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Face Dynamics: From Conceptualization to Measurement

In this chapter, I propose to take a journey through the territory of research in face dynamics. The cognitive map for this territory is based on two strands of analysis previously conducted, one concerning the concept of face (Ho, 1976), and the other concerning the methodological implications of relational orientation (Ho, 1991).

The thesis of relational orientation, or relationalism (a newly coined term), is that social behavior invariably takes place in relational contexts, regardless of social class or cultural variations. Accordingly, the unit of analysis is not the individual, but the individual-in-relations. By relational contexts, I mean social, particularly interpersonal, contexts. Among the most important relational contexts are those involving role and/or status relationships. Relational orientation confronts the bias toward methodological individualism in contemporary mainstream psychology. It makes a demand on the theorist to consider how social relationships are defined, before attempting to interpret the behavior of individuals. An adequate explanation entails, therefore, making explicit the normative expectations and behavioral rules governing interpersonal relationships.

The intellectual tools employed in theory building guided by methodological relationalism are relational concepts, such as reciprocity, interdependence, interrelatedness, and dyads. More so than individualistic concepts (e.g., actor/actress, ego, and self), relational concepts lend themselves to analytic exercises that reflect the relational contexts within which social behavior takes place. Face is a relational concept par excellence. Indeed, the development of relationalism owes much to analytic studies of the face concept.

A Relational Conception of Face Dynamics

As a first step, a clarification of the scientific vocabulary concerning face would be useful. I propose to use the term face dynamics to refer generically to social processes, directly observable or inferred, involved in face enhancement, maintenance, protection, restoration, and derogation. Interactions directly observable may be called simply face behavior; aspects of interaction not directly observable are inferred from face behavior. Of particular interest are the dynamics arising from: (a) incongruences among a person's self-concept, the projection of his/her social self in the public domain, and his/her social image publicly and collectively perceived by others, and (b) discrepancies between the face claimed by a person from others and the face extended to him/her by others.

The term facework is more restricted in meaning than face dynamics. As used by Goffman (1955), facework refers to the subtle style in interpersonal encounters, found in all societies, calculated to avoid personal embarrassment, or loss of poise, and to maintain for others an impression of self-respect. I shall restrict using this term to refer specifically to the strategies, social maneuvers, and/or coping mechanisms an actor/actress employs in face dynamics.

A conceptualization of face dynamics based on relationalism gives particular emphasis to three aspects: (a) face as a field concept, (b) reciprocity, and (c) social influence and social control.

Face as a field concept

Accepting that the unit of analysis is the individual-in-relations, the relational context within which face dynamics take place has to be taken into account. For instance, face may be lost not only from one's failure to meet social expectations, but also from the failure of: (a) people closely associated with him/her to meet expectations, and (b) others to act in accordance with one's expectations of how

one and one's associates should be treated. That is, face may be lost not only from one's own actions but also from the actions of other people. This line of inquiry leads to a delineation of social consequences over which an actor/actress has little or no control and for which he/she may have no responsibility.

Face is a field concept: It takes full recognition of the individual's embeddedness in the social network. A methodological consequence is that the analysis of face behavior, even when pertaining to a single individual, must extend its domain to include: (a) actions by the individual, either self-initiated or in response to those of others; (b) actions by other people closely associated with the individual; (c) actions directed at the individual by people with whom the individual is interacting; (d) actions directed at the individual by people closely associated with those with whom the individual is interacting; and, finally, (e) actions directed at people closely associated with the individual by those with whom the individual is interacting directly or indirectly.

Clearly the domain of social actions to be included for analysis is more encompassing and more complicated than what has traditionally been envisioned. It is a dynamic field of forces and counterforces in which the stature and significance of the individual appear to have diminished. The individual, no longer at center stage, is not the measure of all things; and the world is not seen through his/her eyes. This altered perspective cannot be characterized by anything short of psychological decentering, as dramatic as the historic change of worldview from the Ptolemaic to the Copernican.

Relationalism does not negate the individual, but it does counter egoism. It considers the perspective of each actor/actress; more importantly, it insists on the necessity of including the participation of others in the individual's perspective. We may use an analogy from music. One might say that the ultimate self-expression is the solo virtuoso playing without accompaniment and without an audience. But, even here, the participation of the audience in the mind of the virtuoso is an integral part of his/her musicianship. The ensemble exemplifies a relational arrangement--one, unlike the orchestra, is not hierarchically organized under the direction of a conductor. The individuality of each member's musicianship has to be subjugated. Yet individuality reemerges collectively to mark the ensemble's unique identity, not reducible to the sum of its members' musicianship.

Reciprocity

Inherent in face dynamics, reciprocity concerns the need to show regard for not only one's face but also the face of others. Each interacting party expects to be given face by others and is expected to give face to others. Indeed, a failure to give face to others may occasion a loss of one's own face. This idea of reciprocity is embodied in Ho's (1976) definition of face: "In terms of two interacting parties, face is the reciprocated compliance, respect, and/or deference that each party expects from, and extends to, the other party" (p. 883). Ting-Toomey (1988) also speaks of the self-other dimension in her conceptualization of facework: self-face concern and other-face concern (the other dimension being positive-face and negative-face). Unfortunately, most investigators, especially those from Western cultures preoccupied with individualism, have not recognized the importance of other-face concern. It must be added, though, a conception of face dynamics which gives full recognition to reciprocity would be met with a congenial reception by communication researchers (e.g., Tracy, 1990)--for whom a nonrelational conception would be quite unnatural indeed.

Social influence and social control

Having face means both commanding social influence over others as well as being influenced by others--another aspect of reciprocity. A person who has face is in a position to exercise considerable influence, even control, over others in direct or indirect ways; at the same time, he/she is under a strong constraint to act in

accordance with the requirements for maintaining his/her face. The more face, the greater the social visibility and public scrutiny over one's actions, and hence the stronger the constraint imposed on one's actions. Examples are abundant: candidates seeking high public office in the United States run the risk of having their private life, past and present, exposed to microscopic scrutiny by the public.

Thus the concern for face exerts a reciprocated constraint upon each member of the social network. It delimits individual volition: much of the time, the individual's actions are dictated by the necessity of meeting the expectation of others. In short, the concern for face is a pervasive social sanction; it generates pressure toward conformity; and it is a powerful mechanism underlying other-directedness, that is, acting in ways that reflect a high degree of sensitivity for how one's actions are perceived and reacted to by others.

It has often been said that the avoidance of losing face is an overriding concern in Asian cultures. What about Westerners? In response to this question, Riesman's (1950) characterization of other-directedness in American society comes to mind. Other-directed people are said to have a paramount need to seek approval and direction from, and hence the tendency to act in conformity with, their contemporaries, especially their peers. In the Asian context, other-directedness differs from Riesman's characterization in one fundamental respect. In American society, the driving motive is to seek approval, recognition, and popularity. In Asian societies, the imperative is to avoid disapproval. The dynamics involved in avoiding disapproval versus seeking approval are quite dissimilar. Here we are reminded of the basic difference between gaining face and losing face (Ho, 1976). Face is not lost merely on account of a failure to gain it; and regaining face that has been lost is not gaining face, but merely a restoration of the face to which the individual is originally entitled. To gain face is a intricate social game; the actor/actress may choose not to play it. But to maintain face, to avoid losing face, and to regain face lost are essential for effective social functioning.

From Conceptualization to Measurement

Definition

A critical review of the literature reveals that two distinctions in the definition of face should be made explicit. First, face may be defined in terms of the projection of one's social self in the public domain; that is, aspects of one's self that a person reveals to others. Thus, Goffman (1955) defines face as "the positive social value a person effectively claims for himself by the line others assume he has taken during a particular contact. Face is an image of self delineated in terms of approved social attributes" (p. 213). But face may also be defined in terms of one's social image that is publicly and collectively perceived by others--an image is not necessarily the same as that one reveals to others. Clearly, these are two different approaches to definition, and hence to measurement. Correspondingly, the face that a person expects or claims for himself/herself from others should be distinguished from the face accorded him/her by others. Potential conflicts arise when these two are discrepant. This is a gold mine for research--one that has not been fully exploited.

Second, face may be defined situationally, referring to specific instances of social encounter. Goffman (1955) states: "The person's face is clearly something that is not lodged in or on his body, but rather something that is diffusely located in the flow of events" (p. 214). His seminal ideas have generated research on facework and several closely related topics, such as embarrassment (e.g., Edelman, 1990), impression management (e.g., Leary & Kowalski, 1990), and negotiation in conflict situations (e.g., Ting-Toomey, 1988; Ting-Toomey & Cole, 1990). Nevertheless, it is important to point out that Goffman's conception of face differs from the Chinese conception, which is not restricted to situational encounters.

According to the Chinese conception, face may be defined in terms of the more enduring, publicly perceived attributes that function to locate a person's position in his/her social network. Thus defined, a person's face is largely consistent over time and across situations, unless there is a significant change in public perceptions of his/her conduct, performance, or social status. It goes wherever the person goes, and would not change, for instance, on account of a change in jobs that signify no change in status. As Ho (1976) states: "Face is attached to persons"(p. 874)--not externally to their position, rank, or office. It would then be meaningful to ask how much face a given individual has and what changes in his/her face are perceived, apart from specific social events. (But it would not be meaningful to ask how much face is attached to the individual's rank of office.) This question would lead to a fruitful line of investigation, which researchers have yet to pursue in depth.

Although face is attached to persons, it is not a personality variable (Ho, 1976). Unlike personality, face is not to be regarded as a construct pertaining to personal attributes inferred from behavior. Measurements of face are sociometric, not psychological, in nature. They would not be based upon a direct study of the individual; rather, a person's face would be ascertained by conducting inquiries on the opinions that others have of him/her. That is, a person's face is assessed in terms of what others think of the person. The assessment does not include what the person thinks of himself/herself (i.e., self-perceptions), but may include what the person thinks other people think of him/her. Of course, misjudgments may be made, and will act as a source of strain in one's interpersonal relationships.

The two distinctions identified above have direct methodological implications for the measurement of face, to which I now turn.

Quantification

How much face does a person have? On one occasion, I raised this question in a graduate seminar where face was discussed. A knowledgeable Westerner familiar with the scholarly literature on face, also a contributor to this book, said: "The question doesn't make sense." I responded: "You must have been misled by Goffman." If the question were put to a Chinese audience, no one would have difficulty understanding it. Furthermore, it would be immediately understood that the question demands two answers: one concerning how much face a person expects/claims from others, and the other concerning how much face people give him/her (or how much face the person receives from others).

Nonetheless, face is a universal. As Ho (1976) argues: "While it is true that the conceptualization of what constitutes face and the rules governing face behavior vary considerably across cultures, the concern for face is invariant" (pp. 881-882). What is culturally invariant is the inevitability of judgment; and, therefore, anyone who does not wish to renounce the social nature of his/her existence must show a regard for face. Of course, the criteria by which a person's face is judged are rooted in cultural values, and are hence culture specific. The challenge now is to demonstrate how face may be measured in different cultural contexts. In the following, I outline a scheme for the steps to be followed in face measurements. The scheme is stated at a sufficiently high level of generality so that it is invariant across cultures, that is, applicable regardless of cultural variation.

Defining a domain of attributes. To ask how much face a person has is to quantify face. Quantification makes sense when face is defined in terms of the more enduring, publicly perceived attributes that locate a person's standing in his/her social network, unrestricted to specific social encounters--that is, defined according to the Chinese conception. In general, a person's face is a function of his/her standing or social position within a defined group. The higher the standing, the greater the claim or entitlement to face. The question of how much face a person has then translates into one concerning a person's respectability

and social influence that he/she can exercise over others. This would be a concrete, yet rare, example of following a conception that is non-Western in origin in behavioral science--there being nothing preordained about Western conceptions.

In operational terms, the measurement problem translates into one of defining a domain of attributes that may be considered important for face judgments in various cultural contexts. This domain includes the following classes of attributes.

1. Biographical variables, such as age, sex, birth order, and generational rank.
2. Relational attributes based on birth, blood or marriage ties.
3. Social status indicators based on personal effort or achievement: (a) educational attainment, occupational status, and income; and (b) social connections and influence; membership in clubs, associations, and/or other organizations.
4. Social status indicators not based on personal effort or achievement, such as wealth and/or social connections acquired through marriage.
5. Formal title, position, rank, or office acquired through personal effort or awarded in recognition of personal achievement.
6. Formal title, position, rank, or office acquired through ascription (e.g., inheritance).
7. Personal reputation based on the amoral (e.g., skill-related or task-oriented) aspects of social performance.
8. Personal reputation based on moral character, judged on the basis of personal conduct.
9. Integrity of social being: freedom from stigmata.

The domain defined is by no means exhaustive. Even then, it is far more inclusive than the traditional indices of socioeconomic class (i.e., education, occupation, and income--3a). Again, it illustrates how the face concept is more inclusive than, and hence cannot be reduced to, socioeconomic status; and it points to the inadequacy of relying on the traditional indices when it comes to face research.

The attributes in the domain may be recategorized in different ways; for instance, along the intrinsic-extrinsic, achievement-ascription, moral-amoral, and individual-relational dimensions. Classes 7 through 9 are attributes intrinsic to the individual; classes 1 through 6 are attributes extrinsic to the individual. Classes 3, 5, 7, and 8 are based on personal effort, achievement, and/or conduct; classes 1, 2, 4, 6, and 9 (to be explained later) are based on ascription. Class 7 concerns evaluative judgments of personal conduct made on the basis of moral criteria (e.g., good vs. evil); Class 8 concerns evaluative judgments of social performance made on the basis of amoral criteria (e.g., efficiency, skill, and competence). Finally, comparing class 3a and class 3b illustrates most clearly the distinction between individual (e.g., education) and relational attributes (e.g., social connections).

The last class, what I call integrity of social being (9), requires a more extended discussion. It is more encompassing than moral character, because it includes judgments of actions or circumstances not under the individual's control and hence beyond the domain of personal responsibility. Here we are concerned with the avoidance of something negative in the extreme, rather than the pursuit of something positive. Consider the case of a woman who has been raped (or widely suspected of being raped) in a culture where chastity is considered more important than life; a patient who has fallen victim to a hideous disease, like leprosy in ancient times and AIDS in contemporary life; or being a member of an ethnic minority group that is considered inferior by the community. In each of these cases, the negative consequence amounts to no less than a massive assault on the person's social identity that renders him/her "unclean" in the eyes of others. The person's face is violated, shamed, and stigmatized; his/her social

being has lost its integrity. Face is thus far more profound than just politeness, embarrassment, or impression management--the favorite topics of researchers. At rock bottom, face as the integrity of one's social being is not something that has to be earned, but is an inalienable right to human dignity.

Of course, different cultures attach varying degrees of importance to different attributes; and the attachment may change within cultures as a result of cultural change through time. These are facts that invite, respectively, synchronic and diachronic cross-cultural research. A comparison between Chinese and American cultures would be illuminating. Given its traditional-collectivistic values, Chinese culture would put more weight than American culture on generational rank (1), birth, blood or marriage ties (2), social connections (3, 4), and formal title, position, rank, or office (5, 6). American culture, which champions individualism, would put the most weight on attributes that reflect personal effort or achievement (3, 5) and personal reputation (7). A permissible generalization is that Chinese culture tends to emphasize relational attributes, whereas American culture tends to emphasize individual attributes. Moral character (8) is vital in both cultures; but it would be rated higher in importance, reflecting a greater emphasis on moral judgments than on evaluating the amoral aspects of social performance (7), in Chinese than in American culture. (Note that this statement says nothing about moral behavior per se in either culture.) Finally, under ordinary circumstances, everyone is entitled to integrity of social being (9) in both cultures.

Mien-tzu and lien. In the literature on face, many authors have accepted Hu's (1944) distinction between two Chinese concepts of face, based on two different sets of judgment criteria: mien-tzu achieved through success and ostentation, and lien, representing the confidence of society in the integrity of one's moral character. Concerning this distinction, three points should be made. First, conceptually we can distinguish one class of attributes considered important for face judgments from another. The moral and the amoral (e.g., success and ostentation) attributes, for instance, may be distinguished from each other. But this conceptual distinction does not correspond exactly to the semantic distinction between the two terms. It is not entirely accurate to say that mien-tzu is based on only the amoral attributes; the concept is not altogether devoid of moral content. Moreover, the terms of mien-tzu and lien are used interchangeably in some contexts, as their meanings vary according to the context of usage. Thus, it is hardly surprising that, even among Chinese subjects, many find it difficult to differentiate one term from the other (Chu, 1983). This result simply reflects a lack of clear differentiation at the semantic level; and it would be wrong to conclude from it that the subjects had difficulty making a distinction between the moral and the amoral attributes at the conceptual level.

The second point is that Hu (1944) described lien primarily in terms of moral character (8). The concept is actually more encompassing; it includes integrity of social being (9) as well. An important implication is that lien may be lost not only through unacceptable conduct, but also through circumstances beyond one's control. As the cases mentioned above indicate, the stigmata leading to a fatal damage of lien may not be due to personal misconduct for which one is held responsible, but to life's misfortunes for which one cannot be held responsible.

The third point concerns Hu's (1944) claim that "all persons growing up in any community have the same claim to lien, an honest, decent 'face'" (p. 62). Admittedly, in every society, members are normally entitled to the claim of a basic, decent face, regardless of how humble their social status may be. It is the minimum, irreducible, and inviolate face that one must maintain for adequate functioning as a social being. The loss of this basic face would seriously threaten the integrity of one's social being or, worse, one's acceptability as a member of human society. We are tempted to claim that the entitlement to a basic face is universal. Tragically, we cannot. I was wrong when I stated: "Lien is something to which everyone is entitled by virtue of his membership in society and can be lost only through unacceptable conduct" (Ho, 1976, p. 870). History is replete with instances where some members of a society are by definition excluded from the entitlement of lien: invalids, slaves, and members of an "inferior race" or a lowly caste (e.g., the untouchables in traditional India). Such

exclusion is an expression of prejudice in its deepest form: the negation of humanhood (a newly coined term). An individual is judged and treated solely on the basis of group membership--given a number, but nameless, as in a concentration camp. There is no individuality, and no individual self. Individual identity is reduced, and becomes identical, to collective identity--defective, unclean, even subhuman.

Despite stigmatization, some people are able to survive psychologically without self-stigmatization--a fascinating subject for study. Their inner sense of self remains healthy, even when their outer social identity is marked with indelible insults. These people are living examples of the resiliency of the human spirit. They also demonstrate why the concept of self, as distinct from that of social identity, is necessary--a point that seems too obvious to make; yet, in cultural contexts clouded with prejudice, it is far from reaching public consciousness.

Delineating the audience. The next step is to delineate the audience or specific group concerned. The audience may comprise members of a clan, institution, or social group, formal or informal. The person may or may not be a member of the group, and no face-to-face interaction is necessary at this stage of analysis. Obviously, however, the person must be known to members of the group; and the person must have some knowledge of how he/she is regarded by the group, if the analysis includes his/her perceptions of how he/she is perceived by the group.

How much face a person has is not fixed in amount, but varies largely according to the audience making a judgment about the target person's face--an important point that has largely escaped due attention by researchers. A different audience, even within the same culture, may attach different weights to differing attributes in face judgments. For instance, an academic community would presumably put more weight on intellectual accomplishment, scholarship, and academic rank; whereas a business community would put more weight on social connections important for the promotion of business activities. In quantitative terms then, face is a composite measure that reflects the relative weights attached to attributes by the audience. This measure serves to locate the the individual's position within his/her social network. It should be added, though, that weights attached to intrinsic attributes (classes 7 through 9) are much less likely to vary across audiences than weights attached to extrinsic attributes (classes 1 through 6). That is because intrinsic attributes form the core of the individual's face, regardless of the group by whom it is judged. They reveal what the individual is really like as a person.

Information gathering. In Table 1, I summarize the kinds of information that are useful and should be gathered in research studies. (The specific techniques of data gathering, e.g., actual wording of the questions to be asked, need not concern us here.) Let X be the target person and Y be members of the group concerned. The X and the Y within parentheses represent X's and Y's perception (or perspective) respectively. For example, "Perception of X's expectation (Y)" reads as: "Y's Perception of X's expectation."

Table 1
Categories of Information to be Obtained From X and From Y

Information to be obtained from X	
1 Entitlement (X)	How much face are you entitled to in relation to Y?
2 Actual (X)	How much face do members of Y actually give you?

- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| 3 | Expectation/
entitlement (Y) | How much face do members of Y think that you expect to receive from them? Or, how much face do members of Y think you are entitled to? |
| 4 | Actual (Y) | How much face do members of Y think they actually give you? |
| 5 | Perception of
X's expectation
(Y) | How much face do members of Y think that you think you are entitled to? How do they perceive your expectation/claim? |
-

Information to be obtained from Y

- | | | |
|---|---------------------------------|--|
| 6 | Entitlement (Y) | How much face is X entitled to in relation to Y? |
| 7 | Actual (Y) | How much face do members of Y actually give X? |
| 8 | Expectation/
entitlement (X) | How much face does X expect/claim from Y? Or, how much face does X think he/she is entitled to receive from Y? |

9	Actual (X)	How much face does X think members of Y actually give him or her?
10	Perception of Y's judgment(s) (X)	How much face does X think that members of Y think X is entitled to? How does X perceive Y's judgment(s) of X's expectation/claim, or more generally of X's face?

Derived measures of discrepancies. The information gathered will yield different measures of the target person's face. Measures derived from the information obtained from members of Y are aggregate measures. (Individual variation among members of Y need not concern us here.) Of particular theoretical interest are the derived measures: discrepancies as perceived by X, discrepancies as perceived by Y, and discrepancies between perceptions by X and Y. These are summarized in Table 2.

Table 2
Derived Measures of Discrepancies

Discrepancies as perceived by X

1 vs. 2	entitlement claimed by X from Y vs. actuality
1 vs. 3	entitlement claimed by X from Y vs. Y's judgment(s) of X's expectation
1 vs. 4	entitlement claimed by X from Y vs. Y's perception of actuality
3 vs. 2	Y's judgment(s) of X's expectation vs. actuality
3 vs. 4	Y's judgment(s) of X's expectation vs. Y's perception of actuality
4 vs. 2	Y's perception of actuality vs. actuality

Discrepancies as perceived by Y

6 vs. 7	entitlement accorded X by Y vs. actuality
6 vs. 8	entitlement accorded X by Y vs. X's expectation
6 vs. 9	entitlement accorded X by Y vs. X's perception of actuality
8 vs. 7	X's expectation vs. actuality
8 vs. 9	X's expectation vs. X's perception of actuality
9 vs. 7	X's perception of actuality vs. actuality

Discrepancies between perceptions by X and by Y

- 1 vs. 6 X's vs. Y's assessment of X's entitlement
 - 2 vs. 7 X's vs. Y's perception of actuality
 - 3 vs. 6 X's perception of Y's judgment(s) of X's expectation vs.
Y's judgment(s) of X's expectation
 - 3 vs. 8 X's perception of Y's judgment(s) of X's expectation vs.
Y's perception of X's expectation
 - 4 vs. 9 X's perception of Y's perception of actuality vs.
Y's perception of X's perception of actuality
 - 5 vs. 8 X's perception of Y's perception of X's expectation vs.
Y's perception of X's expectation
-

We begin with an analysis of the information obtained from X, illustrated with an example. X feels that he/she is entitled to a great deal of face vis-a-vis Y and, therefore, expects to be treated accordingly by members of Y. Discomfort is likely to result when X perceives that they do not give him or her face as expected (1 vs. 2) or, probably worse, do not think that he or she deserves it (1 vs. 3). The discomfort may be reduced if X perceives that members of Y merely made a misjudgment or social blunder: They thought they gave X more face than X thought they actually did (1 vs. 4).

A socially sensitive X would also consider how members of Y perceive his or her expectation/claim (1 vs. 5). Our analysis would then include X's perception of Y's perception of X's expectation/claim (5), an instance of what a person thinks others think of him/her. The information obtained from X (5) may be gauged against that obtained from Y on X's expectation/entitlement (8); that is, the derived measure (5 vs. 8) reflects how accurately X perceives Y's perception of how much face X expects from Y.

Similarly, we analyze the information obtained from Y. Members of Y will usually give X the face they consider X is entitled to (6 vs. 7): People generally give--or at least say they would give--as much face to another person as what they feel he/she deserves. However, members of Y may feel that X expects/claims more, or less, than what they think X is entitled to (6 vs. 8), or what X thinks they give him or her in actuality (6 vs. 9): more, perhaps because of X's arrogance or exaggerated sense of self-importance; and less, perhaps because of X's humility. In a culture where arrogance is eschewed and humility is held in high esteem, one has to be careful not to appear arrogant, but humble--otherwise, one's face would suffer. Paradoxically, people perceived by others to be claiming more face than is justified weakens their claim, and may even run the risk of losing face. And people perceived to be claiming less than is deserved strengthens their claim and may even gain face. Such people may be said to have understood the underlying principle involved: face is not to be demanded from others; it is given by others and, therefore, the important thing is how others judge you and what they are willing to give you.

We would also include in our analysis Y's perception(s) of how X perceives their judgment(s) of his/her face (6 vs. 10). This is an instance of what other people think a person thinks of their judgment(s) of him/her. Again, the information obtained from Y (10) may be gauged against that obtained from X on Y's judgment(s) of X's expectation/entitlement (3). The derived measure (3 vs. 10) reflects how accurately members of Y perceive X's perception of how much face they think X expects/claims from them.

The next set of comparisons pit the perceptions of X and Y against each other. Derived measures are obtained from comparing the information obtained from X and that from Y. The derived measure (1 vs. 6) reflects the discrepancy

between X's and Y's assessments of X's face entitlement in relation to Y; the measure (2 vs. 7) reflects the discrepancy between X's and Y's perceptions of how much face members of Y actually give X; the measure (3 vs. 8) reflects the discrepancy between X's perception of Y's judgment(s) of X's expectation/entitlement and Y's own perception of X's expectation/entitlement; and the measure (4 vs. 9) reflects the discrepancy between X' and Y's perceptions of each other's perception (i.e., X's perception of Y's perception and Y's perception of X's perception) concerning how much face members of Y actually give X. Finally, the measure (5 vs. 10) reflects the discrepancy between X's perception of Y's perception of X's expectation/entitlement, and Y's perception about X's perception of Y's judgment(s) of X's expectation/entitlement. [(I shall go no farther!)]

The information derived from this set of comparisons enhances an external observer's understanding of the social dynamics involved in measuring X's face in relation to Y. However, it may or may not be known to either of, or both, X and Y. Consider a rather common example, that of a professor who feels that he/she is slighted by his/her students. The office of a professor ordinarily commands respect, and its occupier would have face vis-s-vis an audience of students. In our example, the professor likewise thinks highly of himself/herself, and expects students to give him/her face (1). He/she also assumes that the students understand that he/she has a high expectation (3). Unfortunately, the professor has not taken the students' reactions to his/her high expectation into his/her face calculation (5). In actuality, the professor is judged by students to be undeserving (6)--perhaps on account of being widely suspected to be guilty of sexual harassment, resulting in his/her claim to face being seriously undermined. A comparison of the professor's and the students' perceptions reveals that the professor expects much more from the students than they think he/she is entitled to (1 vs. 6). But the professor is unaware of this discrepancy, on account of his/her overestimating the face that the students think he/she deserves (3 vs. 6). In this way, the professor sets himself/herself up for disappointment, upon discovering that the face he/she receives from the students falls short of expectation (1 vs. 2).

In general, large discrepancies between perceptions of the two interacting parties will act as a source of strain in their relationship. An adequate analysis would, therefore, need to consider not only the perceptions of each party toward the other, but also how accurate and/or congruent these perceptions are.

Conclusion

In analyzing face dynamics, we gain insight into the significance of interrelatedness and interdependence between individuals. Social actions follow not so much from the individual's own inclinations, sentiments, or needs as they do from the individual's perception of his or her relationships with other people--largely conditioned by cultural definitions. The social presence of others, real or imaginary, is always entered into the calculus of social actions. Moreover, this process is bidirectional. One assumes that one's own presence is taken into consideration by others; in the same way one also assumes that others assume that their presence is considered by oneself.

In conclusion, the analysis above, guided by methodological relationalism, serves to illustrate both the richness and the complexity of the face concept; that it is not reducible to other constructs currently employed in the social sciences, such as personality, status, and prestige; and that it is a potent intellectual tool for the analysis of complex social interaction. Clearly, relationalism promises to open a new direction of research into face dynamics, which will, in turn, give substance to the development of relationalism as a viable theoretical position on human behavior.

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