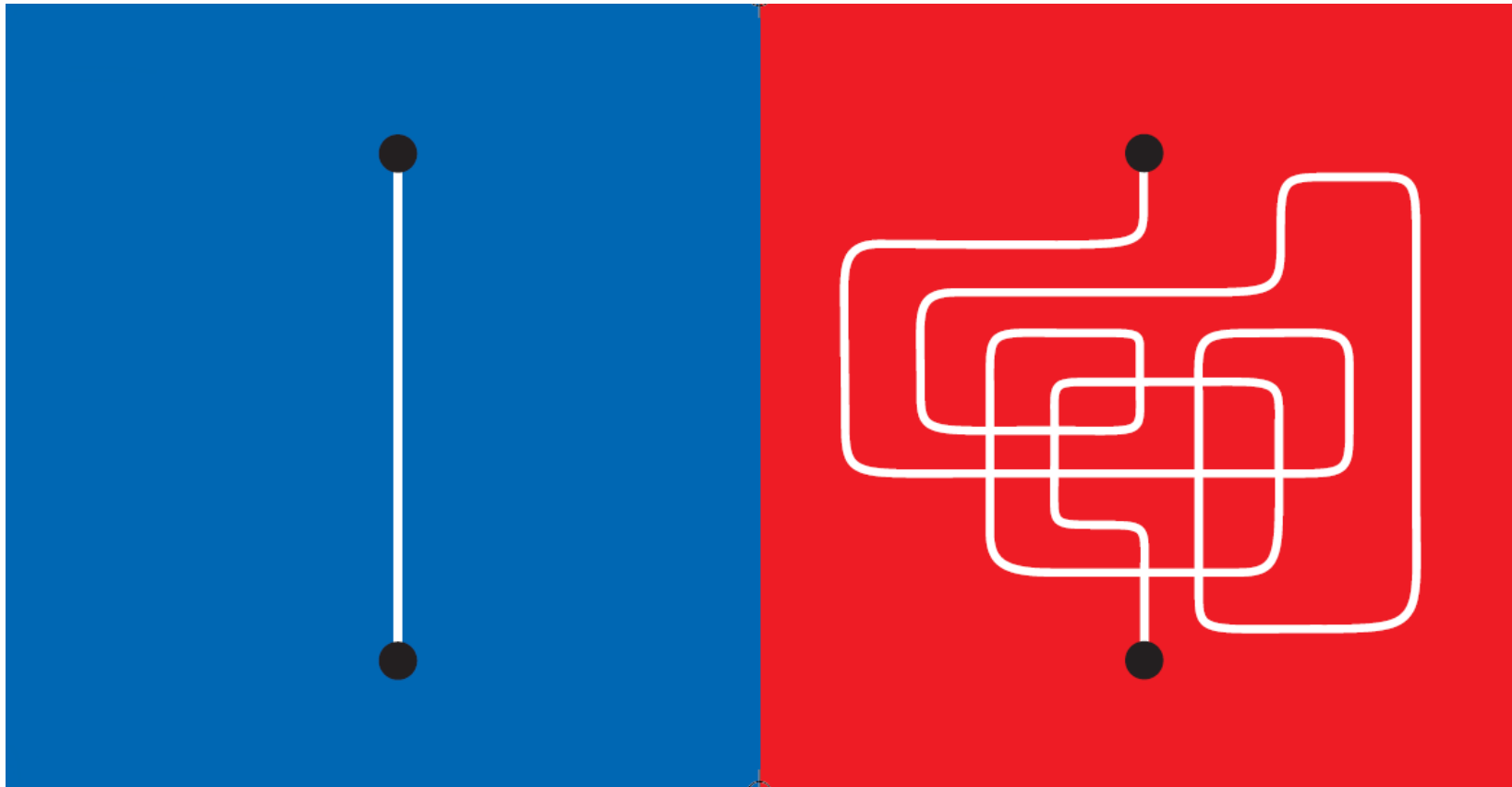
# Problem Solving Approach

(Professor Yang Liu, Berlin Technical Art University)



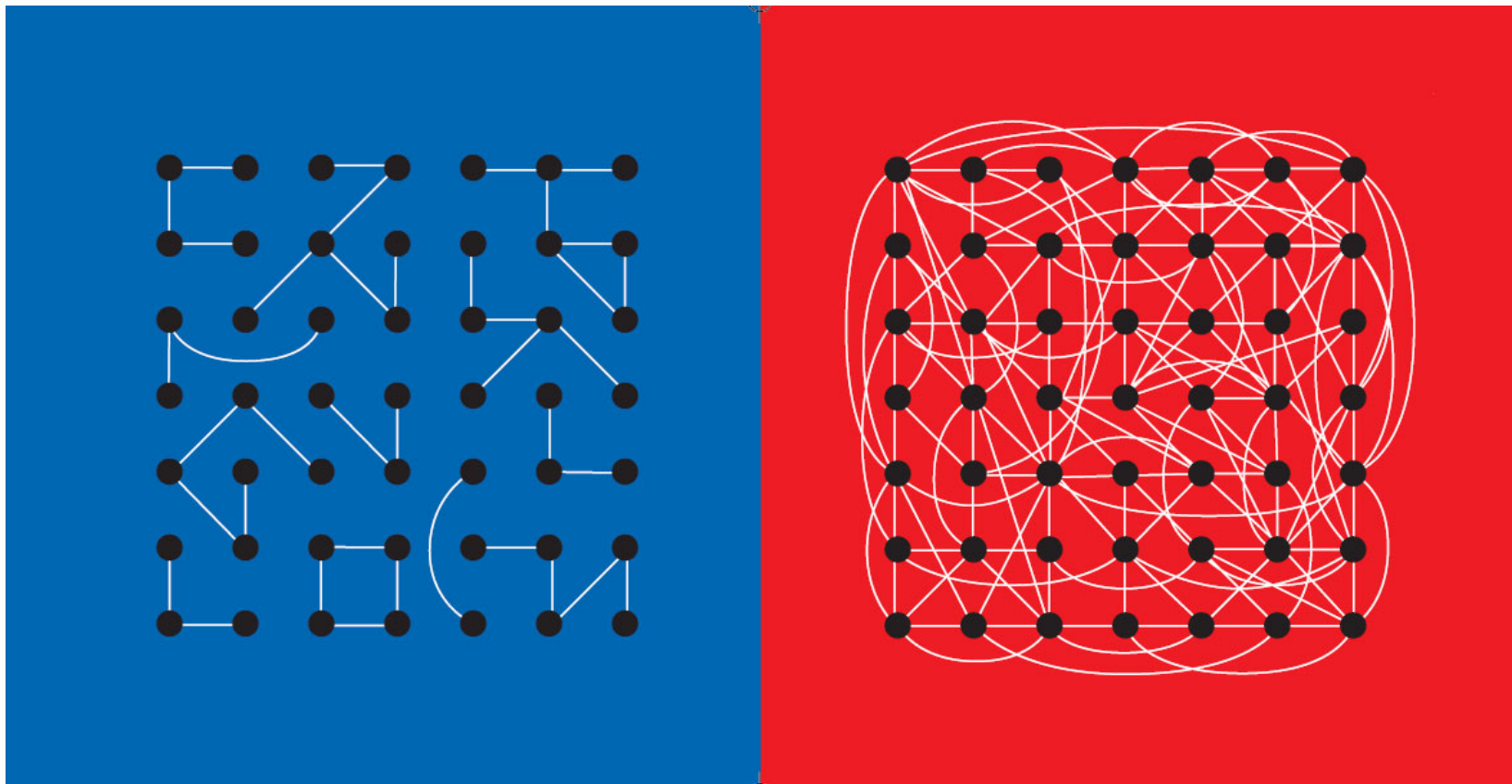
# Self Expression

(Professor Yang Liu, Berlin Technical Art University)



# Social Connections

(Professor Yang Liu, Berlin Technical Art University)

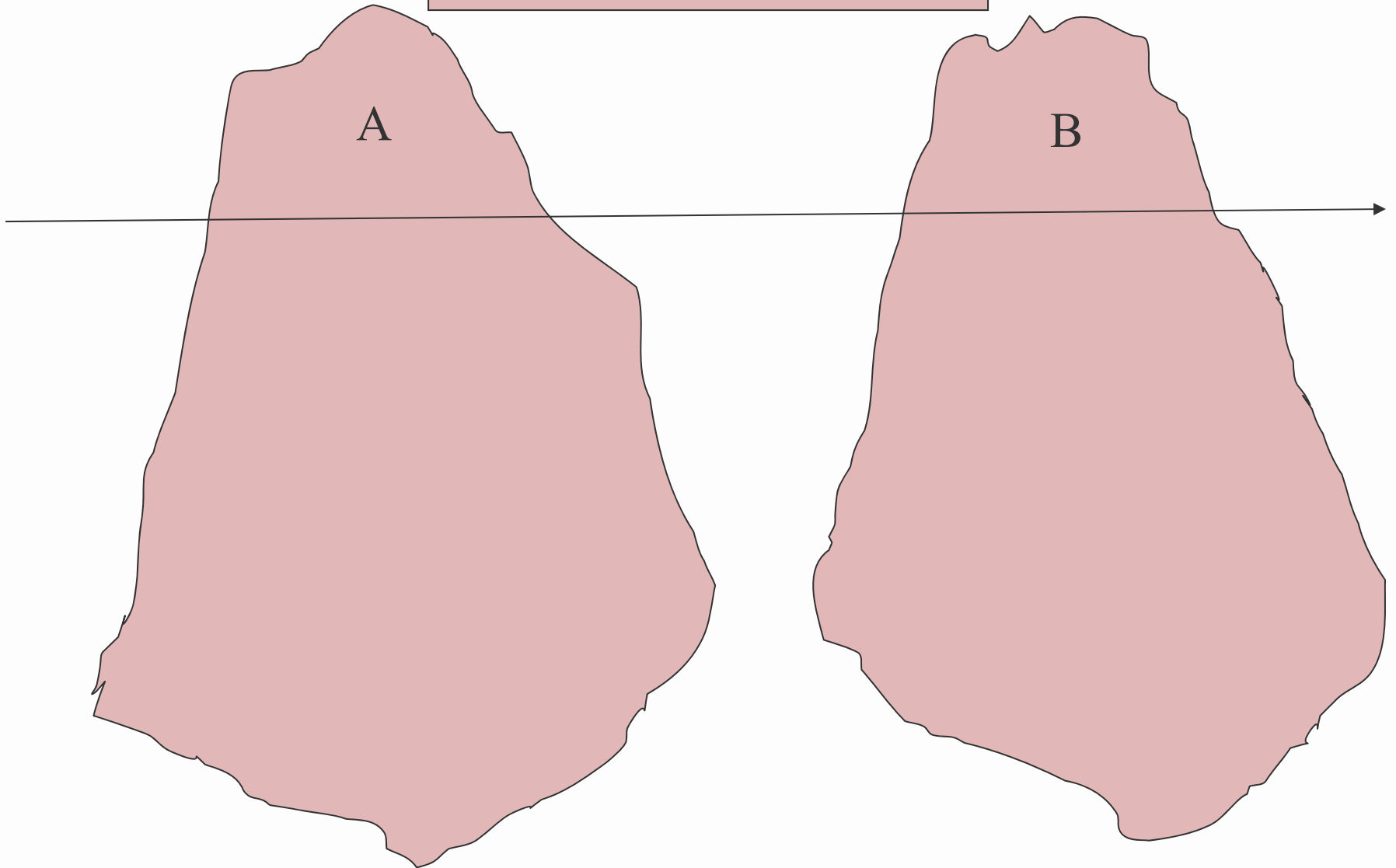




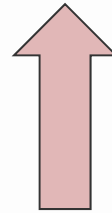
Visible Behaviors

A

B



# Values



History

Geography

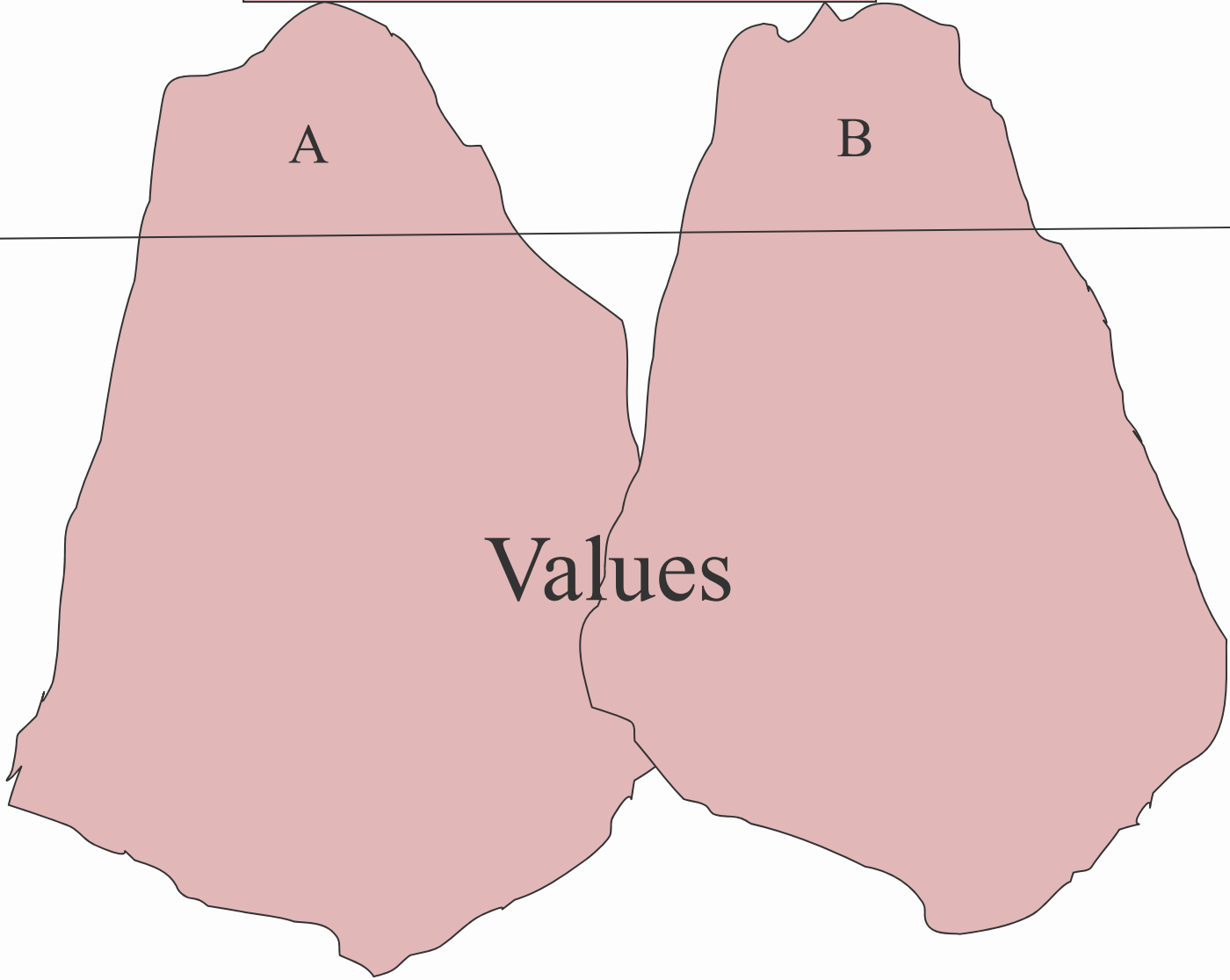
Environment

Visible Behaviors

A

B

Values

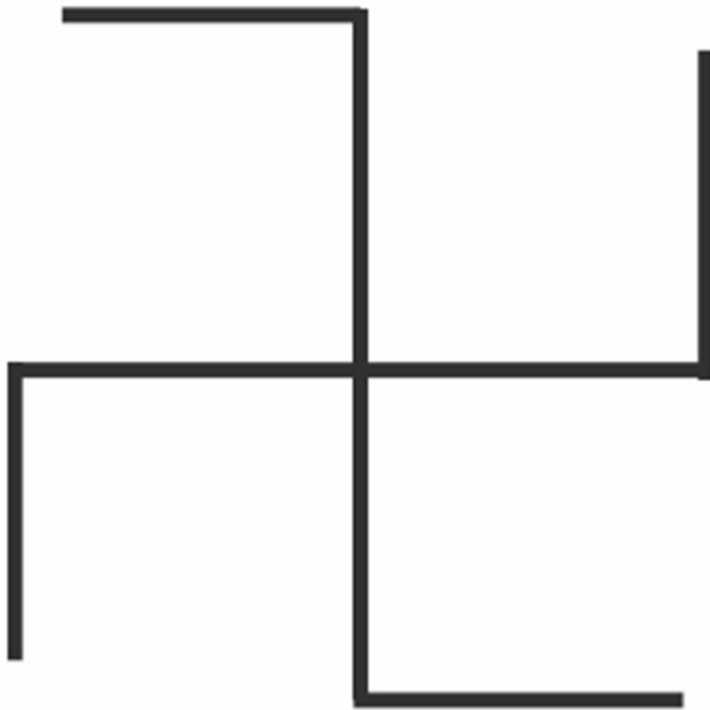


# FACTS THAT IMPACT CROSS-CULTURAL INTERACTION

- Pure communication is impossible, as we all bring prior experience to the communication process.
  
- We communicate in many ways, and much of our communication is unconscious.
  
- We see what we expect to see.
  
- We don't see what we don't expect to see.
  
- We all perceive things differently.



What is this symbol?



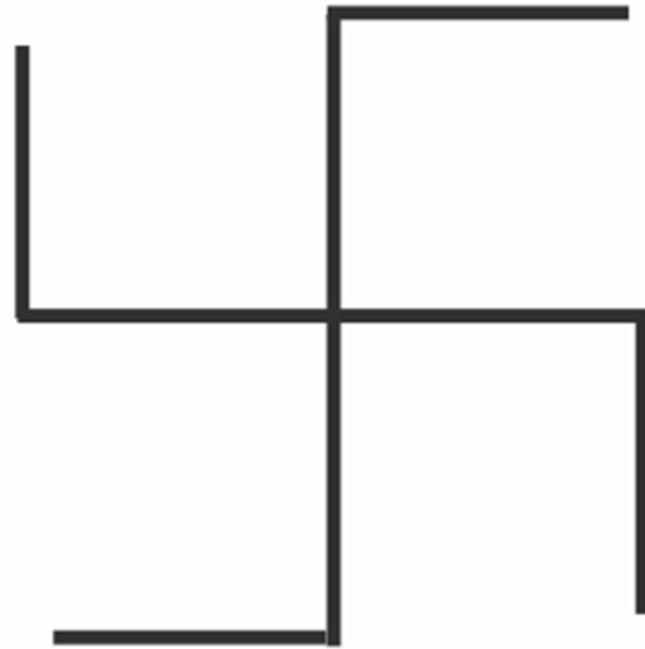
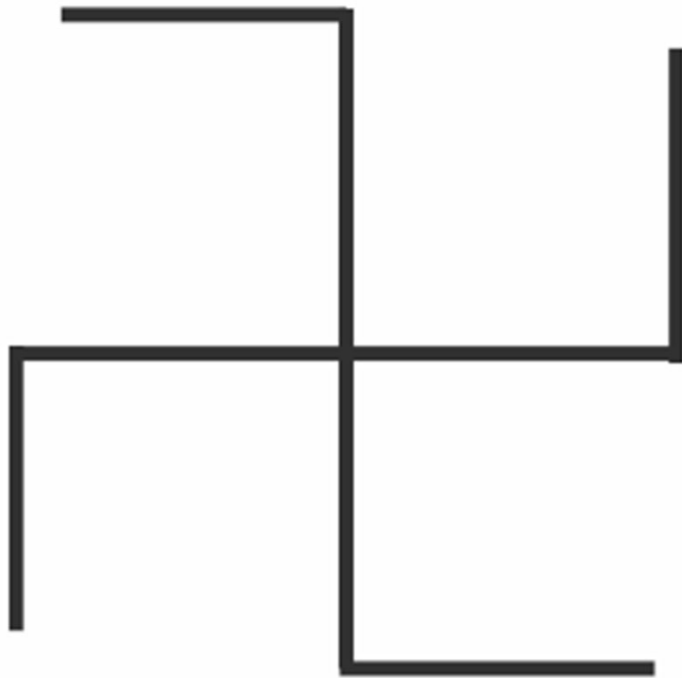
What is this symbol?



# What is this symbol?

**A holy symbol in  
Buddhism, Hinduism**

**A symbol of the Nazi Party**



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E We all perceive things differently.





# Stereotypes versus Generalizations

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## Generalizations

- Chinese people are group oriented.
- American people are individualistic.

## Stereotypes

- You are Chinese; therefore, you are group oriented.
- You are American; therefore, you cannot work in a team.

# U.S. Classroom Culture

Who are your teachers?

- Professors
- Instructors
- Graduate Teaching Assistants
- Undergraduate Teaching Assistants
- Each other~

# U.S. Classroom Culture

## **Student Centered**

- Faculty as coaches
- Students participate
- Lecture, discussion, small groups, experiential activities
- Students present novel ideas

## **Teacher Centered**

- Faculty as experts only
- Students listen
- Lecture-oriented
- Students show learning through memorized information

*As a class member*

## What do you need to do?

- Be an active learner
  - be prepared
    - consider your reading load
  - be ready to ask questions; ask “why?”
  - be ready to give your opinion
    - Your perspective as an international student is important and interesting!
  - be a good observer (passive learning skill)

# Let's practice

Question:



- ✧ What are the pros and cons of 8:00 am classes?

*As a student, generally,*

## What do you need to do?

- Get to know your instructors
- Become familiar with what is expected on exams
- Become familiar with the type of writing that is expected
- Become familiar with expectations of *Academic Integrity*
- Keep in touch with your academic advisor
- Take advantage of resources and opportunities

# Getting ready...

<https://www.cnn.com/travel/article/laura-sara-australia-uk-twitter-romance/index.html>

Back in Australia, Laura (from the UK) was excited to settle into life in Sydney, but she also struggled with *homesickness*. “Moving to the other side of the world was quite difficult,” she says now. The couple worked together to put mechanisms in place to make Laura’s relocation easier. They *established a weekly Skype call* with Laura’s mother. They set up *family group chats*. They made sure future vacations and trips were always in *the calendar*. And as Laura started working, she *slowly found a support network*.



**AAE 291**  
Adjusting to  
**Academic English and Culture**

In this class, you will review:

- How to read a syllabus
- How to manage your reading load
- Note-taking strategies
- What type of writing is required and when
- What types of tests you might encounter
- How to be an active learner
- What is your role in team projects
- How to continue building your academic vocabulary
- What is the university expectation regarding *Academic Integrity*

# ESL Lab

B230 Wells Hall; [elc.msu.edu/esl-lab/](http://elc.msu.edu/esl-lab/)

The ESL Lab provides English language support to international students whose native language is not English.

We can help you to

- Understand class assignments
- Plan and organize your essays
- Revise your essays
- Incorporate source materials effectively
- Improve the grammar and vocabulary in your writing or presentations