An analysis of Indian Culture in an Era of Globalisation

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An analysis of Contemporary Indian Culture in an Era of Globalisation

Part I

(India: Background Information and Theory)
1. Introduction

Globalisation has become a key word in today’s world. And the world of today is very different from what it was ten years ago, even from what it was yesterday. Today, development happens overnight. One of the countries that has been focused on during the past decades is India. India: the diverse country with deep rooted traditions, a deep rooted culture and religion that lives alongside one of the fastest growing economies in the world. As Cohen, Stephen (2001:36) points out:

“India is an ancient state but a modern civilisation”

What I find interesting is the fact that this ancient state has “survived” during the process of globalisation. Especially India’s diverse and deeply rooted culture which has always been and still is influenced by a lot of different religions, languages and traditions. Additionally, in connection with globalisation, the western values seem to have gained acceptance in India.

Research has been done within this field. However, in this thesis, I will analyse the cultural values in India by means of Trompeanaars and Hampden-Turner’s six dimensions; Universalism vs. Particularism, Individualism vs. Communitarianism, Specificity vs. Diffusion, Achieved status vs. Ascribed status, inner direction vs. Outer direction, Sequential time vs. Synchronous time. Consequently, I am going to discuss if globalisation has had an impact on India’s culture with special reference to the six dimensions.

This paper consists of two parts: the first part, Part I deals with; a general description of India, a discussion of theory used and the analysis of Indian culture by means of the six dimensions. The next part, Part II deals with Indian culture in the era of globalisation.
1.1 Methods

My intention is to analyse Indian culture with special reference to the six value dimensions described in the book: Building cross-cultural competence by Hampden –Turner, Charles and Trompenaars Fons (2000 and 2001). In order to answer my problem statement, I am going to describe India’s background and the theory used in general.

Furthermore, I am going to use empirical data, an interview with Mr. Rainer Hamminger in order to put the theory into perspective. Moreover, in my discussion I use interviews with various Indians. Some of the Indians interviewed and Mr. Hamminger are men/women with good jobs.

The graphs I use are based on only one question. Hampden-Turner, Charles and Trompenaars, Fons have selected a question that reflects each dimension.

A lot of different definitions of culture exist. However, I will use the definition by Hofstede, Geert. Culture is

“the collective programming of the mind which distinguishes the members of one human group from another.” (Middleton, John: 2002:6)

In this thesis, I am dealing with business culture as defined by Gesteland and Gesteland (2010: 14):

“A business culture is a unique set of expectations and assumptions about how business people are supposed to communicate, negotiate and manage.”
1.2 Limitations

This thesis is not an exhaustive guidance for communicating with Indians. The focus is on the six dimensions mentioned in the problem statement and the impact of globalisation on these.

I am aware of the fact that the situation in rural India is very different from the situation in the city areas. (Gaiha, Raghaw et.al 2008:113) However, as I am dealing with business culture, my focus will be on the people living in industrialised urban areas of India.

2. General Description of India: Historical Background, Political Structure and Caste

These three aspects are not entirely independent of each other. However, in order to make it clear, I am dealing with them as separate entities.

2.1 Historical Background and Political Structure

India is a democratic republic and is divided into 26 states, that each has its own government which is elected by the people living in it. The keyword to describe India is diversity, regarding religion as well as the language(s) and the population. India is a country containing over 1 billion citizens which obviously involves big differences between people. English is the major- and administrative language in India but there are 14 official languages and a very large number of other dialects spoken. (Kobayashi – Hillary, Mark (2004:6). Indian culture has been influenced by a large number of cultures through time, including the British during colonisation in the 19th century. (Kumar, Rajesh, 2005, pp. 2-26)

In spite of this diversity/difference it seems to be the case that the business culture in India is universal/general independent from/not depending of religion, language and caste line.
(Gesteland, Richard & Gesteland, Mary, 2010: 14). It is described as a “national business culture” (Gesteland, Richard & Gesteland, Mary, 2010:16).

2.2 Religion in India

As said, many different religions are present in India. The many religions in India have had a great impact on Indian culture. The dominant one is Hinduism (82% of the population). Besides this, 6 other religions are represented in Indian society. However, my focus will be on Hinduism in this paragraph because of the fact that the legacy of Hinduism is very clear in India. (Kumar, Rajesh 2004: 41)

Hinduism is the predominant religion in India. It is one of the oldest religions in the world and the historical founder of it is unknown. Hinduism has developed and depending on where you are in India, different traditions are connected with Hinduism. It does not have certain doctrines or rules to follow, like the Ten Commandments, for instance. Dharma, however, is one aspect of Hinduism that seems to be constant. The literature of dharma describes how a person should behave and what to do in the four stages of life. Furthermore, it describes the general rules of how to behave and it describes specific rules of how to behave that corresponds with the placement in the caste system. (Rinehart, Robin 1994: 22-24)

“By performing actions in accordance with one’s dharma, a person’s “unripened” karma at death leads to rebirth in a better state. Conversely, a person who did not act in accord with dharma would create a store of unripened karma that would lead to rebirth in a worse state.” (Rinehart, Robin 1994: 23)
This describes the essence of Hinduism. If one acts the way the literature describes, one is reborn in a better stage or a higher caste. This is one of the reasons why Hinduism is seen more as a way of life than as a religion. Hinduism has through time been affected by a number of other religions, including Islam. (Rinehart, Robin 2005: 55)

2.3 Caste

The caste system has been a part of Hindu society and tradition (82% of the population in India, cf afsnit blabla) since 1200BCE. (Shukla, Veena 1997: 963).

The origin of caste is described in the Rig Vedas\(^1\) in a famous hymn, “hymn to man”. It is a description of how the 4 varnas were “born” from the primeval man. The Brahmins came from the mouth, the Kshatriyas from the arms, the Vaishyas from the thighs and the Sudras from the feet. Originally, the four varnas were viewed as equal. (Lal, Vinay & Loon, Borin Van, 2005: 16-17) However, this changed.

The caste is related to occupations. In India 3,000 castes and 25,000 subcastes in exist. The castes are divided into four different varnas; Brahmins, Kshatryas, Vaishyas, Shudras and the “outcast”, the Untouchables. (Longhurst, Brian et.al. 2008: pp.71-72)

The highest varna is Brahmin which includes priests and teachers, followed by the Kshatriya (landholders and warriors), the Vaishya or bania (businessmen), then the Shudra, (workers). Beneath those four varnas are the “outcasts”, the tribal people and the “untouchables” (the oppressed) (Longhurst, Brian et.al. 2008:71). The Brahmins, the Kshatriya and the Vaishyas are known as the “twice-born” because of the fact that they are allowed to study the Vedas\(^2\). (Rinehart, Robin Contemporary Hinduism, 2004: 23)

\(^1\) The literature that provides the foundation for Hinduism (Rajesh, Kumar, 2005:57)
It is, more or less (cf. par.4.1.1), impossible to change from one caste to another because which caste you are born into, depends on religion, i.e. it is a result from bad karma in the past. (Singh, Hira 2008: 120) If you are in a low caste it is because you have failed to meet the caste expectations in your earlier life. Caste society, though, is not official in India any longer. The caste system was officially abolished by the government in 1950 but it does still exist and control many peoples’ lives – especially in rural India. (Gaiha, Raghav et.al. 2008:113-119)

Having defined the caste – issue shortly, I will elaborate on it because of the complexity of the issue and because of the fact that I will analyse status later (cf par. 3.4.1 & 4.1.1)

I will begin with the caste lowest in the hierarchy “the untouchables”. Especially this caste has been debated through the years and is a matter of a great concern in India and elsewhere. The Untouchables constitute 250 million people in India and, in fact, the untouchables are an outcast below the other four castes. (Shukla, Veena 1997: 963-964)

“From our childhood we in the lower castes are not told by the upper castes that you are not fit to do anything else than make shoes or sweep floors. That’s not fair. That’s not human.” (Singh, Hira, 2008: 122)

The Untouchables are seen as polluting which means that the twice-borns cannot be close to them without being polluted themselves. The higher the caste, the greater the risk of pollution. (Lal, Vinay & Loon, Borin Van, 2005: 19).

I wrote in par. 2.3 that it is “...,more or less, impossible to change caste”. The caste system has evolved over time. The ones lowest in the hierarchy have tried rejected their status. However, this has reinforced the already existing view upon the hierarchy. Because of the fact that the Kshatriyas were the landowners they had the power. (Singh, Hira, 2008: 122-123).
As I have provided the necessary background information on India, I will now move on to describing and discussing my theory for a later analysis of Indian culture.

3. The theory

In order to analyse Indian Culture, I will use Trompenaars, Fons and Hampden – Turner, Charles’ (2000) six-dimensional model of national cultural differences. The first three value dimensions are mirror images of each other; Universalism-Particularism, Individualism-Communitarianism and Specificity and Diffuseness. The next three dimensions are an expression of how a culture perceives status, if a culture is inner – or outer directed and how they regard time: as sequential or synchronous. These 6 dimensions will be explained in detail later.

The six dimensions express some of the core values in a culture. These values are important to be aware of when cooperating with another culture, in this case, India. Hamden-Turner, Charles & Trompenaars, Fons (2000 and 2001) argue in favour of the fact that these dimensions are not advantageous in their absolute form. On the contrary, a reconciliation of both is the ideal solution.

“... Values, as we have seen, come at the opposite ends of continua, analysing and synthesising, making rules and discovering exceptions. You cannot simply add a rule to an exception or add a synthesis to a dilemma. Exceptions must be integrated into a new rule, individuals must be integrated into the community, analysed pieces must be integrated into a new synthesis.” (Trompenaars, F. & Hampden, Turner, 2000: 8)

What the two authors are arguing here, among other things, is that a biased and simplified view upon values is not ideal. To illustrate their point, they use the example of an
automobile and the various and vast demands of one. For instance; some people want a safe car, some want a fast one while others appreciate the design or, for instance, the price. As the authors note, some of these are opposites and, at first glance, incompatible. They mention that it is not easy to unite these but, however, possible. (Trompenaars, Fons & Hampden, Turner, 2000: 8-9).

I am mentioning this example because of the fact that the authors throughout the book keep on emphasising that it is important to remember that an absolute whole of one of the dimensions is not ideal, nor possible. The authors do not argue in favour of any of the values. On the contrary, Hampden, Turner and Trompenaars, Fons (2000 and 2001) argue in favour of a reconciliation of the values and try to maintain an objective view upon the dimensions.

Before I define the six dimensions and apply them to Indian culture, I will discuss my choice of theory.

3.1 Discussion of Theory

Three out of six dimensions, universalism-particularism, diffuseness-specificity, and ascription-achievement were originally labelled as pattern variables by Parson. (Gudykunst, William B. & Kim, Young Yun: 2003:85-87)

I will try to argue in favour of my choice of theory by means of the two articles: “Riding the waves of commerce: A test of Trompenaars “Model” of national cultural Differences” (1996) by Geert Hofstede and “Response to Geert Hofstede” (1997) by Hampden- Turner Charles and Trompenaars, Fons. I will shortly account for the main points in the two articles and in the end paragraph, I will elaborate on them.

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1 I am aware of the fact that Hofstede’s article is not specifically on the edition of the book that I use. Furthermore, Hofstede mentions theories in the article that I do not use in assignment. However, I find aspects of the article suitable for my critique.
A lot of different value models exist, which all have their strengths and weaknesses among others Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck’s value orientations (Gudykunst, William B & Kim, Young Yun:2003:82). One of the most famous is the 5 –dimension model made by Geert Hofstede. This deals with; Uncertainty Avoidance, Individualism vs. collectivism, Power Distance and Masculinity vs. Femininity. Later, Hofstede invented the fifth dimension: long- or short term orientation. (Gudykunst, William B & Kim, Young Yun: 2003, pp. 74-81)

Hofstede, (1996) argues that some of his dimensions are comparable with Trompenaars’ and Hampden Turners’ six dimensions that I use in my analysis. Hofstede points out that the dimensions described by Hampden- Turner, Charles and Trompenaars, Fons are similar to his. (Hofstede, 1996:3).

Furthermore, he argues that if one dimension applies to a culture, it is easy to predict the rest of the dimensions because of the fact that they do not differentiate themselves from each other. In other words, that the dimensions are difficult to divide and, hence, that they are inseparable, easy to predict and that they are only divided by the authors. (Hofstede, 1996:191)

Furthermore, he argues that the some of the dimensions are copied from other authors, including himself. Furthermore, Hofstede argues that Trompenaars’ research is not sufficient.

“…Therefore, in Trompenaars’ questionnaire and book, controversial issues central to cultural conflicts, like power struggle, corruption, exploitation, aggression, anxiety, and differing concepts of masculinity and femininity, are rarely addressed. The result is a fast food approach to intercultural diversity and communication.“ (Hofstede, 1996: 198)

However, in Hampden-Turner, Charles and Trompenaars, Fons’ response to Geert Hofstede, they defend their point of view and justify their theory. They stress the fact that
their fundamental view upon culture is different than Hofstede’s, i.e. Trompenaars, Fons and Hampden-Turner, Charles (1997) perceive culture as self-organising systems that are not truly independent from each other, on the contrary, they are interdependent. To elaborate, they see culture as an organism, a circular on-going process with arcs. Furthermore, they see values as wave-forms in contradistinction to Hofstede’s linear view of culture.

“It is this one dimensional thinking in which his factor somehow “causes” or “underlies” our cultural categories and concepts, which we do not accept. Neither Hofstede, nor Trompenaars, nor Hampden-Turner have the right to insist upon the sovereignty of their own “independent variables” and try to make other cultures’ concepts derivatives of these. We prefer to elicit responses from other cultures around core dilemmas, which our respondents can redefine in their own language.” (Charles, Hampden Turner & Trompenaars, Fons 1997:168)

I chose to use this theory for various reasons. One of the reasons was the limited amount of research done concerning India and the six dimensions. These six dimensions are not as common as, for instance, Hofstede’s. Moreover, I found Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner’s view upon culture interesting because of my later discussion. Their idea about reconciliation of the values is interesting because of my later discussion of how globalisation has influenced and is influencing Indian culture. Singh, Kunil Kumar & Manu Parashar point out the fact that models (including the one I use) are somewhat ethnocentric. They raise the question if a value model is made in a western culture with a western bias can reflect the diversity and complexity of, for instance, Indian culture. They make an interesting point. However, the dimensions treated here are all relevant for western managers.
Regarding the empirical data used in Hampden-Turner, Charles and Trompenaars, Fons’ study of the six dimensions, I will suffice it to refer to the fact that culture is very difficult to “measure” and the fact that a correct way of analysing culture does not exist.

Now, I am going to describe the six dimensions of cultural diversity described by Hampden-Turner, Charles and Trompenaars, Fons. Every section begins with a general description of the value. Thereafter, I will describe how this value is present in India. First, I will deal with the dimension universalism vs. particularism.

### 3.2 Universalism vs. Particularism: Rules vs. Relationships

An analysis of Universalism - Particularism indicates how a culture relates to rules and exceptions. It deals with the dilemma: Should decision(s) and behaviour base on one universal rule, and, hence apply for all situations and all contexts or should decisions and behaviour be adapted to the given circumstances?

This quote illustrates the dilemma of the dimensions:

“A universalist will say of the particularist, “they cannot be trusted because they will always help their friends”; a particularist, conversely, will say of universalists, “you cannot trust them; they would not even help a friend”. (Hampden-Turner, Charles and Trompenaars, Fons’, 2001: 31-32)

Particularistic cultures favour:

- Uniqueness and relationships.

Universalistic cultures favour:

- Sameness, use the court to mediate conflicts and rules.
According to Hampden-Turner, Charles and Trompenaars, Fons (2001; 31), Universalism – Particularism also reflects equality/inequality in a culture. In a universalistic culture, the laws/rules apply to everyone, whereas exceptions are made in particularistic cultures.\(^4\) (cf. 2.3 and 4.1.1).

### 3.2.1 Universalism – Particularism in India

As can be concluded from figure 1, India is a fairly particularistic oriented culture. This is apparent in Indian culture by their focus on relationships. Gesteland and Gesteland, describe relationship focus and deal focus. The dimension, universalism – particularism, does not only refer to relationship- and deal focus but these are, however, a good starting point.

Figure 1: (Hampden-Turner, Charles and Trompenaars, Fons: 2001: 37)
According to figure 1, India is a relationship focused culture. This is confirmed by Gesteland and Gesteland (2010:31). When communicating with a culture that is relationship oriented, it is important to remember the importance of trust in a business situation. A contract, for instance, is not necessarily considered as being binding agreement in India as in a culture that is universalist oriented. On the contrary, relationships are seen as a binding agreement.

This is also confirmed by Rainer Hamminger. When I asked him if the Indians tried to build up a relationship, he answered:
“Yes. They typically tried to create and build up at least a basic for a relationship...”

(appendix 1)

This is might be because of the fact that Indians do not trust the system. They do not have trust laws as people from the west do.

Having explained the first dimension described by Hampden, Turner and Trompenaars, Fons, I will now look at the next dimension: Individualism – Communitarianism.

3.2.2 Individualism – Communitarianism: The Group vs. the Individual

This value dimension explains how a culture relates to other people. The degree of individualism and communitarianism in a culture expresses how the culture sees human beings; as a part or a group or as an independent individual. Moreover, it expresses the focus of a culture: on the community/group or on the individual and the goals of the individual. (Hampden-Turner, Charles & Trompenaars, Fons: 2001: 9). Moreover, it has been defined as an orientation: If one is a part of a communitarian culture, one is group and common goal oriented. On the contrary, if one is a part of an individualistic culture, one is self-oriented. (Trompenaars, Fons and Hampden-Turner, Charles, 2001: 50).

Individualist cultures favour:

- competition, self-reliance, self-interest, personal growth and fulfilment.

Communitarianist cultures favour:

- cooperation social concern, altruism, public service and societal legacy.

However, it is important remember that individualism exists within communitarianism. An individualist society is not without social concern and a communitarian society is not
without competition and self-reliance. To a greater extent, it depends on focus on these. (Hampden-Turner, Charles & Trompenaars, Fons 2000:68)

### 3.2.3 Individualism – Communitarianism in India

As can be seen in figure 2, India is a communitarian culture.

Figure 2: (Hampden-Turner, Charles and Trompenaars, Fons (2001:51)

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As mentioned by Hampden-Turner, Charles and Trompenaars, Fons (2001: 52), the biggest problems when two cultures from each opposite end of the value dimension work
together are: negotiations, decision-making and motivation. This is confirmed by Kumar, Rajesh, (2005:108) who claims that India is a consensus – oriented culture who rarely say “no” in order to maintain harmony in the group.

When asked which problems occurred during communication, Rainer Hamminger answered:

- “First of all I must say that the... in the very first beginning, so to say, no problems occur. They always listen and they are always extremely friendly and they usually agree and the problems occur then with concrete agreements which are typically rarely kept. Rarely kept.” (appendix 1)

Again, this emphasises the fact that India is a consensus – oriented culture that gives priority to cooperation even though they are not capable of keeping the agreements made.

Another important dimension is specificity vs. diffuseness which I will move on to define and explain in the next paragraph.

3.3 Specificity –Diffuseness: The Range of Involvement

Specificity vs. Diffuseness, also called high- and low-context culture, (Trompenaars, Fons and Hampden-Turner, Charles, 2001: 89-90)

I will try to define the dimension and illustrate the dilemma here by using a quote:

“A specific culture seeks truth through analysis, by breaking the whole into pieces and seeing in which a specific part a fault or trouble lies”. Hampden- Turner, Charles & Trompenaars, Fons , (2000: 129-130)
This dimension describes how people view processes: as a part of a united whole, or as individual pieces with no connection.

“In a diffuse culture, everything is connected to everything”. For instance, what people from a mainly specific culture see as not important or as a waste of time can in a diffuse culture be seen as very important. (Trompenaars, F. & Hampden, T. 2001: 87). India is a diffuse and particularistic culture. To elaborate on the two quotes, I will use an example from par. 3.3.1) In a diffuse culture, the relationship with the business partner is connected to the decisions being made about an agreement or a negotiation, whereas it is not important in a specific culture. Here, relationships and business are seen as separate entities: The offer/arguments are analysed and decisions are based on these only. In a diffuse culture these are inseparable and, hence, connected. Specific cultures are more direct when communicating than diffuse cultures. Moreover, specific cultures seem to separate their private lives from their work lives. (Trompenaars, Fons and Hampden-Turner, Charles: 2001:86).

However, as mentioned, it is important remember that none of the dimensions are an absolute good. Taken too far, there are drawbacks if a culture is too specific. Too much analysis can paralyse the course. (Trompenaars, F. & Hampden, Turner, 2000: 132).

3.3.1 Specificity – Diffuseness in India

As can be concluded from figure 3, India is a relatively diffuse culture. When doing business in India, it is important to build a good relationship with the Indians. (cf par. 3.2.1)
It is always recommended to take time to get to know them and become friends with them when negotiating something. This is, among other things, because of the diffuseness in India. While specific cultures separate their private life from their work life, diffuse cultures connect these two and see them as inseparable.
Figure 3: (Hampden-Turner, Charles and Trompenaars, Fons: 2001: 93)
Moreover, it is important to be indirect and be aware of the fact that Indians rarely say no. They do almost everything to be polite. When interviewing Rainer Hamminger I asked him if Indians were easy to cooperate with. He answered:

“Based on what I just said, in principle yes. As long as you do not have to come to concrete results with them. They are always very friendly and very harmonic and nice – even nice and also funny quite often. First, it is easy to cooperate with them. The outcome is the problem.”

This quote stresses the fact that India is a diffuse culture. Mr. Hamminger mentions that the outcome is the problem. The outcome is a problem because of the fact that they are afraid of saying no directly. Indians keep on promising even though they are not able to keep their promises. Indians find it better to miss a deadline than to say no.

The diffuseness in India can be connected to religion, Kharma, Gandhi. A lot of actions are done in order to be reborn. Everything is connected (cf. par. 2.2)

### 3.4 Achieved – Ascribed Status: How Status is Accorded

In order to explain this dimension, I will use a quote and elaborate on it:

“The first kind of status is called achieved status and the second ascribed status. While achieved status refers to doing, ascribed status refers to being.” (Trompenaars, Fons & Hampden, Turner 2001: 102)

That is, achieved status is based on a recently accomplishment and what you can contribute now, whereas an ascribed status is based on what is “given”, including birth,

Different cultures have different notions of status. (Trompenaars, Fons & Hampden, Turner 2001: 103). Having defined the dimension, I will now look at the complex subject of how status is perceived in India.

### 3.4.1 Achieved – Ascribed Status in India

The question of status in India is complex because of the caste system (cf. Afsnit)

Figure 4 shows that the Hindu cultures (including India) are more ascriptive oriented than the protestant cultures.
Figure 4: (Hampden-Turner, Charles and Trompenaars, Fons: 106)
Furthermore, most Indians value ascription because of their reliance on the caste system. Professional titles, age, degrees and caste level are indicators of status. Friendships and kinship are more important than expertise. When Mr. Hamminger was asked where he differentiated most from the Indians, he answered:

“I guess it is in fact two aspects: The one is the hierarchical thinking and understanding – they act and they behave totally hierarchical. This is the one. The second is the religious aspect...” “The managers spoke to me differently than to ones with a lower status. Maybe because I am a Westerner.” (cf. appendix 1)

This is, among other things, because of the caste system in India. It is deeply rooted in Indian society that if someone is from a higher caste or has a better job title he/him should be treated differently than one from a lower caste with another job title. (Gesteland, Richard R. & Gesteland, Mary C: 2010: pp. 42-62)

Achievement is described as the essence of Protestantism. Ascribed status has been considered “dangerous for your economic health” (Hampden-Turner, Charles & Trompenaars, Fons: 2001: 104). In spite of this, India is one of the fastest growing economies in the world.

3.5 Inner Direction – Outer Direction: Relation to Nature

Whether a culture is inner or outer directed depends on its relation to nature. That is, a culture is inner-directed if it perceives nature as something that should be controlled whereas an outer-directed sees nature as something to live in harmony with.
This dimension is, among other things an expression of how control is perceived in a culture: An inner-directed culture sees an organisation as a “machine that obeys the will of its operators. The second, outer directed, tends to see an organisation as itself a product of nature, owing its development to the nutrients in its environment and to a favourable ecological balance”. (T&H: 2001: 141)

The definition of success differs, depending on whether one belongs to an inner – or outer directed culture. In the USA, success is identified with control, while in an outer-directed culture, it is connected with adaptation. Adaptation in a non-inferior way, that is. To illustrate, I will use the classic example with the Sony Walkman. It was invented by the Japanese (an outer directed culture) with one main purpose: that people could listen to music without disturbing others. On the contrary, in the more outer – directed cultures, the main reason for using a walkman is not to be disturbed by others (other people?).

3.5.1 Inner Direction – Outer Direction in India

According to figure 5, India is a more outer directed culture than, for instance, USA and Norway.

\footnote{Sony is a Japanese firm (an outer directed culture), according to figure blab la to the same extent as India}
Figure 5: (Hampden-Turner, Charles and Trompenaars, Fons: 2001:144)
According to figure 5, 63 per cent of the asked answered that they control their own destinies. This might seem surprising, considering the fact that the Indians are born into a caste. However, it is important to remember the fact that that they blame themselves if they are born into a low caste. According to the Indians if they are born into a low caste it is because of the fact that they failed to meet the caste expectations in their earlier life. (cf. 2.3)

The colonisation of India was done by inner-directed persons (Hampden-Turner, Charles & Trompenaars, Fons: 2000:248). According to Mr. Hamminger noticed the need for adapting. When asked if the Indians tried to adapt during communication, he answered:

“They rarely say no and, yes, you can say so. They are very friendly and polite. They sort of let you take control and sometimes they almost seem afraid of you. Afraid to offend you.” (cf. app. 1)

The fact that they seem afraid of offending the ones they are in the company of is also connected with high- and low context communication and the fact that they are a communitarian culture that focuses on the group instead of on themselves.

### 3.6 Sequential and Synchronous Time: How Time is managed

How time is managed in a culture is important to be aware of. When coordinating activities it is important to know if time is considered just as guideline or as an exact schedule.

If a culture has a sequential view upon time, time is seen as linear sequential events passing regularly. Events happen in the right order without disturbances and/or surprises, even if it is at the expense of, for instance, efficiency. In a sequential time society it is rude to be 5 minutes late, whereas it is common in a synchronous time society.
However, if a culture has a synchronous view upon time, time is seen as a cyclical and repetitive feature. Members of a culture who have a synchronous view upon time can do more than one thing at a time. As described by Trompenaars, Fons. And Hampden, Turner (2001: 124) they can “skip between stones” and still reach their target.

### 3.6.1 Sequential and Synchronous Time in India

Here, it seems to be the case that Hampden-Turner, Charles & Trompenaars, Fons India is a synchronic oriented culture. (Gesteland, R. & Gesteland, M. 2010: 22) When cooperating with Indians it is important to “adapt” or at least to be aware of this relationship to this way of managing time. In a synchronic oriented culture, people tend to “give time” to whom they have a relation. The time issue is connected to status as well. (Trompenaars, Fons & Hampden-Turner, Charles: 2001:125)

India is still an agricultural society – is not industrialised yet. Time seems to become more monochronic along with industrialisation. When westerners trade/cooperate with Indians, they often experience late deliveries and lack of punctuality. It is important to be aware of the fact that it they have a completely different perception of time in India. (Gesteland, R. & Gesteland, M. 2010: 22)

These aspects are also confirmed by Rainer Hamminger (see appendix 1) When asked if he had experienced missed deadlines or lack of punctuality, he answered:

“*This is normal, so to say. Especially deadlines and also the concrete items are typically missing or delayed...*” (appendix 1)
This emphasizes the fact that it is very important to be aware of the differences when cooperating with Indians. If one does not adjust and know what to expect it will be impossible to do business with Indians.

Having explained the six dimensions and related them to Indian culture, I will continue with a short sum-up and discussion of my results.

### 3.7 Religion and Values

According to Tarakeshwar, Nalini et.al., (2003:390-391), religion is a very important aspect of culture and a crucial factor when it comes to analysing culture and predicting people’s behaviour. This is confirmed by Trompeaars, Fons and Hampden-Turner, Charles (2001:52) who talk about a Protestant – Catholic divide. According to them, it seems that religion has a crucial importance for their values.

### 3.8 Results (Sum up)

In various degrees, the business culture of India can be characterised as a particularist, communitarist, diffuse, outer-directed culture that values ascribed status and has a synchronous view upon time.

Having looked at these dimensions in connection with India, I do to some extent agree with Gert Hofstede (1996) when he argues that the dimensions are inseparable. For instance, India is a particularistic culture which has a synchronous view upon time. This is not surprising because of the fact that these variables are logically connected. A culture that has a universalistic approach to rules and situations will also have a linear approach to
time. Moreover, India is values ascribed status which is connected to particularism as well. The caste system could not exist if India was a universalistic culture.

In general, India is often situated at the opposite end of the graph than the countries of western Europe, Canada and the United States.

As I have described the theory and analysed Indian culture in accordance with it, I will move on to Part II of my thesis:
Part II

(India in an Era of Globalisation)
4. Discussion

4.1 Globalisation

If we look at one of the many definitions of globalisation which is free trade and free mobility of goods, it is evident that globalisation has changed India. India’s market has changed from being a seller’s market into being a consumer’s market. Concerning the economic matters, undoubtedly, India has gone through a rapid change during the past decades. According to Kumar, Rajesh (2005: 26) this is a continuing process. However, this only takes economic matters into consideration and what I am dealing with here is the cultural globalisation. These definitions of globalisation do not consider the economy but also the issue of culture which is my focus point.

“Globalisation is a term that tries to capture the rapid social change that is occurring simultaneously across a number of dimensions, including the economy, politics, communications and culture.” (Longhurst, Brian et.al. 2008:59)...“Where social and cultural life can no longer be seen as firmly located in particular places with clear boundaries.” (Longhurst, Brian et.al.2008:59)

The first definition by argues that globalisation is a rapid social change that affects four important and inseparable dimensions of a society. The other definition does not contradict the first definition. But it argues that cultures converge and says that there are no clear boundaries and that the locations exist but that their boundaries become fuzzy due to globalisation. I chose these two dimensions because they capture the main themes of this discussion: has globalisation had an impact on Indian culture? And are the western and the Indian culture converging? (I am going to focus on the six dimensions described in par. 3.2-3.6).
4.1.1 Globalisation and the six dimensions

It has been very difficult for me to find sources/articles that were directly related to the six dimensions which is why I have to “work my way around it” by involving aspects that are not directly related with Indian culture and relate them to the dimensions.

However, having defined the issue of globalisation does not provide exhaustive information about the consequences of globalisation. At first hand, globalisation was an economic matter. But the rapid changing of the economy has had a lot of side-effects, among other things, changing of culture. But why does globalisation change culture? Some of the consequences of globalisation, with a special reference to India are: urbanisation, marginalisation and westernisation (appendix 2) and (Athyal, Sakhi: 1999 pp 6-31). Later, I will apply them to the six dimensions dealt with in paragraph 3.2-3.6.

These factors affect all India but especially the younger generation living in the urban areas – the ones who are going to inherit the business world. I will look at the factors that have had an impact on the young people of India today with special reference to the six dimensions and by means of this analysis try to indicate and discuss if Indian and Western cultures are converging: does Indian culture show a tendency towards westernisation? Due to the fact that culture is a comprehensive term my focus will be on the six dimensions mentioned in paragraph 3.2-3.6.1.

Now, I will consider the six dimensions separately. I will try to link them to some of the consequences of globalisation in order to make an attempt to predict how the values are
affected by globalisation. At the end I will sum up my results and discuss them. First, however, I will look at the dimension individualism vs. communitarianism.

It seems to be the case that the dimension, individualism and collectivism, has been influenced by globalisation. The Indian manager who is interviewed on exactly this matter claims that the youth is far more individualistic than before. He mentions that the youth do not focus on the goals of their family or an organisation, for instance. On the contrary, they seem to focus more on their own goals. This is also confirmed by Athyal, Sakhi (1995).

I might be wrong but one of the reasons for this could be the changing family pattern. The traditional Indian family is a so-called joint family where three generations live together and the grandparents took care of the children during the day. This is still the case – however, mostly in rural India. Due to the increasing mobility of the Indians, a better infrastructure and working women, a nuclear family pattern seems to secure a foothold in contemporary India. (app. 1 and Athyal, Sakhi:1995) This can be one of the reasons why the youth in India has a changing group mentality.

The next dimensions I am going to deal with are universalism vs. particularism and achieved vs. ascribed status. As mentioned in paragraph 3.2.1, the degree of universalism vs. particularism is connected with status in a society. Here, I will discuss whether the question of status in India is changing the particularistic philosophy in the society.

According to figure 1, the countries situated in Western Europe are the most universalistic whereas the Eastern countries including India are some of the most particularistic oriented cultures. This figure does, more or less, represent equal- and inequality in a society.

Along with globalisation, India’s perception of status has changed. According to the interview, the caste boundaries are changing. One from the outcast can move into the city and remain, more or less anonymous with a chance of getting a job, despite of his/her position in the caste system (cf. par. 2.2). However, it is very important to note that the
caste system might be officially abolished but it seems to be the case that the caste system is becoming a system of class instead. The difference between class and caste is that which caste one belongs to depends on the deeds done in ones earlier life, whereas class is defined as “one of the groups into which people in a society are divided according to their family background, education, job or income” (Macmillan English Dictionary 2002: 246). The ones who are from the lowest castes seem to get the labour jobs that are not very well paid (Athyal, Sakhi, 1999). Of course, the subject of status and class are diminished by the fact that it has become easier for Indians to be educated. However, for the ones in the lowest castes it seems to be a challenge to change their destinies but, still, a possibility. Additionally, Kumar, Rajesh (2004:40) mentions that prosperity and position in the caste system are connected. He also points out the fact that some parts of the business world are dominated by the Brahmins.

This is, more or less, confirmed in the interview (appendix 2). Nikhil Desai talks about globalisation’s impact on Indian culture, he says:

“What they see on television, what they see at some of the call centers ..there is a difference between their traditional values and what they see there. And slowly they start believing that that is a better life. You know – progress mean: bigger car, bigger house”

He indicates that the traditional values have changed. India has become a consumer culture and materialism is becoming more evident.

To sum up, it seems to be the case that Indians change their view upon caste and equality. In the urban areas it seems to be the case that caste is being replaced by a class society. Status is connected with materialism and consumerism.

Now, I will look at the dimension: specificity vs. diffuseness. A lot of different aspects can influence this dimensions and I have already mentioned some of them. For instance, the nuclear family pattern is one of them. Before, the family was seen as a connected unity which has now been split and family life is separated, i.e. in the day time children are in
day care centers while their parents are working and their grandparents are not a part of the family to the same extent as before (i.e. in the joint family pattern).

Additionally, I mentioned in par.3.3.1 that Hinduism contributes to the fact that diffuseness is predominant in Indian culture. It seems to be the case that the youth of India hold on to their religion.

The next dimension I will treat here is the inner – or outer direction of India. In order to do that, I refer to my preceding paragraphs on the other dimensions. The obviously increasing number of youths in India who are becoming more individualistic is affecting the degree to which they are inner – or outer directed. Furthermore, as the caste is slowly becoming a class system the Indians will probably begin to feel that they control their lives more than the earlier generations felt they did.

Regarding the time dimension, sequential vs. synchronous time, I will suffice it to say that according to Tarakeshwar et. al. (2003:379) the Indians’ perception of time is among other things a consequence of the predominance of Hinduism. As mentioned, Hinduism does not seem to become less evident in Indian society, not at this time being. However, Gesteland and Gesteland (2010) argue that the perception of time in India is changing:

“Over time westerners can expect the behaviour of Indian suppliers, customers and partners to slowly come closer to monochronic expectations” (Gesteland & Gesteland 2010:29)

This quote does not specifically deal with the dimension sequential vs. synchronous time. Gesteland and Gesteland refer to Hall’s monochromatic vs. polychronic view upon time into consideration (Par. Bla). However, it clearly shows that aspects of Indian culture are changing.

It is, more or less, impossible to say when but it seems to be the case that the youth from India will be a self-dependent, individualistic, cosmopolit belonging to a global culture. It is
evident that India’s culture has and still is becoming westernised. However, it must not be forgotten that the west has embraced a lot of the eastern values as well. (Athyal, Sakhi: 1999: pp. 1-8)

5. Conclusion:

Globalisation affected India and the Indian culture. My analysis showed that India is a particularistic, communitarianist, diffuse, outer-directed culture that favours ascribed status and has a synchronous perception of time. However, when looking at the consequences of globalisation, it seems to be the case that the deeply rooted traditions and values in India are changing. Especially one of the core values, individualism – communitarianism seems to undergo a rapid development due to globalisation. Even the caste system which is connected to the eternal religion, Hinduism, in India seems to be affected by globalisation and is gradually becoming a system of class, an expression of material goods instead of karma. In connection with the changing of the caste system, the dimension of how status is accorded will change as well and become westernised.

The nuclear family pattern which is gaining acceptance in Indian society can affect more of the dimensions. I stressed the dimension specificity – diffuseness in the discussion. Mostly because of the fact that this change might cause another perception of the family being a whole.

Globalisation in India has resulted in modern, urbanised Indians living along with immemorial traditions and values. Even though the Indians are becoming modernised and are embracing the western values, it seems to be the case that they still hold on to some of their traditions, including their religion which is still important when it comes to a change
of values in a society. As stated in appendix 2, it might be the case that India is becoming a part of a global culture.
6. Abstract

The aim of this assignment is to analyse Indian culture by means of the six value dimensions; Universalism vs. Particularism, Individualism vs. Communitarianism, Specificity vs. Diffusion, Achieved status vs. Ascribed status, inner direction vs. Outer direction, Sequential time vs. Synchronous time. My results indicate that Indian culture is very different from the cultures of Western Europe and the USA. Indian culture is particularist, communitarian, diffuse, outer-directed culture that values ascribed status and has a synchronous view upon time. The cultures of Western Europe and the United states are in the opposite ends of the scale, with exceptions, that is.

My discussion deals with the impact of globalisation on the six value dimensions. It is evident that globalisation has affected Indian culture. It seems to be the case that Indians are becoming more individualistic oriented and that the caste system is slowly becoming a system of class. Moreover, the family pattern is changing from a joint family to a nuclear family in India which also affects the values.
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Appendices

Appendix 1

Interview with Dr.ing., Rainer Hamminger

Could you tell me shortly who you are and about your education?

- Yes. I am “tysker”

Yes, I know… ha ha

- I have studied mechanical engineering and processing and material science in Germany. And I have got a PhD at nuclear research centre in southern Germany and have spent around about 30 years in industry meanwhile, so to say, in management functions – different.

And you have worked in a lot of different countries with a lot of different cultures?

- Ja. I have been working in the in the United States, in Japan, in India shortly only but with Indians for a longer period in Europe. I have been working in Denmark, in Belgium, in Great Britain, in Poland

Okay. Good. Have you received any intercultural training or courses?

- Not at all. I have it, so to say, in my blood.

Yes. You are a natural talent. And you have worked together with Indians?

- Yes I have been working with one of that Indian private giant companies, Reliance.

Which kind of jobs did the Indians have? Were they managers or..?

- Only managers. Top leaders. I had only to do with top leaders.

Okay. Which problems did occur when you communicated, if any?

- First of all I must say that the... in the very first beginning, so to say, no problems occur. They always listen and they are always extremely friendly and they usually agree and the problems occur then with concrete agreements which are typically rarely kept. Rarely kept.
In your work with Indians have you ever experienced missed deadlines or lack of punctuality?

- This is normal, so to say. Especially deadlines and also the concrete items are typically missing or delayed or you get something completely different of what has been agreed on – what I guess is very much due to the hierarchical culture in India. There is always a boss above and they always have to talk after a meeting or an agreement they always have to report to the boss and the boss to the bosses etc. etc. etc.... and then the outcome is something completely different – this is rather typical.

Did you get the impression that Indians try to sort of adapt when communicating with them? You mentioned before that they always seem to agree?

- They rarely say no and, yes, you can say so. They are very friendly and polite. They sort of let you take control and sometimes they almost seem afraid of you. Afraid to offend you.

Were they easy to cooperate with?

- Based on what I just said, in principle yes. As long as you do not have to come to concrete results with them. They are always very friendly and very harmonic and nice – even nice and also funny quite often. First, it is easy to cooperate with them. The outcome is the problem.

Okay. These Indians you cooperated with... Were you aware of which caste they were from?

- Partly, only. I have made the experience in India and with Indians in Europe as well that some of them are very open-minded about that subject and talk about it. And also, maybe 50 percent but the other 50 percent do not talk about it at all. And I also made the experience that some are, let us again say 50-60 percent are very open-minded and also talk about their families and circumstances at home etc. etc. Others do not at all. There is a barrier. And typically they do not comment in a general sense they do not comment on their caste system. Typically not but I have also met some who did. But this is only, let us say 5-10 percent maybe. The managers spoke to me differently than to ones with a lower status. Maybe because I am a Westerner.

Okay. Did the Indians seem to separate their private life from their work life?
- Yes. I would say so, yes. According to the experiences I have made they do. Yes. Most of them.

When negotiating something did they trust you or did they to build a relationship with you before an agreement?

- Yes. They typically tried to create and build up at least a basic for a relationship. The second part of your question: Did they trust me or do they trust non-Indians so to say. No. But they do not trust Indians either. This is important – they do not trust other Indians either. Not at all.

No. Because of all of the corruption?

- Yes. Yes.

Exactly. This is a very broad question. But where did you differentiate yourself most from the Indians: the biggest differences between you and the Indians.

- I guess it is in fact two aspects: The one is the hierarchical thinking and understanding – they act and they behave totally hierarchical. This is the one. The second is the religious aspect. This is the second, I would say. Not talking about food and all that now, of course. We are not talking about that now. But the two things that are most important are the religion and I have met Indians in Europe and in India who do not behave very religious, so to say and I have met others that are strictly religious who keep all the rules and the traditions and pray to all their many Gods etc. etc. It is also funny to see all of the shrines in the factories in India. A lot of different shrines in a modern factory. Different Gods in one factory. Very very strange for us.

Yes. It must be. Thank you, Mr. Hamminger.
Appendix 2: Globalisation and Indian Cultural Values, part 1

The interviews are available at:


Now..My name is Zack Lahey. I am a senior. My movie is the effects of globalization of Indian cultural Values and it is about how globalization has affected India during the past 15 years.

Globalization, I think has made India more competitive. When the competition started in TV or in any consumer developer, anything you see. When they were clothes they were selling any crap. There was no quality, there was no choices, hardly had any choice. Then, slowly, things started opening up. They were competitive, they were better, they started servicing people. Globally, consumers they came but in India it was not like that. Consumers depended on what ever I make you have to buy. But now consumer has a choice.

Nikhil Desai, International Speaker, Motivator and Trainer:

Globalisation is affecting India positively. There has been more competition, therefore better products that have come into India. India which was once a market which was essentially a seller’s market has now become a buyer’s market because there were a few monopolies that dominated, just one example being the Indian skies(?) only ... one domestic and one international ... were the carriers why you got so many carriers and, therefore, better service and more flights to international destinations within and outside the country. So globalization has definitely affected India and us in a very positive matter.

Kalpesh Singh, Website Designer:

Globalisation, basically brought in an opportunity ... It has definitely...excellent things have happened, really.

Nikhil Desai, International Speaker, Motivator and Trainer:

India is now recognized as one of the major economic powers in the world. India could, infact, have been there many decades ago but some of the policies of the governments were actually not helping India to grow. Now things are changing to the positive side and if we can help that happening in a faster way...

Sajit Pisharodi, Equity Fund Manager, Kotak:
Primary there are 4-5 things that need to be balanced. It is your family life, it is your money matters, what money you are making. Three I think is your spiritual life. Then, obviously the quality time you spend with your family and other things. See India is a culture if you look at it a traditional culture. You stay with your family. It is like a joint family.

Nikhil Desai, International Speaker, Motivator and Trainer:

Joint families structure, for example in India that was so strong is now giving way to the nuclear families of the West... and... it creates problems ‘cause the structure that was there from the other generation, from the grandparents... You see, grandparents was a good support system because they had time. .. it was ideal. Grandparents had the children to spend time with. Children had the wisdom of the grandparents which, sometimes the parents could not provide because they were busy with either making the home or the professional career. So it has affected. We are going more nuclear in terms of families.

Dr, Malini Shah, Family Psychologist:

...we have seen a disintegration of the joint families. We now have nuclear families coming up. Sometimes both of the parents are working and maybe the child is alone or someone else is there to take care of the child. Initially you had grandparents to stay with them. So some kind of value collocation used to happen. But nowadays, it is... because they are moving like everyone is more self- individualistic.

Nikhil Desai, International Speaker, Motivator and Trainer:

Indians are distancing themselves from reality as compared to what they see in terms of western culture. What they see on television, what they see at some of the call centers ..there is a difference between their traditional values and what they see there. And slowly they start believing that that is a better life. You know – progress mean: bigger car, bigger house, and not progress, like Martin Luther King said: man has made great technological progress but is inner progress... as a result we have guided missiles but misguided men. And that is... that maybe, unknowingly people get misguided as to what is the real purpose of life, what will give them true fulfillment and happiness [...] 

Anonymous:

It is not the aim of globalisation to influence competition but it creates a kind of have and have-nots...
Anonymous:

Money basically relates to glamour and that is something which will attract anybody. In BPO industry you have a particular set of people they know how American culture works. They know, they interact with American people or they interact with international people for that matter. Say people from UK or Australia. So what they feel is they are an edge above the others just because their confidence level has increased by way of interaction that’s one. And they feel that they can, they are, they have manuý more things that they can do better than the other, than the normal Indians or than the people they probably might call localites. They think that OK. I am a bit above the other because you know, I’ve, I know a lot of things these guy don’t know. The clothing has improved so much, the way people dress now is completely different. I mean the Western culture has completely taken over the Indian culture, basically.

Anonymous:

You’ve seen a lot of changes, like every girl aspires to be the next Miss India. And a lot of burgeoning of the health centers, especially the gyms. So a lot of emphasis is paid on external attributes. You see sometimes students and they have to say something at the house they would rather call from the phone […]a lot of children are left alone because of the nuclear family structure […]

Now people have more spending capacity due to globalization. So finances have improved. As an individual I can basically go out for shopping, for movies, for eating outside there are franchises like McDonald’s and Pizza Hut and Domino’s coming up. So… post to globalization it was more kind of a traditional Indian family – prior to globalization. Post to globalization this thing has broken up. Everybody has become very self-independent. So, you know there has been a little shift between the father and the son scenario. Previously it used to be traditional that the father used to say: boy, you have to start working […] but now the son becomes independent very fast. The moment they finish their graduation or post graduation they are on their own . There are companies, there are offices that are ready to take you and pay for your skills. You have a spending power, you have a spending capacity, you tend to move on.

Anonymous:

It is not that India has become Americanised. India is just delving itself into a global culture.