

CULTURAL RESEARCH QUESTIONS

General

Briefly describe the people's physical environment; demographic statistics; political environment.

Family

1. What is the role of each member of the family?
2. How companionable is the husband-wife relationship? How much trust, respect, and understanding is there? How much disrespect, deception, or tension?
3. How much freedom does the woman have? How much authority? Give examples. How much education has she had? What is her economic role?
4. How are the children taught? How are they disciplined? How important are other adults in socializing the child? How important is the child's peer group? How much does the father play with the child? How long do the parents control the child's choices? Is there a generation gap? How do people try to bridge it?
5. What do the old people do? How do other family members treat them?
6. How does the family make decisions? Who takes the lead? Are there discussions? How does the family settle quarrels? Describe some quarrels you have seen or have been told about. Who are the most loyal family members? Who are the least loyal? Are there some marginal organization?
7. How is the family related to other structures in society: to the neighborhood? to the kin? to community organizations?

Social Structures

8. Who are the community opinion leaders? (These may include media and national as well as local figures.)
9. What is the community decision-making unit? What is the process?
10. How does the community settle quarrels?
11. What are the natural lines of affiliation? (These may tie individuals to several networks.)
12. In their most common group, what are: the rights and obligations of members; any distinctive roles; special rituals or celebrations; myths or special reputation of the group; models; villains; other techniques of boundary maintenance; any distinctions between formal and informal behaviors.

Communication

13. What are their: topics of conversation; joys; achievements (from their point of view); failures, heroes? What are they reading? Listening to? Where are they traveling? What questions are they asking?
14. Do they have any in-group language, codes, or symbols?
15. Do they have any distinct kinds of humor?
16. What kinds of media do they prefer: books, magazines, newspapers, leaflets, comics, radio, TV, drama, music, demonstrations, posters?
17. What style of verbal arrangement do they prefer: nonfiction, narrative, poetry, myth, proverbs, comics, debates, frankness or subtlety; abstractions or references to tangible things; induction or deduction; lectures or case studies; memorization or problem-centered learning; enthusiasm or formal presentations?
18. What are the main themes of columnists in national newspapers and magazines?

Economy

19. What are the local natural resources?
20. What are the common local products made for home use or for sale?
21. What is the spread of occupations?
22. What percent are rich, comfortable, subsistence level, or destitute? Do these economic class lines coincide with other classifications (i.e., kin, caste, etc.) or do they cut across these divisions, tying people together?
23. What is the average daily diet?
24. Do they consider themselves impoverished, or not?
25. What kinds of expenditure do they delight in? (clothes, parties, insurance policies, investments, labor-saving gadgets...)
26. What kinds of expenditure do they consider extravagant?
27. What do economists think are the country's chief economic problems? Its assets? Its economic opportunities?
28. What do neighbors think the country's chief economic problems are? How do they experience these?
29. Is there a Marxist movement among university students? What are their specific complaints?
30. Is there economic tension between ethnic groups?

31. What percent own their own land and/or business?
32. What are some of the most powerful political and economic entities in the environment of these people? How do they feel about these?
33. In the main, what social class in the national system do these people occupy? What are the functions or potential functions of this class in the total system?
34. How are large political functions of this class in the total system?
35. How are large political and economic entities likely to affect these people over the next ten years? Hypothesize various alternative scenarios.

Religion

35. What do they turn to in a time of crisis?
36. What do they think of man's destiny? Man's origin?
37. What do they think will provide a full and meaningful life?
38. Do they think there is a transcendent power in the universe? Do they think they can relate to it? How?
39. What are their ideas of the supernatural? God? Christ? man? sin? Christians?
40. What moral system do they actually try to live by?
41. Do they participate in more than one religion? If so, when, where, and concerning what do they express each faith?

Values

42. What are their distinct felt needs?
43. What are their distinct values? (Contributing to needs/values may be: economic problems; ethnic theory; social tensions; marital or generational conflicts; problems in housing, schooling, medicine, legal justice; recreation; technology; childraising patterns; art; vocational aspirations; modernization or obsolescence; attitudinal emphases such as romantic love, loneliness, pleasure, family pride, friendliness, achievement, communal solidarity).
44. What do these people consider to be the significant events of the last 30 years? of the last 500 years? How have they reacted to these events?

Social Extension Network

45. What internal variations do these people exhibit: in language and dialect; in social class; in national citizenship; in geographic distribution, and in differing ecological milieus; in degree of modernization (including education, urbanization, types of jobs, desired family pattern and size, spending habits, etc.)
46. What various networks tie a member of this people to other people outside the group? What are the strongest externalizing networks?
47. Are a significant part of these people functioning customarily in terms of two (or more) cultural codes? Beyond the mother-tongue-and-culture, do the other codes come from: near neighboring people; early foreign colonizers/immigrants who helped form the nation? recent foreign colonizers/traders?
48. Given multiple codes, do these people seem to evidence code integration or code switching? Is the code switching direct and cumulative? i.e., are the people gradually changing from one ethnic identity to another over time? How do the feel about having multiple codes?
49. How do the people identify themselves? With what specific traits would they identify someone who is a _____ (member of their group)?
50. How do they feel about their identity and ethnicity?
51. Is their ethnic affirmation maintained more because of a sense of satisfaction in their primordial roots, or because their ethnic identity gives them economic/political advantage?
52. If a church exists among this people, in what ways has Christianity enhanced their sense of their heritage?
53. In what ways has Christianity facilitated national integration? Has this eroded ethnic distinctives? (**should this be ethnic distinctions?**)
54. In what ways could Christianity enhance this people's ethnic distinctives? (**should this be ethnic distinctions?**)