

# Classification and Quantification of Cultural Basements and Elements Used in Multicultural Families

(autoethnographic research)

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## Introduction

The purpose of this autoethnographic research consists of describing and structuring personal cultural background that directed general lifestyle, career, psychological development, personal life, and self-education in the period since getting 11 years old until getting 40+ years old. In the process of structuring, it has been found that description of cultural background follows some strict mathematical and categorical patterns. These patterns may be either my personal particularity or something universal not depending on my cultures, ethnicities, or cognitive processes; more detailed research of this topic with large number of respondents is desired.

The document contains the draft version of research; the research has been performed by me since the end of 2019<sup>th</sup> year till the end of 2020<sup>th</sup> year in the process of writing guide on building family and parenting models that was published at <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.3576245>. Initial version of this research in the format of research proposal has been included in the collection of ideas for social researches published at <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.3364008>. In the subsequent versions of this document, you may expect to see improved text structure, minor fixes of text style, deeper theoretical background, and possible practical applications of results.

## Methods

All results have been summarized just by recalling multiple details of life in memory within one day at the end of 2019<sup>th</sup> year. Then, some details have been added within several weeks.

The term *cultural basement* describes general set of cultural constructs and practices used within particular geographical region, ethnic group, or religious community. The term *cultural element* describes one of cultural constructs and practices used within particular cultural basement. All listed cultural basements and elements were thought about and/or verbalized somehow in the period since getting 11 years old until getting 18 years old; however, the first full summary has been created just within the latest year when I was 40+ years old already. In other words, usage of these cultural basement and elements was “semi-conscious” within almost 25-30 years. By now, almost all of them may be considered either as abandoned experience from the past or as natural eternal part of my personality.

In spite of active usage of religious cultural basements, I’m neither religious nor believer; these basements were used outside of practicing religious ceremonies and outside of accepting existence of god(s).

It is obvious that some elements may be freely regrouped between basements because they are rather universal; in my case, they were grouped as provided further just in according to source of information about element (particular relative or book purchased by particular relative, for example), or in according to cultural/psychological communication context where the element was taken from.

Summary of results is given outside of genealogical, ethnic, demographical, historical, psychological, medical, and economical contexts just to avoid digging too deeply; it is a topic for much more detailed research involving group of scientists with multidisciplinary background and large budget. In this research, I would like just to highlight the following details:

- structuring of cultural background obtained in childhood and teenage years is possible even for amateur in social sciences and psychology (I have not any degree in these fields); although, for young people assistance of professional interviewer may be needed;
- such structuring may result in unpredictable strict mathematical and categorical patterns;
- such patterns may correlate with multiple aspects of adult life, and subsequently, may have global social implications.

## Results

### **Cultural basements and elements taken from my parents/grandparents**

- “Ashkenazi Jewish” – strict monogamy, concentration at education and self-learning, being either business-oriented or science-oriented or arts-oriented in professional life, females playing dominant role in family relationships, using basics of kashrut;

- “general Central Asian” – village-style thinking, high fertility, obedience to state, acceptance of superiority of Islamic culture and generally Semitic cultures;
- “Russian/Soviet” – internationalism (Soviet ideology of multiculturalism limited to USSR and friendly countries), separating ordinary life stream from official state ideology stream, using Russian language as primary one in family relationships, being Europe-oriented;
- “general Islamic” – obedience to supernatural forces in daily life (it was cultivated by my father repeating “*Allah berse*” regularly, which means the same as “*InshAllah*”), considering knowledge of Arabic language as desired, so-called “Islamic/Semitic internationalism” (the term is created by me to describe transition of Soviet internationalism ideology to the whole Islamic/Semitic world, but as I remember similar concept really exists in Islam), giving Arabic first names to kids.

### **Cultural basements and elements extracted from mass media, movies, classic literature, popular literature, popular science literature, and science literature**

Some elements may look strange for person grown up in Russia, but you should understand that I grew up in 1980’s and 1990’s in the situation of economical/political collapse and expansion of Western cultures into Russian/Soviet mass media. At the same time, you should note that active reading and watching of TV/movies were encouraged by parents and grandparents; that’s why all absorbed cultural material had psychological foundation in interpersonal family relationships (for example, father and mother purchased literature in different genres/styles with training different parts of my mind appropriately).

- “Mediterranean” – deep relatedness between family members, being arts-oriented in professional life, public demonstration of affection and sexuality, considering Mediterranean region residence or US residence as prerequisites for family building and successful life;
- “Protestant” – labour-based life philosophy (up to using labour as one of sexual sublimation methods), individualism, nuclear family, considering US residence as prerequisite for family building and successful life;
- “modern US” (“modern” for 1980’s and 1990’s) – multiculturalism, high mobility, considering residence in one of international megalopolises as prerequisite for family building and successful life, obedience to laws, regular sportive training;
- “exotic anthropological” – using elements of traditional visual cultures and lifestyles as elements of sexual play between spouses (considering females in exotic traditional clothes as very sexually attractive), orientation towards living in nature and “being green” in daily lifestyle, using science as basement for family relationships and other parts of life, giving “exotic” first names to kids (I had not and I have not kids, but the idea about giving “exotic” first names was reviewed by me firstly in teenage years).

## Notes

- The following items have been recalled in memory in several weeks after writing down the most part of background: practicing kashrut, giving Arabic names to kids, regular sportive training, and giving “exotic” names to kids. No more items have been recalled after that during almost half of the year.
- When I lived with parents and grandparents, pork never was consumed; at least once, theoretical explanation of kashrut was given to me in my early childhood by grandmother; until now, just by habit I still don’t consume pork, except rare situations when other sorts of meat are completely absent, and I need to eat much.
- Repeating “*Allah berse*” regularly was done by my father; at least once, in my childhood, one of my grandfathers forced me to perform some Islamic religious ritual before dinner; I didn’t practice anything of this by myself, but I’m superstitious a little; this superstitiousness is supported by some risky travels I make, and generally, by my lifestyle.
- Cultural basements are listed in the order of significance from the most significant to less significant.
- Order of cultural basements and elements extracted from mass media, movies, classic literature, popular literature, popular science literature, and science literature does not relate to the order of basements and elements extracted from personal communication with parents and grandparents. In other words, it is a separate set of the same significance as the previous one.

## Quantitative summary of results

So, we have 2 sets of cultural basements being used since getting 11 years old until getting 40+ years old. There are 4 basements in each of sets of basements. Each basement consists of 4-5 elements. The total of elements in each set is 17. The basement with 5 elements may have lower significance than basement with 4 elements.

## Qualitative summary of results

All elements listed above may be roughly regrouped in 17 groups reflecting different aspects of social life (although, approach to regrouping and total number of groups may be highly debated):

- “family structure” – strict monogamy, females playing dominant role in family relationships, high fertility, deep relatedness between family members, individualism, nuclear family;
- “role and methods of education” – concentration at education and self-learning;
- “career options” – being either business-oriented or science-oriented or arts-oriented in professional life;
- “religious practices” – using basics of kashrut;

- “general level of traditionality” – village-style thinking;
- “obedience to external forces” – obedience to state, separating ordinary life stream from official state ideology stream, obedience to supernatural forces in daily life (it was cultivated by my father repeating “*Allah berse*” regularly, which means the same as “*InshAllah*”), obedience to laws;
- “superiority of particular ethnocultural groups” – acceptance of superiority of Islamic culture and generally Semitic cultures, being Europe-oriented;
- “geography of internationalism and multiculturalism” – Soviet internationalism, so-called “Islamic/Semitic internationalism”, US multiculturalism;
- “languages” – using Russian language as primary one in family relationships, considering knowledge of Arabic language as desired;
- “names given to kids” – giving Arabic or “exotic” first names to kids;
- “role of sex” – public demonstration of affection and sexuality, using elements of traditional visual cultures and lifestyles as elements of sexual play between spouses (considering females in exotic traditional clothes as very sexually attractive);
- “migration routes” – considering Mediterranean region residence or US residence as prerequisite for family building and successful life, considering residence in one of international megalopolises as prerequisite for family building and successful life;
- “role of labour” – labour-based life philosophy (up to using labour as one of sexual sublimation methods);
- “mobility” – high mobility;
- “role of sports” – regular sportive training;
- “attitude to nature” – orientation towards living in nature and “being green” in daily lifestyle;
- “role of science” – using science as basement for family relationships and other parts of life.

## Discussion

As you can guess, here are the primary directions of further research of this topic:

- perform quantitative research documented above with large number of respondents, cross-culture studies and cross-nation studies are recommended; monocultural families need to be included in the research too; cultural basement may be based not only on geography, ethnicity or religion, but on professional and recreational activity too (like cultures of professional musicians or amateur musicians, for example);

- determine underlying principles of extracting particular basements and elements from information streams falling on child/teenager, including influence of genetic and social background;
- determine implications of collected results as on single respondent level as on society level.