

# Culture And Beyond: A comparative study on the “valency” of Japanese and Vietnamese\*

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## ABSTRACT

The purpose of the present study was to compare Vietnamese and Japanese respondents regarding “valency” as defined by Wilfred Bion. To measure the respondents’ valency, a revised and abbreviated version of the Reaction to Group Situation Test (RGST) was administrated separately to the two ethnic groups (136 Japanese and 300 Vietnamese students). The results revealed some significant differences. However, these differences were, in general, not qualitative but quantitative differences. That is, the two ethnic groups were found to display similar reactions to group situations, with some differences regarding the way (actively, emotionally, or cognitively) they react to the stimulus-situation. No one of these differences were found to be influenced solely by the respondents’ culture. Some of them were the result of the separate effect of both the individual valency and culture (*fight* and *flight* stimulus-situation). However, it was found that the effect of the former (valency) was more important than the latter’s one. Moreover, the quantitative difference regarding *pairing* and *dependency* stimulus-situation was the result of the interactive effect of both culture and valency.

The present study is based on two fundamental works: Bion’s clinical work and his experiences with therapy groups, and the large number of empirical studies conducted by Thelen et al. (1954), and Stock and Thelen (1958).

Like his predecessors Freud and Lewin, Bion (1968) developed a unique group theory as a result of experiences with small groups of neurotic patients at the Tavistock Clinic. This theory has a significant influence on the study of group behavior and individual behavior within the group.

### The Concepts of Basic Assumptions and Valency

Central to Bion’s theory is the concept of *basic assumption*. According to Bion

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(1968), whenever a group is born it has only two alternatives: to function as a *work group* or a *basic assumption group*. In the former case, the group members appear to be united around a real or “basic task”. In this case the group is characterized by a high sense of reality, cooperation among its members and, therefore, growth and high achievements.

On the other hand, a group functioning as a basic assumption group appears to be dominated or determined by an underlying common assumption. It behaves “as if” its members shared a common unconscious (unspoken) assumption by which the group behavior and culture are influenced and directed. Although very often a fantasy, the group behaves “as if” this assumption is real, rational, and agreed upon by every member. Bion referred to this fantasy as “basic assumption”, and described three different basic assumptions, namely, the basic assumptions of *dependency* (baD), basic assumption of *fight/flight* (baF), and basic assumption of *pairing* (baP). Other researchers have added new basic assumptions (see, Anzieu, 1984; Turquet, 1985; Lion & Gruenfeld, 1993), but they will not be discussed in the study, for this goes far beyond the scope of this study.

The other core concept in Bion’s group dynamics is the concept of *valency* with which the concept of basic assumption is closely related. Discussing the relationship between the group basic assumption and the role played by each group member, Bion (1968) argued that participation in a basic assumption “*requires no training, experience, or mental development*” (p.153). All what a member needs to participate in the group basic assumption is the *valency* corresponding to the basic assumption which dominates the group activity at a certain period of its history. Initially a word borrowed from physics, valency is used by Bion (1968) as expressing “*a capacity for instantaneous involuntary combination of one individual with another for sharing and acting on a basic assumption*” (p.153). The word “combination” does not mean here that members consciously co-operate with each other, but implies rather that members unconsciously aim at the same emotional goals (dependency, fight/flight, or pairing). According to Bion, “*a group acting on basic assumption would need neither organization nor a capacity for co-operation*” (p.170). He considers *co-operation* as the counterpart of valency in the work group.

Moreover, valency can be defined in terms of nature and degree. That is, each person has a valency of a given nature or kind (dependency valency, fight/flight valency, or a pairing valency). As put by Bion (1968), a person “*can have... no valency only by ceasing to be, as far as mental function is concerned, human*” (p.116). There are individual differences in terms of the valency degree; depending of

his/her capacity for combination, a person can have a *high* or *low* valency. A person with a relatively low valency will be considered here as work-oriented, or as having a co-operation tendency (Ct).

The psychological and behavioral content of a given valency is similar to the content of its corresponding basic assumption. That is, a dependency valency (Dv) is characterized by a tendency to rely on others (group members, leader, etc). The Fight/flight valency includes fighting with others, drawing others (especially the leader) into fights, direct and indirect hostility, criticism, boredom, avoidance of conflict, withdrawal from the group activity, etc. (Hafsi, 1997). The most frequent expressions of pairing valency (Pv) is a tendency of inviting and appealing, and at the same time conveying and encouraging intimate and friendly interactions. Moreover, pairing is also characterized by a strong hope for a better group life, a strong expectation, and rather a futuristic and idyllic look at the here-and-now.

It should be noted that the author, based on the empirical work of Stock and Thelen (1958), prefers to divide the Fight/flight valency into Fight valency (Fv), and Flight valency (Flv), and deals with them separately (Hafsi, 1997). Because, although they are triggered by the same stimulus, that is, the fear of a fantastic enemy, they mobilize two different kinds of defence methods.

The results of research in group dynamics have taught us the fact that the group is not merely the sum of its members, but they did not shed light on how the passage from the individual to group takes place. In other words, these results can not tell us how a given member comes to combine with other members to constitute a group with its mind and culture. This lack of information concerning the individual-group relationship constituted a kind of "missing link" which Bion's concept of valency has helped us to restore.

### **Measuring Valencies: Introducing The RGST and the RGST-Ab**

Based on Bion's group theory, Thelen et al. (1954) conducted a series of studies at the National Training Laboratory in Group Development (NTL Institute) in Bethel. These studies resulted in the development of a battery of research methods, and a great amount of publications in the period from 1951 to 1958 (Stock & Thelen, 1958). To my knowledge, however, few studies only (Fransson, 1980; Armelius & Armelius, 1982; Karterud & Foss, 1989; Lion & Gruenfeld, 1993), have applied these methods since then.

One of these methods is the Reaction to Group Situation Test (RGST). This test is a sentence completion test composed of 44 items or stimulus-situations on which

the subject is expected to project his/her valency. Drawing from Bion, Thelen and his team conceived of group activity in terms of two axes: emotionality and work. Therefore, they constructed the RGST so that 28 of its 44 items (stimulus-situation) present the subject with a particular emotional (fight, flight, dependency, and pairing) or cooperation stimulus-situation. The subject is asked to write down what the actor (the group, a member, or two members) would do in the stimulus-situation. Then, with the exception of the general items, the content of all other items is scored on three dimensions: 1) acceptance of the situation conveyed by the stimulus-situation, 2) clarity of response, and 3) manner of response (see Hafsi, 1997 for more details).

Most of those who have used Thelen et al's research methods (including the RGST) have pointed out the difficulty in working with the original manuals (Karterud & Foss, 1989). That is also why the RGST was not used extensively (Hare, 1973; McGrath, 1984; Lion & Gruenfeld, 1993). Therefore, when using the original RGST, the author (Hafsi, 1996, 1997) also met with a number of difficulties that led him to develop a revised version of the test, referred to as the RGST Nara University Version (RGST-Nu). This version is characterized by a simpler scoring method. Unlike the original scoring method, the one developed by the author does not necessarily require an intensive clinical training.

As will be discussed later, using an abbreviated version of the RGST-Nu (RGST-Ab), the present study was conducted to investigate the similarities and differences, in terms of valencies between Japanese and Vietnamese subjects.

## METHOD

### Subjects:

A number of 136 Japanese students (Male=98, Female=38) and 300 Vietnamese students (Male=184, Female=116) participated in the study. The mean age was 19.4 years for the Japanese, and 20.6 for the Vietnamese. The subjects were administered the abbreviated version of the RGST-Nu (or RGST-Ab) during the class.

### Test Material:

Administering the RGST would have been ideal in this study. However, due to the lack of a Vietnamese version of RGST, this was not possible. Even if this was possible, it would have been very difficult, if not impossible, to translate all the RGST protocols of 300 Vietnamese subjects in Japanese, due to a lack of time and

soon available translators. Therefore, the author developed a less time-consuming version of RGST-Nu which also, except the translation of the items, does not require translation of the subjects' answers.

Based on previous studies (Hafsi, 1996, 1997), the authors selected from the RGST-Nu 10 items (2 for each valency and 2 for cooperation tendency) which had the highest response percentage to develop the RGST-Ab scale, indicated in Figure 1. As a response to the stimulus-situation described by each item, the subject were provided with 6 possibilities. The scale was designed so that point-1 represents the strongest agreement or identification, and point-6 the weakest agreement with the tendency (dependency, fight, pairing, Flight, and cooperation) the stimulus-situation is supposed to express. That is, if a subject answer by choosing the response indicated by point-1, he/she is considered as accepting strongly the tendency indicated in the stimulus-situation. The choice of point-6 indicates that the subject does not identify or have the tendency described in the stimulus-situation. The 6 possibilities of responding to each stimulus-situation are thus as follows: point-1: identifying with the tendency by resorting to action, point-2: identifying with the tendency by resorting to emotion; point-3: identifying cognitively with the tendency; point-4: not identifying with or rejecting ideally the tendency; point-5: not identifying with the tendency by resorting to emotion; point-6: not identifying with the tendency by resorting to action. The fact that responding by action (point-1) is considered as stronger than responding by emotion is based on the findings of previous studies (Hafsi, 1996, 1997).

#### **Procedure:**

Living in different countries (Hoh Chi Ninh City, Vietnam, and Nara City, Japan) the subjects were surveyed separately, using the same method. That is, the RGST-Ab questionnaire was distributed to the subjects, and the items were read one by one (allowing a 20-second interval between two items) by an assistant. As mentioned above, the subject were asked to choose as quickly as possible, one possible response to each stimulus-situation after the assistant has finished reading it. The completed questionnaires were returned at the end of the class. The results of the study were as follows.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

The first analysis consisted in analyzing the difference between Japanese and Vietnamese respondents in terms of valency distribution. However, only the data of

Figure 1. Description of the RGST-Ab Scale.

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| <p>1. Since Jack liked some members more than others, he</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. spent time (hang around) with them.</li><li>2. was happy.</li><li>3. thought about traveling with them.</li><li>4. started to think about his relationship with them.</li><li>5. was not happy about that.</li><li>6. left the group.</li></ol> <p>2. Together John and Fred</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. went out for dinner.</li><li>2. laughed altogether.</li><li>3. begun to think about restructuring the group.</li><li>4. realized that they can't stay together.</li><li>5. hate to be altogether.</li><li>6. stoped working together.</li></ol> <p>3. When he realized he was angry at Phil, Charles</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. warned him.</li><li>2. got more angry at him.</li><li>3. thought about asking him to leave the group.</li><li>4. thought it was not good.</li><li>5. was disappointed with himself.</li><li>6. tried to make it up with him.</li></ol> <p>4. When Jim realized quite a few people were taking digs at each other, he</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. tried to take digs at other people too.</li><li>2. enjoyed it.</li><li>3. thought "we can't help it".</li><li>4. decided not to do like them.</li><li>5. didn't like it.</li><li>6. asked them to refrain from doing it immediately.</li></ol> <p>5. When the leader offered to help him, Pete</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. shook his hand and thanked him.</li><li>2. was very glad.</li><li>3. thought about what he would have done without the leader's help.</li><li>4. thought he should find how to manage by himself.</li><li>5. was hurt.</li><li>6. told him: "I can do it alone".</li></ol> | <p>6. When Harry said that we needed help, Martin</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. shouted: "That's true. I agree with you".</li><li>2. felt relieved.</li><li>3. thought about which kind of help the group needs.</li><li>4. didn't think so.</li><li>5. got angry at him.</li><li>6. ignored him.</li></ol> <p>7. When several members dropped out of the discussion, Hank</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. didn't participate too.</li><li>2. felt reassured.</li><li>3. thought that their behavior was understandable.</li><li>4. thought that he must think about the reasons of their behavior.</li><li>5. got angry at them.</li><li>6. warned them.</li></ol> <p>8. When Ed seemed to be daydreaming, Bill</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. tried not to disturb him.</li><li>2. envied him.</li><li>3. thought that it would be nice if he can do like Ed.</li><li>4. thought about how to attract Ed's attention.</li><li>5. got angry at him.</li><li>6. called him.</li></ol> <p>9. When Sam said: "Let's get to the problem", I</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. said: "Yes, let's do it".</li><li>2. was glad to hear that.</li><li>3. thought about how to deal with the problem.</li><li>4. thought that was impossible.</li><li>5. didn't like it.</li><li>6. refused it.</li></ol> <p>10. Since the group wanted to test the suggested procedure, Milt</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. cooperated.</li><li>2. was glad.</li><li>3. decide to examine the procedure.</li><li>4. thought about leaving the group.</li><li>5. didn't like it.</li><li>6. showed his disagreement.</li></ol> |
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the respondents who were characterized by only one valency (Pv, Fv, Dv, Flv, or Ct) were analyzed. Therefore, only 302 respondents were found to have one valency. The rest (N=134) were characterized by either more than one valency or did not display any clear valency.

Table 1. Frequency Distribution by Ethnic Group

Valency	Ethnic Group	
	Japanese	Vitnamese
Pairing	40(43.0)	32(15.3)
Fight	00( 0.0)	1( 1.0)
Dependency	7( 7.5)	52(24.9)
Flight	2( 2.2)	92(44.0)
Cooperation	44(47.3)	92(44.0)

Note: Values represent frequencies and percentages (in parentheses).

Table 2. Mean of Each Type of Valency by Ethnic Group

Valency	Ethnic Group	
	Japanese	Vietnamese
Pairing	1.84( .90)	2.72( .73)**
Fight	4.11(1.15)	4.49(1.09)*
Dependency	4.50(7.50)	3.53(1.30)**
Flight	2.39( .81)	2.69( .87)*
Cooperation	1.80( .83)	2.34( .73)**

Note: Values represent mean score and standard deviations (in parentheses).

\* $p < .01$ ; \*\* $p < .001$

### Differences and Similarities

As can be seen in Table 1, there were significant differences between these two ethnic groups ( $\chi^2=41.2$ ,  $df=4$ ,  $p < .0001$ ). That is, with the cooperation-tendency being predominant for each group (44.0% of the Vietnamese sample, and 47.3% of the Japanese sample), the Japanese were characterized by the Pv (43.0%), and the Vietnamese by Dv (24.3%). These findings have a principal implication for the study of Japanese people. They reveal clearly that Japanese feel comfortable in dyadic relationships, and may thus provide support for the theory of *amae* (Doi, 1973), a psychological tendency which is thought of as a feature of Japanese people.

Analyzing the data further, the means of the two ethnic groups in each of the valency were compared. The results did not reveal significant *qualitative* difference between the two groups of subjects. That is, as indicated in Table 2, the two groups tend to identify with the same stimulus-situations or items (pairing, dependency, and cooperation), and reject the same stimulus stimuations too (fight and flight).

However, if we examine carefully the results in Table 2, we can see that although there are no qualitative differences between them, the differences were, nevertheless, statistically highly significant. In other words, although both groups displayed preference for paiting (both groups means were lower than point-3), Japanese respondents were found to be more paoring-oriented than their Vietnamese counterparts ( $t(434)=9.9$ ,  $p < .0001$ ). Moreover, the rejection by the Vietnamese respondents of the fight stimulus-situation was significantly higher than the one by

of Japanese respondents ( $t(434)=3.2, p<.001$ ). Concerning the flight simulacrum-situation, the Japanese respondents displayed a stronger rejection than their Vietnamese counterparts ( $t(434)=-7.8, p<.0001$ ). In response to dependency, the Japanese respondents' identification with the stimulus-situation was stronger than the Vietnamese respondents ( $t(434)=3.5, p<.0001$ ). The same significant quantitative difference was found between the two groups ( $t(434)=6.5, p<.0001$ ) concerning cooperation tendency, with the Japanese respondents characterized by the highest mean.

Seeking further information about these quantitative differences, the two ethnic groups were compared regarding their response manner (action, emotion, or cognition, see Hafsi, 1997 for more details) to each of the stimulus-situation.

Table 3. Response Manner in the First Pairing Item By Ethnic group

Response Manner	Ethnic Group	
	Japanese	Vietnamese
Ac-ac	74(54.4)	37(12.3)
Ac-em	33(24.3)	127(42.3)
Ac-id	19(14.0)	114(38.0)
No-id	4( 2.9)	21( 7.0)
No-em	4( 2.9)	1( 0.3)
No-ac	2( 1.5)	00( 0.0)

*Note:* Values represent frequencies and percentages (in parentheses). The statistical significance level is indicated in text.

- Ac-ac: accept-action;
- Ac-em: accept-emotion;
- Ac-id: accept-ideation;
- No-id: Non-accept-ideation;
- No-em: Non-accept-emotion;
- No-ac: Non-accept-action

Table 4. Response Manner in the Second Pairing Item By Ethnic Group

Response Manner	Ethnic Group	
	Japanese	Vietnamese
Ac-ac	68(50.0)	41(13.7)
Ac-em	41(30.1)	79(26.3)
Ac-id	7( 5.1)	23( 7.7)
No-id	17(12.5)	146(48.7)
No-em	1( 0.7)	9( 0.3)
No-ac	2( 1.5)	2( 0.7)

*Note:* Values represent frequencies and percentages (in parentheses). The statistical significance level is indicated in the text.

- Ac-ac: accept-action;
- Ac-em: accept-emotion;
- Ac-id: accept-ideation;
- No-id: Non-accept-ideation;
- No-em: Non-accept-emotion;
- No-ac: Non-accept-action

**Pairing Situation:** As indicated in Table 3, there are statistically significant differences between the two groups concerning the way they respond to the first pairing stimulus-situation (item-1:  $\chi^2(5)=86.2, p<.0001$ ). That is, for the Vietnamese sample, the highest percentage (48.7) rejected cognitively (point-4) the pairing situation (item-1), whereas the highest percentage of the Japanese sample (50.0) was found to identify actively (displaying action, point-1) with the same situation. However, the second highest percentage for both samples (Japanese=26.3, and Vietnamese=30.1) was that of the respondents who identified with the emotionally-loaded



response (point-2). What the results suggest here is that the Vietnamese, more than the Japanese, feel less comfortable in the situations where they have special intimate relationship with a limited number of people. The Japanese, on the contrary, tend to feel more comfortable and express their preference for the situation in terms of action (point-1).

Unlike the first item, the second pairing item describes a dyadic relationship. The difference between the two ethnic groups is also statistically significant ( $\chi^2(5)=103.7, p<.0001$ ). As indicated in Table 4, the highest percentage of the Vietnamese (42.3) perceived the dyad as engaging in an emotional interaction (point-2: laughing together), whereas the Japanese respondents (54.4) tended to see the dyad as acting altogether (point-1: going out for dinner). If we consider the fact that responding with action (point-1) has a stronger impact (Hafsi, 1997) than responding emotionally (point-2), we can say that Japanese respondents, more than their Vietnamese counterparts, feel comfortable in a dyadic relationship and tend to translate their feelings directly into action.

Table 5. Response Manner in the First Fight Item By Ethnic Group

Response Manner	Ethnic Group	
	Japanses	Vietnamese
Ac-ac	21(15.4)	95(31.7)
Ac-em	37(27.2)	5( 1.7)
Ac-id	5( 3.7)	3( 1.0)
No-id	27(19.9)	92(30.7)
No-em	4( 2.9)	10( 3.3)
No-ac	42(30.9)	84(31.7)

Note: Values represent frequencies and percentages (in parentheses). The statistical significance level is indicated in the text.

Table 6. Response Manner in the Second Fight Item By Ethnic Group

Response Manner	Ethnic Group	
	Japanese	Vietnamese
Ac-ac	4( 2.9)	2( .7)
Ac-em	9( 6.6)	3( 1.0)
Ac-id	6( 6.6)	11( 3.7)
No-id	36(26.5)	42(14.0)
No-em	34(25.0)	69(23.0)
No-ac	44(32.4)	173(57.7)

Note: Values represent frequencies and percentages (in parentheses). The statistical significance level is indicated in the text.

**Fight Situation:** Besides the general rejective tendency towards fighting described in Table 2, there are also significant differences between the two ethnic groups regarding the first fighting stimulus-situation ( $\chi^2(5)=80.3, p<.0001$ ). As indicated in Table 5, the total percentage (accept-action + accept-emotion + accept-ideation) of Japanese respondents identifying with the first fighting stimulus-situation (46.3), is higher than the one of Vietnamese respondents (34.4). Moreover, there are more Vietnamese than Japanese who reject cognitively (point-4) and actively (point-6) the fight situation described in the item.

As indicated in Table 6, similar significant differences were found between the two samples regarding the second fighting stimulus-situation ( $\chi^2(5)=36.3$ ,  $p < .0001$ ). The results reveal a general tendency that Japanese respondents tend to reject fighting cognitively more than do their Vietnamese counterparts. Vietnamese respondents tend to reject it by means of action.

The general findings that both groups tend to reject fighting stimulus-situation—whether emotionally, cognitively or actively— may be interpreted here as supporting the popular belief that Asian people are less aggressive and more peaceful than Western counterparts.

Table 7. Response Manner in the First Dependency Item By Ethnic Group

Response Manner	Ethnic Group	
	Japanese	Vietnamese
Ac-ac	38(27.9)	112(37.3)
Ac-em	64(47.1)	20( 6.7)
Ac-id	15(11.0)	59(19.7)
No-id	10( 7.4)	93(31.0)
No-em	5( 3.7)	2( 0.7)
No-ac	4( 2.9)	14( 4.7)

*Note:* Values represent frequencies and percentages (in parentheses). The statistical significance level is indicated in the text.

Table 8. Response Manner in the Second Dependency Item By Ethnic Group

Response Manner	Ethnic Group	
	Japanese	Vietnamese
Ac-ac	28(20.6)	28( 9.4)
Ac-em	13( 9.6)	47(15.7)
Ac-id	86(63.2)	206(68.9)
No-id	8( 5.9)	15( 5.0)
No-em	1( 0.7)	1( 0.3)
No-ac	00( 0.0)	2( 0.7)

*Note:* Values represent frequencies and percentages (in parentheses). The statistical significance level is indicated in the text.

**Flight Situation:** As indicated in Table 2, although the two ethnic groups share in general the same rejective tendency towards flight, there is a statistically significant difference between them. These differences are described in details in Tables 7 and 8.

From Table 7 we can see that this rejective tendency is, generally, expressed cognitively in the first flight item although there is a significant difference between the two ethnic groups ( $\chi^2(5)=54.2$ ,  $p < .0001$ ). That is, a high percentage of both Vietnamese (64.0) and Japanese (51.5) selected the point-4, or the cognitively rejective reaction. Moreover, if the two groups are compared regarding the second flight item, here again a significant difference can be observed ( $\chi^2(5)=57.6$ ,  $p < .0001$ ). As indicated in Table 8, while a high percentage of the Vietnamese respondents (46.3) tend to display a positive attitude (point-1) towards flight, the highest percentage of the Japanese respondents (60.3) was, on the opposit, characterized by a negative attitude (point-6). Which implies that Japanese respondents tend to reject any kind of flight behavior, regardless of who is displaying it (one or

many members). As to the Vietnamese group, they were less categorical in their reaction. For they tended to tolerate the flight behavior when it is displayed collectively (item 7), and reject it when displayed by only one member (item 8).

Table 9. Response Manner in the First Fight Item By Ethnic Group

Response Manner	Ethnic Group	
	Japanese	Vietnamese
Ac-ac	7( 5.1)	23( 7.7)
Ac-em	1( 0.7)	6( 2.0)
Ac-id	12( 8.8)	47(15.7)
No-id	70(51.5)	192(64.0)
No-em	25(18.4)	3( 1.0)
No-ac	21(15.4)	29( 9.7)

*Note:* Values represent frequencies and percentages (in parentheses). The statistical significance level is indicated in the text.

Table 10. Response Manner in the Second Figly Item By Ethnic Group

Response Manner	Ethnic Group	
	Japanese	Vietnamese
Ac-ac	20(14.7)	139(46.3)
Ac-em	2( 1.5)	2( 0.7)
Ac-id	4( 2.9)	7( 2.3)
No-id	20(14.7)	46(15.3)
No-em	8( 5.9)	00( 0.0)
No-ac	82(60.3)	106(35.3)

*Note:* Values represent frequencies and percentages (in parentheses). The statistical significance level is indicated in the text.

**Dependency Situation:** As can be seen in Table 2, in spite of the significant difference found between Japanese and Vietnamese, the two ethnic groups share in general the same positive tendency towards dependency situations. However, a comparison of their reaction manner reveals significant differences.

As indicated in Table 9, while the highest percentage of the Vietnamese respondents (37.3) reacts actively (point-1) to the stimulus-situation, the highest percentage of Japanese (47.1) reacts rather emotionally (point-2) ( $\chi^2(5)=113.8, p<.0001$ ). However, as indicated in Table 10, this kind of difference was not found in the case of the second dependency stimulus-situation. Both Japanese and Vietnamese (68.9 and 63.2 respectively) reacted similarly towards the stimulus, that is emotionally (point-2), but with a statistically significant difference ( $\chi^2(5)=13.5, p<.01$ ).

**Cooperation Situation:** As discussed above, Table 2 does not reveal qualitative but rather quantitative significant differences between the two ethnic groups. Both of the groups displayed a positive attitude towards cooperation. This finding supports Bion hypotheses that work group mentality is always present in the group, even if it is often inhibited by the basic assumption group mentality.

Moreover, a close investigation of these differences between the two groups revealed further significant quantitative differences. As indicated in Table 11, a comparison of the two groups, regarding their reaction to the first cooperation

Table 11. Response Manner in the First Cooperation Item By Ethnic Group

Response Manner	Ethnic Group	
	Japanese	Vietnamese
Ac-ac	80(58.8)	71(23.7)
Ac-em	4( 2.9)	11( 3.7)
Ac-id	46(33.8)	212(70.7)
No-id	2( 1.5)	3( 1.0)
No-em	2( 1.5)	3( 1.0)
No-ac	2( 1.5)	00( 0.0)

*Note:* Values represent frequencies and percentages (in parentheses). The statistical significance level is indicated in the text.

Table 12. Response Manner in the Second Cooperation Item By Ethnic Group

Response Manner	Ethnic Group	
	Japanses	Vietnamese
Ac-ac	91(66.9)	123(41.0)
Ac-em	2( 1.5)	21( 7.0)
Ac-id	39(28.7)	150(50.0)
No-id	00( 0.0)	00( 0.0)
No-em	3( 2.2)	5( 1.7)
No-ac	1( 0.7)	1( 0.3)

*Note:* Values represent frequencies and percentages (in parentheses). The statistical significance level is indicated in the text.

stimulus-situation, revealed that Vietnamese (70.7) tended to identify cognitively (point-3) with the stimulus significantly more than Japanese (33.8) ( $\chi^2(5)=59.7$ ,  $p<.0001$ ), and that the percentage of Japanese (58.8) that reacted actively (point-1) to the stimulus was higher than that of the Vietnamese (23.7). The same significant difference in the reaction manner was found between the two groups regarding the second cooperation stimulus-situation ( $\chi^2(4)=28.5$ ,  $p<.0001$ ). That is, the highest percentage of the Vietnamese (50.0) reacted cognitively to the stimulus, and the highest percentage of the Japanese (66.9) reacted actively to the same stimulus. This finding seems to be consistent with the results of other cross-cultural studies on work (MOW International Research Team, 1987).

In order to determine the effect gender may have on valency, male and female respondents were compared. However, no statistically significant differences were found within groups and between groups. This finding does not support the common stereotypic conception of women as being more dependent, and men as being more active (fight valency) for instance.

#### Culture or Valency?

The results discussed up to now reveals quantitative differences and similarities between the two ethnic groups surveyed in the present study. However, they do not provide us with information concerning the determinant factor(s) of these results. In other words, we do not know whether these differences and similarities are the results of cultural differences or valency differences.

Therefore, a 2-way ANOVA with culture, valency mean, and valency types was

Table 12. The Effect Culture, Valency, and Their Interaction

	Stimulus-Situation				
	Pairing	Fight	Dependency	Flight	Cooperation
Culture	0.04	5.37*	0.42	7.99**	1.4
Valency	18.23***	5.20**	11.25***	7.97***	57.7***
Two-way	4.99***	0.51	2.26**	0.30	2.0

Note: Values represent mean squares.

\* $p < .05$ , \*\* $p < .001$ ; \*\*\* $p < .0001$

performed. Table 12 summarizes the results. As indicated in this table, a significant 2-way interaction exists between culture and valency type concerning pairing (stimulus-situation) mean ( $F(3)=12.5$ ,  $p < .0001$ ), and dependency ( $F(3)=4.8$ ,  $p < .003$ ). Regarding fight and flight, no significant interactions were found. In the case of fight, there was a separate significant effect of culture ( $F(3)=4.7$ ,  $p < .03$ ) and valency type ( $F(3)=4.6$ ,  $p < .001$ ), with the latter being more significant. Similarly, it was found that flight was also affected separately and significantly by culture ( $F(3)=6.9$ ,  $p < .009$ ) and valency ( $F(3)=6.9$ ,  $p < .0001$ ). However, it is noteworthy that here also the effect of valency type is more significant than that of culture.

Hence, we know now that, whether interactively or separately, culture and valency do influence the person's reaction to a given group situation as measured here by the RGST-Ab scale. However, the data do not provide us with further information about the nature of the interaction of the two factors (culture and valency). Therefore, we can speculate, based on Bion's theory, that it is valency which determines the individual and group behavior. Compared with the cultural effect which is secondary, the valency effect is a primary effect. In other words, we can say that beyond culture there is valency as a primary determinant factor. However, the valency effect is sometimes, depending on the prevailing values and norms, culturally inhibited. Obviously, the effect of culture on valency is not limited to inhibition. The cultural effect consists also in regulating, facilitating, rationalizing or idealizing the behavioral content of valency as well, depending on the historical, socio-economical, and political conditions and situations. Further speculation on the relationship between valency and culture goes beyond the scope of the present study, therefore, I will confine thus myself to this brief discussion, hoping that future empirical research will shed light on this question.

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