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*Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology* 2003 34: 304  
DOI: 10.1177/0022022103034003005

The online version of this article can be found at:  
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# INDIVIDUALISM, COLLECTIVISM, AND AUTHORITARIANISM IN SEVEN SOCIETIES

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Building on Hofstede's finding that individualism and social hierarchy are incompatible at the societal level, the authors examined the relationship between individualism-collectivism and orientations toward authority at the individual level. In Study 1, authoritarianism was related to three measures of collectivism but unrelated to three measures of individualism in a U.S. sample ( $N = 382$ ). Study 2 used Triandis's horizontal-vertical individualism-collectivism framework in samples from Bulgaria, Japan, New Zealand, Germany, Poland, Canada, and the United States (total  $N = 1,018$ ). Both at the individual level and the societal level of analysis, authoritarianism was correlated with vertical individualism and vertical collectivism but unrelated to horizontal collectivism. Horizontal individualism was unrelated to authoritarianism except in post-Communist societies whose recent history presumably made salient the incompatibility between state authority and self-determination.

**Keywords:** individualism; collectivism; authoritarianism; cultural values

**Cultural theorists generally agree** that values championed by a society are the product of a complex historical process involving all domains of social, economic, and political life. From an adaptationist angle, cultural systems can be examined as the product of the interaction of a people with their ecological, geographical, and climatic environment (e.g., Cohen, 2001;

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AUTHORS' NOTE: Many thanks to Jessica Cameron, Adena Cytron, Richard Denzel, Marjorie Knepp, John McCoy, Kaori Moritomo, Paresh Patel, Larry Wong, and Laura Zettel for their assistance in collecting and coding the data of Study 1. We are indebted to Takahiko Masuda, Izumi Sakamoto, Piotr Winkielman, Grzegorz Król, and Katharina Seidler for their assistance with Study 2. Many thanks to Heather Gillespie, Cath Byrne, Shannon Curtis, and Aleksandra Kozłowska for their help in preparing this article. Address correspondence concerning this article to Markus Kemmelmeier, Interdisciplinary Ph.D. Program in Social Psychology, Department of Sociology, Mail Stop 300, University of Nevada, Reno, Reno, NV 89557, USA; markusk@unr.edu.

JOURNAL OF CROSS-CULTURAL PSYCHOLOGY, Vol. 34 No. 3, May 2003 304-322

DOI: 10.1177/0022022103253183

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Diamond, 1997; Harris, 1968). Emphasizing more the dynamics of cultural evolution, modernity theorists, starting with Karl Marx (1973), have proposed that cultural values evolve along a predictable trajectory (e.g., Hofstede, 1980; Inkeles & Smith, 1974). As traditional societies advance technologically, they assume new modes of production, leading to a revolution in the nature of work and an increase in societal wealth (Bell, 1973; Inglehart, 1997). Such far-reaching economic transformations are thought to be reflected in dramatic changes in people's priorities, shifting them from concerns about survival and economic security to the goal of self-actualization. Specifically, in the social realm modernity theorists propose that traditional values emphasizing adherence to social norms and submission to established authority give way to values focusing on individual self-determination (Inglehart, 1990, 1997).

Even though cultural change is certainly not uniform across different societies (e.g., Inglehart & Baker, 2000), this trend from tradition to modernity is exemplified in the emergence of individualist values, which typically occurred on the background of a restrictive social order. Historically, individualism is a product of the ideology of liberalism whose emphasis on civic liberties and freedom emerged in opposition to authoritarian oppression during the late 18th and 19th century, especially the American Revolution and French revolution (cf. Gelfand, Triandis, & Chan, 1996; Lukes, 1973; Triandis, 1995). The central idea of these and similar political movements was the recognition of individual self-determination, individual human rights, and the limitation of state control over the individual—ideas that form the philosophical cornerstone of today's civic democracies. As a consequence, the cultural ideology of individualism appears to be diametrically opposed to the notion of conformity to the group and subordination to authority.

Indeed, results of Hofstede's (1980) seminal multinational study on cultural values are consistent with this idea. Examining data obtained in 40 societies, he found a pronounced negative correlation ( $r = -.67$ ) between individualism and power distance, a construct referring to the degree to which relationships between individuals of a society are hierarchical. Thus, Hofstede demonstrated that the greater the level of power distance, the lower the level of individualism in a society. Other analyses demonstrated that individualism and power distance loaded on the same factor, suggesting that they are opposite ends of an underlying continuum (Hofstede, 1980, chap. 5).<sup>1</sup> These findings support the notion that at the cultural level, individualism and adherence to authority and hierarchy are incompatible. Because Hofstede considered collectivism the opposite of individualism, his findings also implied that power distance and hierarchy are inherently linked to collectivism.

#### **DISTINGUISHING LEVELS OF ANALYSIS**

One of the central lessons of cultural psychology is that individual and societal levels of analysis have to be carefully distinguished and findings obtained using societies as units of analysis do not necessarily correspond to findings obtained in studies using individuals (e.g., Diener & Diener, 1995; Kemmelmeier, Król, & Kim, 2002). This is most apparent in the relationship between the constructs of individualism and collectivism. Because individualism and collectivism appear to be semantic opposites, early research assumed them to define opposite ends of the same psychological dimension such that societies high in individualism are simultaneously low in collectivism and vice versa (e.g., Hofstede, 1980; Hui, 1988). However, when individualism and collectivism were assessed as aspects of an individual's belief system, and not as cultural-level phenomena, a different pattern emerged. At the individual level of measurement, the two constructs were found to constitute orthogonal

dimensions, implying that individuals high in individualism are *not* necessarily low in collectivism and vice versa (e.g., Bontempo, 1993; Oyserman, 1993; Rhee, Uleman, & Lee, 1996; Singelis, 1994; Triandis, Bontempo, Villareal, Asai, & Lucca, 1988; cf. Trafimow, Triandis, & Goto, 1991).<sup>2</sup> Whereas at the societal level, individualism-collectivism constitute a single bipolar dimension, at the individual level they form two independent unipolar dimensions and individuals may simultaneously endorse both individualist and collectivist values without contradiction (Leung, 1989; Triandis, 1989).

What does the independence of individualism and collectivism imply for people's orientation toward authority? Although individualism may be incompatible with hierarchy and submission to authority at the cultural level, it is not clear that individuals' beliefs about authority are equally incompatible with their individualist values. Therefore, in this study, we examine the relationship between individualism, collectivism, and authoritarianism. We propose that there is considerable similarity between collectivist and authoritarian beliefs, causing them to be highly correlated; at the same time, we propose that there is no such relationship between individualism and authoritarianism.

#### COLLECTIVISM AND AUTHORITARIANISM

The concept of collectivism emphasizes interdependence between the self and one's group or community, implying that collectivists place more value on collective goals and are guided more by group norms and traditional authority figures (Oyserman, Coon, & Kemmelmeier, 2002; Triandis, 1995). Cross-cultural studies have shown that members of collectivist societies are more concerned about conforming to social norms than are members of individualist societies. For example, a meta-analysis of conformity research showed that people from collectivistic societies were more influenced by a majority than those in individualistic societies (Bond & Smith, 1996). Schwartz (1994a) corroborates this idea with evidence that collectivistic cultures endorse traditional (and conservative) values more than do individualistic societies. Further research suggests that individuals with a collectivistic background are more likely to base behavioral decisions on group norms and others' expectations than on own preferences (e.g., Peng, Kemmelmeier, Burnstein, & Manis, 1996). Moreover, there is evidence that people from collectivist societies, more than those from individualist societies, feel a sense of obligation to in-group members, defer to in-group authorities, draw a firmer distinction between in-group and out-group members, and show greater in-group bias (e.g., Cha, 1994; Earley, 1989; Triandis, 1989; Wheeler, Reis, & Bond, 1989; see Oyserman et al., 2002, for a recent review). Similar findings have been obtained at the individual level of analysis, that is, when the relationship between social behavior and endorsement of collectivist beliefs of members of the same society was examined (e.g., Jackson & Smith, 1999; Triandis et al., 1988; Ybarra & Trafimow, 1998).

These features of collectivism reveal a striking similarity to those of authoritarianism, a construct originally introduced by Adorno, Frenkel-Brunswik, Levinson, and Sanford (1950). Presently, the most comprehensive and widely accepted theory of authoritarianism is that proposed by Altemeyer (1988, 1996; but see Martin, 2001). Altemeyer defines authoritarianism as a value syndrome that comprises three distinct elements: conventionalism, submission to authority, and authoritarian aggression. Authoritarians (a) adhere to conventional morality and value compliance with social norms, (b) emphasize hierarchy and deference to authority figures, and (c) possess a "law and order" mentality that legitimizes anger and aggression against those who deviate from social norms and conventions. There is ample

research supporting this conception of authoritarianism (see Altemeyer, 1988, 1996, 1998, for comprehensive reviews). First, studies show that authoritarianism is consistently related to conformity behavior and compliance with perceived norms, including religious teachings (e.g., Altemeyer, 1988; Johnson & Steiner, 1967). Second, authoritarians are often submissive (Meloan, Van der Linden, & De Witte, 1996) and obedient to authority, even when this implies inflicting injury on others (e.g., Elms & Milgram, 1966; Vaughan & White, 1966). Last, authoritarians support harsh punishments for those who violate social conventions or disobey authorities (Altemeyer, 1988; cf. Smith & Winter, 2002).

As this brief overview makes clear, the authoritarian emphasis on compliance with social norms and deference to in-group authority has its parallel in the collectivist attention to in-group expectations and respect for status and tradition (cf. Gelfand et al., 1996). At the same time, the concepts of authoritarianism and collectivism are dissimilar with regard to conformity and deference behavior: Whereas hostility against in-group deviants and out-groups is an integral component of authoritarianism, intra- and intergroup aggression is not explicitly included in the concept of collectivism.

Beyond the considerable conceptual similarity and overlap in empirical findings, Duckitt (1989) has proposed a more specific link between collectivism and authoritarianism. According to his theory, authoritarianism, at its core, entails the belief that in-group goals are superordinate to individuals' private pursuits. This establishes the primacy of social norms and group authority and gives the in-group license to enforce norms and punish deviants. Duckitt argues that historically, authoritarian regimes promoted a sense of commitment to the group and of self-sacrifice for the common good, which in turn was used to justify sanctions against dissenters. This tendency to subjugate individual rights and goals to those of a dominant collective is exemplified in the fascist regimes in Germany and Italy during the 1930s and 1940s or the totalitarian regime in the Soviet Union. Although we hold that there is no empirical evidence of an inherent connection between collectivism and aggression, Duckitt's hypothesis highlights that both authoritarianism and collectivism stress the ideas of group commitment and priority of group interest over self-interest (cf. Gelfand et al., 1996).

#### INDIVIDUALISM AND AUTHORITARIANISM

Where in many respects, collectivism appears to be compatible and even similar to authoritarianism, we argue that individualism and authoritarianism are different and unrelated, notwithstanding the apparent semantic incompatibility discussed earlier. Although there is little doubt that authoritarian ideology is antidemocratic and antiliberal, at the psychological level it is less clear whether authoritarians necessarily de-emphasize individual rights, self-determination, and the pursuit of self-interest, all central aspects of individualism. A review of the literature reveals that with regard to social and political attitudes, authoritarians do champion individual self-determination on some issues yet oppose it on others. For example, in the United States, authoritarians support laissez-faire policies regarding regulation of the domestic economy and oppose government intervention (McFarland, Ageyev, & Abalakina-Paap, 1992).<sup>3</sup> In Canada and the United States, authoritarianism is associated with rejecting efforts by collective institutions to control and limit individual gun ownership (Altemeyer, 1996; Nelson & Milburn, 1999). Moreover, in Canada, individuals high in authoritarianism strongly support freedom of choice in schooling (Altemeyer, 1996). However, on other issues, authoritarians resist individual self-determination. For example, they

tend to oppose freedom of choice when it comes to abortion (Altemeyer, 1996; Duncan, Peterson, & Winter, 1997; Peterson, Doty, & Winter, 1993) and physician-assisted suicide (Kimmelmeier, 2001; Kimmelmeier, Burnstein, & Peng, 1999; Kimmelmeier, Wiczorkowska, Erb, & Burnstein, 2002). Although as philosophies, authoritarianism and individualism are incongruous, whether they are incompatible at the psychological level, say, as personal value constructs, is ambiguous at best. In light of the inconsistent findings reviewed above, it is more cautious to assume that there is no systematic and stable relationship between authoritarian and individualist beliefs.

#### **SEMANTIC RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN INDIVIDUALISM, COLLECTIVISM, AND AUTHORITARIANISM**

To date, only one published study has systematically researched the relationship between individualism, collectivism, and authoritarianism at the individual level. Focusing on the naïve understanding of these constructs, Gelfand et al. (1996) had 38 undergraduate students judge the similarity between various terms chosen to represent individualist, collectivist, and authoritarian values (e.g., “choosing your own goal” for individualism, “devoutness” for authoritarianism, and “respect for tradition” for collectivism). The authors found in a multi-dimensional scaling analysis that a two-dimensional solution best accounted for the data. The first dimension was defined by the polar opposites individualism and authoritarianism, and the second dimension reflected an orthogonal collectivism dimension. That is, Gelfand et al. (1996) found support for the notion that individualism and authoritarianism were perceived to be incompatible. Yet, contrary to expectations, collectivism was *not* positively related to authoritarianism but unrelated to both individualism and authoritarianism.

Gelfand et al.’s (1996) study provides valuable insight into how individuals perceive the semantic relationships between these value constructs. However, it is clear that naïve conceptions of the three constructs may not be consistent with the constellation of individualism, collectivism, and authoritarianism when they are measured in the “living object.” Although research has shown that patterns of empirical self-descriptions often follow the semantic similarity of self-descriptive terms (e.g., Borkenau, 1992; Gara & Rosenberg, 1981), the intuitive understanding of the relationship between value concepts does not necessarily reflect the empirical relationship between the same concepts. Indeed, a recent study by Triandis and Gelfand (1998, Study 4) used an individual difference approach and showed authoritarianism to covary with some aspects of collectivism. Unfortunately, individualism was not reported in this study; hence, the full constellation between the three value constructs remains unclear (see also Rudy & Grusec, 2001; Urban, 1998).

#### **THE PRESENT SERIES OF STUDIES**

In the present studies, we choose an individual difference approach to assess the relationship between individualism, collectivism, and authoritarianism. Consistent with modern conceptions of individualism and collectivism, the two concepts are assessed with separate measures. In Study 1, conducted in the United States, we selected three sets of measures that allowed assessment of individualism-collectivism as distinct dimensions and explored their correlation with a standard measure of authoritarianism. Study 2 used a refined measure of individualism-collectivism and examined the cross-cultural generality of our findings. This study also allows an examination of authoritarianism and individualism-collectivism at the societal level.

## STUDY 1

### METHOD

#### Respondents

The data came from five different samples collected at the University of Michigan between 1996 and 1997. We ascertained that each respondent was included in only one of the five samples. Overall, there were 518 undergraduate students (236 men, 281 women; 1 unspecified). The mean age was 19.3 years and the majority of participants were of European American/Caucasian background (approximately 70%).

Because the data were originally collected for other purposes, samples varied with regard to the particular set of measures they completed. Only 57 participants received the complete set of four measures; others received subsets of two or three measures. Yet, because the main purpose of the present study was to assess the correlations between various measurement instruments, the maximum number of participants was included to estimate a particular correlation coefficient. Before collapsing the samples, we examined the reliability coefficients and patterns of correlations for those samples that received the same pairs of measures but found no differences. Also, because no gender differences were obtained, this variable is not discussed further.

#### Measures of Individualism-Collectivism

*Oyserman (1993)*. For her study of multiculturalism, Oyserman constructed two scales measuring the orthogonal dimensions of individualism and collectivism.<sup>4</sup> Sample items include “To know who I really am, you must examine my achievements and accomplishments” (individualism) and “If you know what groups I belong to, you know who I am” (collectivism). The reliability of the 12-item individualism scale and the 10-item collectivism scale was  $\alpha = .63$  and  $\alpha = .72$ , respectively.

*Bontempo (1993)*. In a methodological study comparing the translation fidelity of Triandis et al.’s (1988) INDCOL scale, Bontempo discovered that the scale comprised two independent subscales, one assessing individualism and one assessing collectivism. The present investigation used a slight modification of his scales removing the one item per subscale that was unrelated to the total subscale score. The reliability of the 10-item individualism scale was  $\alpha = .66$ . The reliability of the 5-item collectivism scale, however, turned out to be compromised,  $\alpha = .56$ . Sample items include “One does better working alone than in a group” (individualism) and “Aging parents should live at home with their children” (collectivism).

*Singelis (1994)*. We also used Singelis’s scales to measure independent and interdependent self-construals (Markus & Kitayama, 1991), which represent a central feature of individualism and collectivism. Each of the scales comprised 12 items. Sample items include “I enjoy being unique and different from others” (independence) and “I will sacrifice my self-interest for the benefit of the group I am in” (interdependence). Internal consistencies were  $\alpha = .69$  and  $\alpha = .72$ , respectively.

**TABLE 1**  
**Intercorrelations Between Scales (Study 1)**

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
RWA	<i>-.11<sup>a</sup></i> (57)	<i>.03<sup>a</sup></i> (57)	<i>.01<sup>b</sup></i> (375)	<i>.53<sup>a****</sup></i> (57)	<i>.33<sup>a*</sup></i> (57)	<i>.29<sup>b****</sup></i> (375)
Oyserman (1993)						
(1) Individualism		<i>.45<sup>**</sup></i> (193)	<i>.28<sup>*</sup></i> (54)	<i>-.05</i> (193)	<i>-.08</i> (193)	<i>-.22</i> (54)
Bontempo (1993)						
(2) Individualism			<i>.27<sup>*</sup></i> (54)	<i>.01</i> (193)	<i>-.02</i> (193)	<i>-.31<sup>**</sup></i> (54)
Singelis (1994)						
(3) Independence				<i>.20</i> (54)	<i>.17</i> (54)	<i>-.07</i> (382)
Oyserman (1993)						
(4) Collectivism					<i>.26<sup>***</sup></i> (193)	<i>.53<sup>***</sup></i> (54)
Bontempo (1993)						
(5) Collectivism						<i>.44<sup>**</sup></i> (54)
Singelis (1994)						
(6) Interdependence						

NOTE: Numbers in parentheses indicate the number of respondents on which the coefficient is based. Correlation coefficients indicating convergent validity of the various scales are italicized. RWA = right wing authoritarianism.

a. Thirty-item full version of RWA scale; 134 participants who only received the short version of the scale are not reported here. However, the pattern of correlations observed for this sample was identical.

b. 10-item short version of RWA scale.

\* $p < .05$ . \*\* $p < .01$ ; \*\*\* $p < .001$ .

*Authoritarianism.* We used Altemeyer's (1988) Right Wing Authoritarianism scale (RWA) ( $\alpha = .90$ ). Altemeyer (1988) defined authoritarianism in terms of authoritarian submission, aggression, and conventionalism. This scale is generally considered state-of-the-art (e.g., Eckhardt, 1991; Winter, 1990) and has been used extensively in the literature (e.g., Doty, Winter, Peterson, & Kemmelmeier, 1997; Tarr & Lorr, 1991). Of our total sample, only 57 participants received the full version of the scale ( $\alpha = .90$ ). The remainder was administered a 10-item short version developed by Haddock, Zanna, and Esses (1993) ( $\alpha = .73$ ). The correlation between the short and full versions of the scale was  $r = .87$ .

## RESULTS

The correlation coefficients between our measures of individualism, collectivism, and authoritarianism are displayed in Table 1. First, the three measures of individualism were unrelated to the three collectivism scales. The only exception was an unexpected negative correlation between Bontempo's (1993) individualism and Singelis's (1994) interdependent self-construal scales. This pattern is consistent with the general claim that individualism and collectivism constitute orthogonal dimensions when assessed at the individual level. Second, all three individualism measures were significantly correlated with each other, and the same was true for the three collectivism measures, thus providing evidence for the convergent validity of the different scales. Finally, even though the various individualism-collectivism scales converged, the level of association clearly shows that the measures of individualism and collectivism employed in this study are not redundant. Indeed, the convergent correlations have to be considered somewhat low in light of the fact that the all individualism measures and all collectivism measures were designed to tap the same underlying dimension. This is a reflection of the diverse conceptualizations of individualism and collectivism on the part of Bontempo, Oyserman (1993), and Singelis, which is typical for the

cultural-psychological literature (Kagitçibasi, 1997; Oyserman et al., 2002). Yet, despite stark differences, the present data clearly show that conceptualizations of individualism and collectivism are each configured around a common core.<sup>5</sup>

Regarding the associations between individualism-collectivism and authoritarianism, we found RWA was correlated with all three measures of collectivism/interdependence, a finding consistent with the hypothesis that there is a conceptual overlap between authoritarianism and collectivism. As expected, there was no correlation between RWA and any of the individualism measures. This supports our hypothesis that the two constructs are unrelated in the United States.

In a more focused analysis of the relationship between authoritarianism and individualism-collectivism, correlations were computed between Oyserman's (1993) measures and each of the 30 items of the full RWA scale ( $n = 57$ ) to examine which of the three elements of authoritarianism is responsible for this association with collectivism. Because Altemeyer (1988) did not provide a classification of items, the first and second author coded each of the 30 items of the RWA scale according to whether it reflected (a) authoritarian aggression, (b) submission, or (c) conventionalism or any combination of the three (see Smith & Winter, 2002, for a similar approach). To ensure objectivity, once an agreement had been reached, a research assistant repeated the classification. Inter-coder agreement was very high (96%): For all but one case, classifications were identical, and the discrepancy was resolved in discussion. As a result, 21 items received one code, and 9 items received two codes. In examining the relationship between collectivism and different aspects of authoritarianism, we found Oyserman's collectivism to be significantly correlated with 3 of 8 aggression items (38%), 8 of 14 submission items (57%), and 12 of the 17 conventionalism items (71%).<sup>6</sup> The lower level of correlation with authoritarian aggression indicates that this aspect is much less relevant to collectivism than are submission and conventionalism, as over half the items referring to these components of authoritarianism had a significant relationship with collectivism. This supports the notion that both authoritarianism and collectivism are concerned with conformity and obedience to in-group authority relationship. In contrast, Oyserman's (1993) individualism scale was only related to 2 of the 17 conventionalism items and to none of the submission or aggression items. Again, this finding confirms the assumption of dimensional independence between individualism and authoritarianism.

## STUDY 2

We explored the cross-cultural generality of the relationship between individualism and authoritarianism. Arguably, the ideology of liberalism and individualism emerged in the context of oppressive rule, in which the will of the individual was subjugated to the will of authorities, such as the monarch (Triandis, 1995). This suggests that oppression is an important and perhaps necessary condition to render salient the incompatibility between individuals' self-determination and adherence to the social and political order. In Study 1, the respondents were from a society with a long democratic tradition and whose citizens are relatively free to pursue their individual interests within an established legal and political system. Therefore, the absence of an open antagonism between the political order, on one hand, and individual freedom and self-determination, on the other hand, may be responsible for the absence of any correlation between individualism and authoritarianism. This might well be different in societies that are experiencing or have recently experienced totalitarian regimes.

In these societies, adherence to the social order may well be construed as incompatible with personal freedom and self-determination.

To test this hypothesis, we collected data in two post-Communist countries, Poland and Bulgaria. Until 1989, both countries were ruled by a Communist regime that severely limited individual freedom and self-expression. We also gathered data in two countries that experienced totalitarian regimes during the first half of the 20th century, namely Germany and Japan. In addition to the United States, we selected two countries, Canada and New Zealand, which had never experienced any kind of totalitarian regime. If totalitarianism shapes the constellation between individualist and authoritarian beliefs, we anticipated that psychological individualism and authoritarianism would be negatively correlated in societies whose historical experience includes oppression.

Study 2 also relies on a recent reconceptualization of individualism and collectivism proposed by Triandis and his colleagues (Singelis, Triandis, Bhawuk, & Gelfand, 1995; Triandis, 1995, 1996; Triandis & Gelfand, 1998). This framework is inspired by Fiske's (1992) analysis of elementary forms of human relationships and involves a horizontal-vertical dimension reflecting whether individualistic or collectivistic values pertained to equal status or to hierarchy (cf. Hofstede, 1980). In brief, the psychological concept of vertical individualism (VI) values competition and outperforming others (cf. Spence, 1985); horizontal individualism (HI) characterizes the desire to be unique and different from equal others; vertical collectivism (VC) includes valuing tradition and respect for the family; last, horizontal collectivism (HC) entails a sense of interdependence and connection with in-group members.

Because the authoritarian emphasis on conformity and submission to authority explicitly refers to power differences, we anticipated the vertical dimension in Triandis's (1995, 1996) model to be related to authoritarianism. Specifically, we expected that authoritarians would endorse the traditional authority structure of the family, resulting in a positive correlation between authoritarianism and VC. At the same time, authoritarianism is likely to be connected to in-group members' sense of interdependence with and connectedness to others. Even though authoritarians strongly identify with their group (e.g., Duckitt, 1989), attachment to the collective is psychologically distinct from attachment to individual in-group members (e.g., Hogg & Abrams, 1987). In short, HC mainly refers to interpersonal connectedness, not social identification with a collective, and thus should not be associated with authoritarianism. We expected this pattern to hold across all societies studied.

With regard to individualism, it is important to note that the concept of HI emphasizes personal uniqueness and self-determination and is very similar to Singelis's (1994) concept of independent self-construals as well as Oyserman's (1993) individualism construct (cf. Triandis & Gelfand, 1998). Based on our findings in Study 1, therefore, we expected HI to be unrelated to authoritarianism except in those societies with a recent history of totalitarianism. As outlined earlier, we anticipated authoritarianism to be negatively related in post-Communist countries and, perhaps, in Germany and Japan as well.

Last, concerning VI, there is considerable evidence that authoritarians prefer competition to cooperation (Kelley & Stahelski, 1970; Kuhlman & Marshello, 1975) and believe in natural hierarchies and the "survival of the fittest" (Altemeyer, 1996; Pratto, Sidanius, Stallworth, & Malle, 1994). Consequently, we predicted authoritarianism to be positively correlated with preference for competition, the primary component of VI.

Although Study 2 hopes to extend the individual-level findings of Study 1, it also allows an investigation of our hypotheses at the cultural level. That is, beyond exploring associations between authoritarianism and individualism-collectivism within each subsample, we examine our predictions using societies as units of analysis.

## METHOD

### Respondents

The data were collected between November 1997 and March 1999. In the United States, 192 undergraduate psychology students (82 males, 109 females; 1 unspecified) participated in the present study in exchange for course credit (mean age 18.8 years). The sample was ethnically mixed with 64% describing themselves as European American/Caucasian, 12% as African American, 10% as Asian American, and 4% as Latino. In Bulgaria, we obtained data from 322 university students (72 men, 247 women, 3 unspecified). The majority were in the 1st years of their studies (89%). The Japanese sample consisted of 86 undergraduate students in a psychology class (45 men, 41 women) with a mean age of 20.0 years. The Polish sample comprised 123 psychology students (69 men, 54 women) with a mean age of 22.5 years. In Germany, 102 psychology students completed our materials (23 men, 79 women). The mean age was 24.1 years. The German data were obtained at a university in former West Germany and only a minority of participants (< 10%) had come of age in former East Germany. The Canadian sample comprised 96 undergraduates (38 men, 54 women, 4 unspecified). The mean age was 19.3 years, with the majority of students being of a European cultural background. Finally, the sample from New Zealand comprised 111 undergraduate students in a political science class (54 men, 57 women), most of whom described themselves as of European origin (83%). No age information was available for this sample.

### Measures

We used items provided by Triandis (1995) to measure VI, HI, VC, and HC. There were eight items each to measure VI (e.g., "It is important for me that I do my job better than others"), HI (e.g., "I enjoy being unique and different from others in many ways"), VC (e.g., "I would sacrifice an activity that I enjoy very much if my family did not approve of it"), and HC ("It is important for me to maintain harmony within my group"). As in Study 1, we used Altemeyer's (1988) RWA scale to assess participants' level of authoritarianism, but all samples completed the full 30-item version of the scale.

English versions of the measures were used in the United States, New Zealand, and Canada. For Japan, Poland, Germany, and Bulgaria, the materials had to be translated into the respective national language. In Germany and Bulgaria, the common back-translation method was used (Brislin, 1986). In the case of Japan and Poland, translations were prepared collaboratively by at least three bilingual research psychologists. Because some of the items on the authoritarianism scale assume a Christian cultural background, it was necessary to slightly modify item content to adapt the scale to the Japanese cultural context.

## RESULTS

First, we examined the internal consistency of our measures in different samples. As shown in Table 2, in many cases the Cronbach's alpha coefficients were somewhat lower than the .70 standard proposed by Nunnally (1978). However, whereas reliability coefficients below .70 are not uncommon in the measurement of individualism and collectivism (see reviews by Coon & Kemmelmeier, 2001, and Oyserman et al., 2002), such low values indicate the presence of additional error variance. As a result, correlational analyses based on

**TABLE 2**  
**Cronbach's Alpha Reliabilities of Measures (Study 2)**

	<i>RWA</i>	<i>VI</i>	<i>HI</i>	<i>VC</i>	<i>HC</i>
Bulgaria ( <i>n</i> = 322)	.79	.60	.54	.69	.59
Canada ( <i>n</i> = 96)	.63	.80	.66	.47	.68
Germany ( <i>n</i> = 102)	.88	.77	.53	.67	.55
Japan ( <i>n</i> = 86)	.75	.75	.45	.75	.47
New Zealand ( <i>n</i> = 111)	.90	.79	.70	.61	.52
Poland ( <i>n</i> = 109)	.81	.67	.70	.70	.63
United States ( <i>n</i> = 192)	.80	.82	.68	.56	.63

NOTE: RWA = right wing authoritarianism; VI = vertical individualism; HI = horizontal individualism; VC = vertical collectivism; HC = horizontal collectivism.

these scales are likely to underestimate the true correlation coefficients between constructs (Cohen & Cohen, 1983).

We present two sets of analyses. Individual-level analyses explore the cross-cultural generality of the findings of Study 1. In addition, we conducted a set of analyses using societies as units of analysis to explore the relationship between authoritarianism and individualism-collectivism at the aggregate level.

### Individual-Level Analyses

To examine the relationship between individualism-collectivism and RWA, we used multiple linear regression models. Within each sample, we regressed RWA on VI, HI, VC, and HC, while controlling the influence of respondent age and gender. The standardized regression coefficients obtained for each sample, as well as the zero-order correlations, are summarized in Table 3. Our interpretation focuses on the regression results because, in contrast to Pearson correlations, beta coefficients are adjusted for possible redundancies between the four facets of Triandis's (1995, 1996) horizontal-vertical individualism-collectivism model.

As expected, we found that VC was consistently related to RWA in all seven samples. Replicating our findings from Study 1, the more individuals valued tradition and respected family authority, the higher they were in authoritarianism. At the same time, there was no positive relationship between RWA and HC, implying that the extent to which participants viewed themselves as embedded in their group and connected to others was generally unrelated to authoritarianism. We even obtained a negative association in our Bulgarian sample between HC and RWA, showing that interpersonal connectedness was at least in part incompatible with authoritarianism. The differential association of RWA with VC but not HC is additional evidence for the notion that both RWA and VC emphasize submission to in-group authority.

With regard to individualism, we found that in the United States, as well as in the other two English-speaking countries, HI was not related to RWA. Given that the individualism measures used in Study 1 are similar to HI, this null finding represents a conceptual replication of our results. The results for Germany and Japan resembled those found for the English-speaking countries, presumably because the strong democratic traditions established in the second half of the last century replaced the experience of authoritarian rule. However, as predicted, the correlation between HI and RWA was negative and significant in the post-

**TABLE 3**  
**Relationship Between Individualism-Collectivism Scales and RWA:**  
**Individual-Level Analyses (Study 2)**

	<i>Individualism</i>				<i>Collectivism</i>			
	<i>VI</i>		<i>HI</i>		<i>VC</i>		<i>HC</i>	
	<i>r</i>	$\beta$	<i>r</i>	$\beta$	<i>r</i>	$\beta$	<i>r</i>	$\beta$
Bulgaria ( <i>n</i> = 322)	.11*	.07	-.14**	-.14**	.35***	.40****	.03	-.14**
Canada ( <i>n</i> = 96)	.05	-.04	-.11	-.09	.35***	.37***	.06	.09
Germany ( <i>n</i> = 102)	.24**	.10	-.05	.00	.31***	.35***	-.05	-.12
Japan ( <i>n</i> = 86)	.10	.13	.05	-.06	.43****	.44****	.21**	-.06
New Zealand ( <i>n</i> = 111)	.28***	.27***	-.10	-.14	.44****	.53****	-.08	-.18*
Poland ( <i>n</i> = 109)	.09	.18*	-.13	-.21**	.35****	.29***	.14	.08
United States ( <i>n</i> = 192)	.17**	.17**	-.06	-.06	.23***	.16**	.18**	.15*

NOTE: RWA = right-wing authoritarianism; VI = vertical individualism; HI = horizontal individualism; VC = vertical collectivism; HC = horizontal collectivism. Table entries represent zero-order Pearson correlation coefficients and standardized regression coefficients. The latter were obtained by regressing RWA on all individualism-collectivism variables simultaneously, while controlling for age and gender.

\* $p < .10$ . \*\* $p < .05$ . \*\*\* $p < .01$ . \*\*\*\* $p < .001$ .

Communist countries, Bulgaria and Poland. This supports the notion that the historic experience of authoritarian rule renders the psychological dimensions of authoritarianism and individualism incompatible. Last, we found only partial evidence for the notion that authoritarianism and competitiveness are positively associated. Only in the U.S. and New Zealand samples was there a reliable association between RWA and VI. Although this pattern is consistent with earlier research on the relationship between authoritarianism and competitiveness, in the majority of societies examined in this study, authoritarianism and competitiveness were unrelated.

For a stricter test of our predictions concerning the differential association between individualism-collectivism and authoritarianism, we used meta-analysis to aggregate the regression coefficients pertaining to each type of country (Cooper & Hedges, 1994). That is, we generated combined correlation estimates separately for post-Communist countries, countries that experienced totalitarian rule in the 20th century, and those who never experienced any totalitarian rule. The weighted aggregated regression coefficients are shown in Table 4. Across all three types of countries, there was a reliable association between RWA and VC but no relationship between RWA and HC. The association between VI and RWA was nonsignificant only in formerly totalitarian societies, despite the fact that the combined correlation was slightly greater than for post-Communist societies. Finally, only in post-Communist countries there was a negative correlation between RWA and HI, supporting the notion that this value constellation demonstrates the impact of recent history.

Even though the general pattern of findings is compatible with our predictions, it can be viewed as preliminary evidence only. As is apparent in Table 4, within each column the confidence intervals of the aggregate correlation coefficients overlap, implying that none of the comparisons between combined coefficients of different types of societies approached conventional levels of statistical significance. Thus, presumably because of the relatively small number of societies in the present sample and the resulting lack of statistical power, our hypotheses concerning differential correlations in post-Communist, former totalitarian, and never totalitarian societies has not been supported.

**TABLE 4**  
**Relationship Between Right Wing Authoritarianism and**  
**Individualism-Collectivism: Combined Effect Sizes (Study 2)**

Types of societies	<i>Individualism</i>				<i>Collectivism</i>			
	<i>VI</i>		<i>HI</i>		<i>VC</i>		<i>HC</i>	
	$\beta$	(CI)	$\beta$	(CI)	$\beta$	(CI)	$\beta$	(CI)
Post-Communist	<i>.10</i>	<i>(.01/.19)</i>	<i>-.16</i>	<i>(-.25/-.07)</i>	<i>.38</i>	<i>(.29/.45)</i>	<i>-.09</i>	<i>(-.18/.01)</i>
Former totalitarian	<i>.11</i>	<i>(-.03/.26)</i>	<i>-.03</i>	<i>(-.17/.12)</i>	<i>.39</i>	<i>(.26/.51)</i>	<i>-.09</i>	<i>(-.24/.05)</i>
Never totalitarian	<i>.15</i>	<i>(.06/.25)</i>	<i>-.09</i>	<i>(-.19/.01)</i>	<i>.32</i>	<i>(.23/.41)</i>	<i>.05</i>	<i>(-.05/.14)</i>

NOTE: VI = vertical individualism; HI = horizontal individualism; VC = vertical collectivism; HC = horizontal collectivism; CI = confidence interval. Standardized regression coefficients (standardized semipartial correlation coefficients) were Fisher's  $z$  transformed, aggregated, and retransformed into standardized regression coefficients. Aggregated standardized regression coefficients that are reliably different from 0 are italicized. Post-Communist societies include Bulgaria and Poland, former totalitarian societies include Germany and Japan, and never-totalitarian societies comprise Canada, New Zealand, and the United States.

### Societal-Level Analyses

Despite the fact that Study 2 included only data from seven societies, we explored the relationships between RWA and individualism-collectivism at the societal level. For this purpose, we computed sample means for each variable weighted for gender to correct for the somewhat different distribution of men and women in the seven samples. We chose Pearson product-moment correlation to examine the association between constructs as the number of societies and the presence of collinearity did not allow for the use of multiple regression modeling. These societal-level analyses showed that RWA was strongly related to VC,  $r = .89$ ,  $p < .01$ , and somewhat related to VI,  $r = .71$ ,  $p < .08$ . This pattern confirms that societal-level authoritarianism is linked to the vertical dimension in Triandis's (1995, 1996) individualism-collectivism model. In societies with comparatively high levels of authoritarianism, there was a greater emphasis on inequality and status differences between individuals. This is consistent with the notion that authoritarianism is a value system inherently linked to social hierarchy.

Although coefficients were also positive, there was no significant relationship between RWA and HC,  $r = .61$ ,  $p > .14$ , and HI,  $r = .45$ ,  $p > .31$ . The fact that societal-level HI was not reliably correlated with RWA further supports our notion that there is no consistent relationship between individualism and authoritarianism. Similarly, the absence of a correlation between HC and RWA is also expected because a sense of interconnectedness with in-group members is distinct from valuing tradition and respect for the family (e.g., Triandis, 1995).<sup>7</sup>

### DISCUSSION

The purpose of our studies was to examine the relationships between the constructs of individualism, collectivism, and authoritarianism. The present findings illustrate that authoritarianism is associated with collectivism across different measures of the construct and different societies. In particular, both at the individual level and the societal level, Study 2 demonstrated that authoritarianism is associated with only those aspects of collectivism referring to hierarchy and submission to in-group authority. Yet other aspects of collectivism, namely those emphasizing closeness and interpersonal connection with in-group

members, are unrelated to authoritarianism. This confirms our hypothesis of a conceptual overlap in the definition of authoritarianism and collectivism: Both constructs stress the adherence to social norms and submission to legitimate in-group authority. However, as shown in Study 1, the similarity of these constructs primarily occurs for these two content areas, as the association between authoritarian aggression and collectivism is substantially weaker.

At the same time, our results do not demonstrate a pervasive inverse relationship between individualism and authoritarianism. Specifically, the present findings do not mirror the pronounced negative relationship between individualism and power distance reported by Hofstede (1980) for the aggregate level. In other words, even if the experience of hierarchy and status inequality in a society is incompatible with the pursuit of self-determination, individual beliefs about authority and social convention are not necessarily at odds with an individualist orientation. This finding also confirms individualism-collectivism as an exception to the widely observed trend that the dimensional structure of self-ratings parallels the semantic similarity between dimensions (e.g., Borkenau, 1992; Gara & Rosenberg, 1981). Whereas Gelfand et al. (1996) showed that the concepts of individualism and authoritarianism are perceived to be semantic opposites, the present analyses revealed that this was not the case for self-ratings on the same value dimensions. Overall, the findings corroborate our earlier contention that there is no clear relationship between individualism and authoritarianism when they are assessed as individual value orientations.

There were, however, two exceptions to this pattern. First, in the two post-Communist societies included in Study 2, Bulgaria and Poland, higher levels of authoritarianism were significantly related to lower levels of individualism when the latter reflected an emphasis on personal self-determination and uniqueness. Comparisons of this association between post-Communist societies and other societies were not statistically significant, but the overall pattern of results is consistent with our prediction. Individualist values may be incompatible with authoritarian values when the historical experience highlights the conflicts between self-determination and expressions of personal uniqueness with the political structure. Because Bulgaria and Poland emerged from Communist rule only little over a decade ago, we argue that the citizens of these societies may still view adherence to law and order as potentially antithetical to their personal freedom. In brief, although research has often argued that value patterns tend to be relatively stable across cultures (e.g., Inglehart & Baker, 2000; Schwartz, 1994b), we submit that the effects of history should not be ignored when examining the meaning of and relationships between values.

Second, despite the fact that both Gelfand et al.'s (1996) and Hofstede's (1980) findings might lead one to expect a negative relationship between individualism and authoritarianism, we found evidence for a positive relationship between authoritarianism and vertical individualism (VI), both at the individual level as well as at the societal level. The discrepancy between the present data and those earlier findings is hardly surprising as Gelfand et al. (1996) and Hofstede (1980) did not conceive of competition and competitiveness as aspects of individualism. Although the positive correlation between VI and authoritarianism conceptually replicated earlier studies conducted in the United States (Kelley & Stahelski, 1970; Kuhlman & Marshello, 1975), the cross-cultural generality of this finding is not yet entirely clear. In spite of similar effect sizes and the absence of any significant differences between different types of societies, we did not find a statistically reliable association between these constructs in our samples from post-Communist societies. Future research will need to explore this issue further.

Where the present article focuses on authoritarianism, other research in psychology has examined the relationship between individualism-collectivism and other sociopolitical orientations toward hierarchy. In this regard, some might wonder to what extent the present findings for authoritarianism are similar to those found for social dominance orientation (Pratto et al., 1994). Often suspected to be redundant, the constructs of authoritarianism and social dominance orientation are empirically quite distinct (e.g., Altemeyer, 1998; Heaven & Bucci, 2001; Pratto et al., 1994; Whitley, 1999). Indeed, recent findings by Strunk and Chang (1999) on the relationship between horizontal-vertical individualism-collectivism and social dominance orientation in the United States do not fit well with our results. These authors found social dominance orientation to be inversely related to HC but unrelated to VC. That is, social dominance orientation was incompatible with a sense of connection and interdependence to other group members but neutral with regard to conformity and submission to authority. Yet social dominance orientation resembled authoritarianism in that it was unrelated to HI but positively related to VI.

In summary, our findings establish that self-ratings on the dimensions of individualism, collectivism, and authoritarianism parallel neither the pattern found at the aggregate level (Hofstede, 1980) nor the pattern found for naïve perceptions of similarities and differences between the three concepts (Gelfand et al., 1996). This highlights that individual beliefs about the relationship between value constructs may not correspond to the empirical relationships between them and that findings obtained at one level of analysis cannot automatically be generalized to other levels. Even though there are many instances in cultural psychology where different levels of analysis converge (e.g., Kimmelmeier et al., 2002; Nisbett & Cohen, 1996), the present findings serve as a reminder that cultural researchers need to pay close attention to the meaning and implications of their concepts at various levels of analysis. It is only by considering cross-cultural and within-cultural patterns simultaneously that a full understanding of cultural values can be reached.

## NOTES

1. Hofstede's (1980) decision to treat individualism and power distance as separate constructs was motivated by conceptual considerations and occurred despite strong statistical evidence for a single underlying dimension (p. 221).

2. There is, however, one known exception. Rhee, Uleman, and Lee (1996) showed that individualism and collectivism constitute a single bipolar dimension when these constructs exclusively refer to family.

3. It is interesting to note that in Russia authoritarianism is associated with opposition to *laissez-fair* individualism (McFarland, Ageyev, & Djintcharadze, 1996). Along similar lines, Romanian authoritarians do not embrace the expansion of personal freedom that has become available in the post-Communist era (Krauss, 2002).

4. Because Oyserman (1993) constructed a series of similar scales, we selected the one that was suitable to be used in the United States. This scale has since been used in the United States where it demonstrated good psychometric properties (Kimmelmeier, 2001; Kimmelmeier, Burnstein, & Peng, 1999).

5. As pointed out by a reviewer, the fact that Oyserman's (1993) collectivism scale is more strongly correlated with right wing authoritarianism (RWA) than with Bontempo's (1993) collectivism scale challenges the discriminant validity of the collectivism measures, as they should be expected to relate more strongly to measures of the same underlying construct than to any third variable (Campbell & Fiske, 1959). In the present context, we view this as further evidence of the enormous heterogeneity in the conceptualization of the construct.

6. Although not intended by Altemeyer (1988), we also combined the items pertaining to each component into subscales (Cronbach's  $\alpha$  aggression, .65, submission, .82, and conventionalism, .83). Following Meng, Rosenthal, and Rubin (1992) in comparing correlated correlation coefficients, we found that both the correlation between RWA and submission ( $r = .54, p < .001$ ) and the correlation between RWA and conventionalism ( $r = .56, p < .001$ ) were greater than the correlation between RWA and aggression ( $r = .35, p < .01$ ),  $Z = 2.28$  and  $Z = 2.07$ , both,  $p < .05$ . The

comparison between the correlations of RWA with submission and RWA and conventionalism was not significant,  $Z = .26, ns$ .

7. In contrast to the individual-level analyses reported above, the present exploratory analyses at the societal level assume that the various translations of the measures used in this research possess scalar equivalence (see van de Vijver & Leung, 1997). Not only is it implied that all measures tap into the same underlying construct, but it is also assumed that different versions have identical measurement properties allowing the comparison of scale scores between societies. Because scalar equivalence has not been empirically ascertained, the present analyses only warrant tentative conclusions.

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