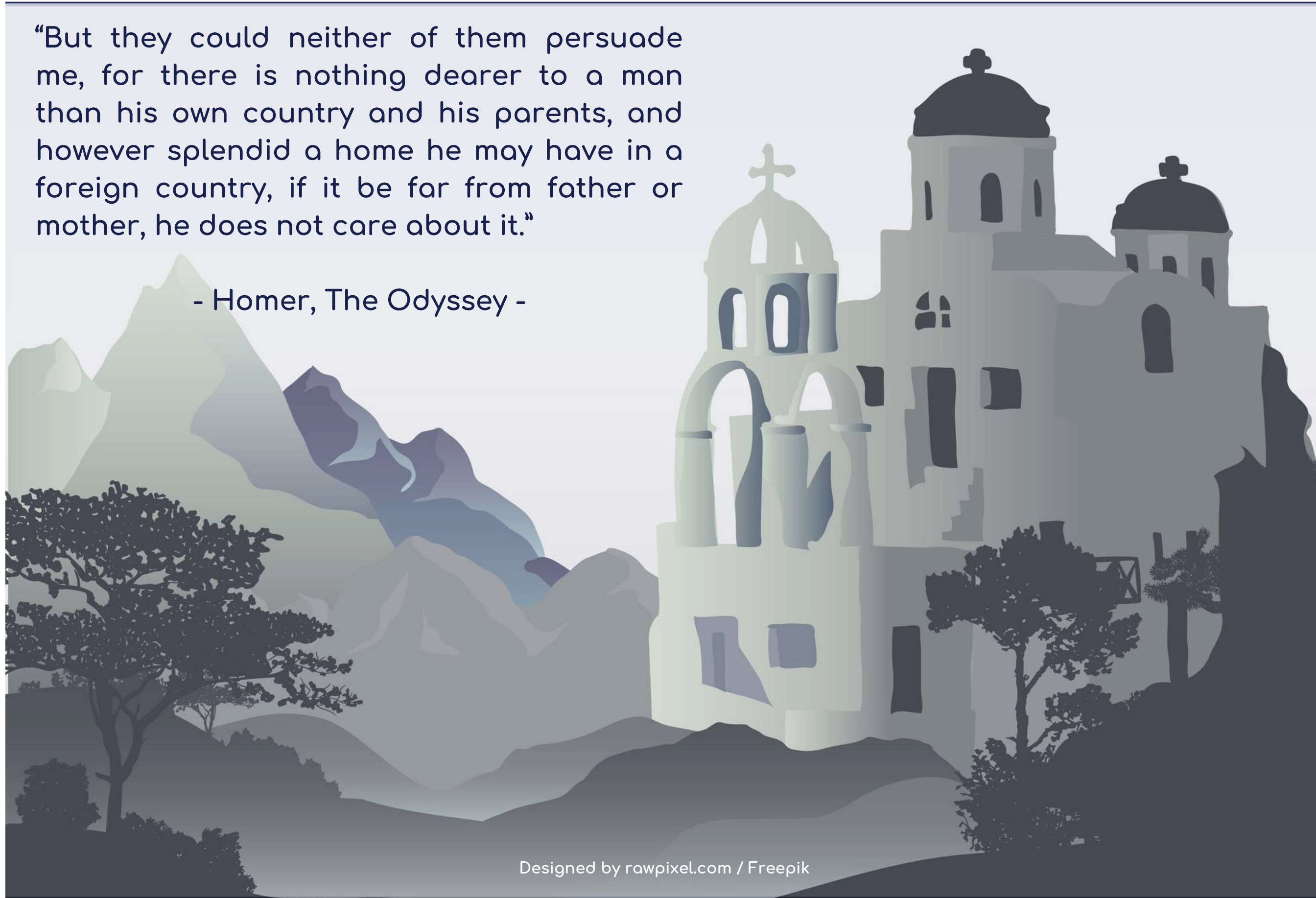# Culture Clusters: the Eastern Europe Cluster

"But they could neither of them persuade me, for there is nothing dearer to a man than his own country and his parents, and however splendid a home he may have in a foreign country, if it be far from father or mother, he does not care about it."
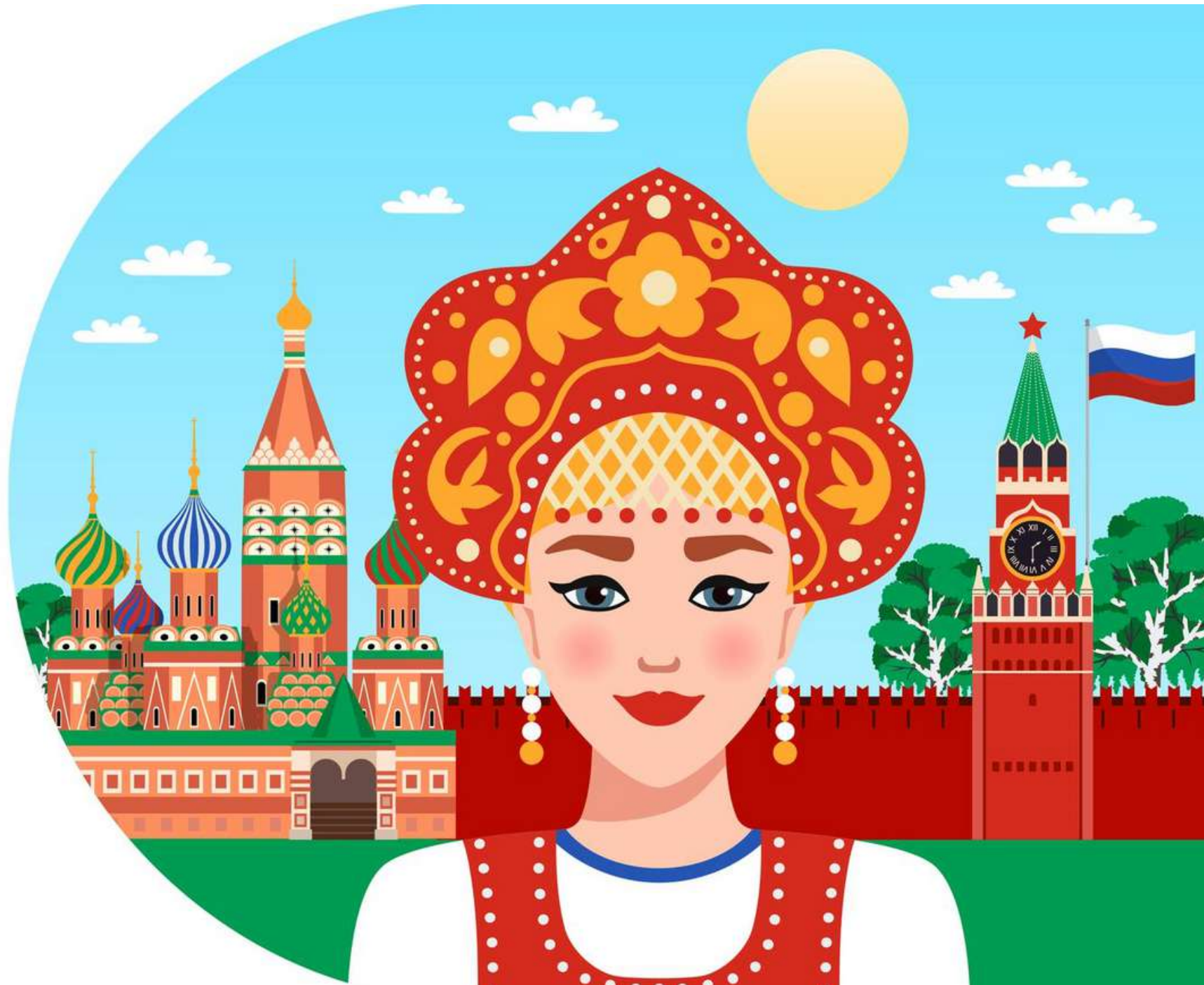
- Homer, The Odyssey -

https://www.muditaconsultancy.com/en/resource-center/visuals

The Eastern Europe
Cluster includes
the following countries:

Albania
Georgia
Greece
Hungary
Kazakhstan
Poland
Russia
Slovenia

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Culture Clusters: the Eastern Europe Cluster

HIGH-CONTEXT
cultures:
communication is mostly indirect and implicit, requiring a certain degree of contextual knowledge to be fully understood.
The use of non-verbal communication (voice, gestures, etc) is significant.

Since reliance on written communication is relatively low, knowledge of unwritten rules, social codes and rituals tends to be assumed. Procedures are somewhat flexible, decisions are based on feelings and emotional factors.

Culture Clusters: the Eastern Europe Cluster

POLYCHRONIC
cultures are past-oriented, they see time as a cyclical concept, a repetition of natural cycles and patterns. Punctuality is not a primary concern, people tend to live for the moment, plans can be altered to fit a situation as it changes.
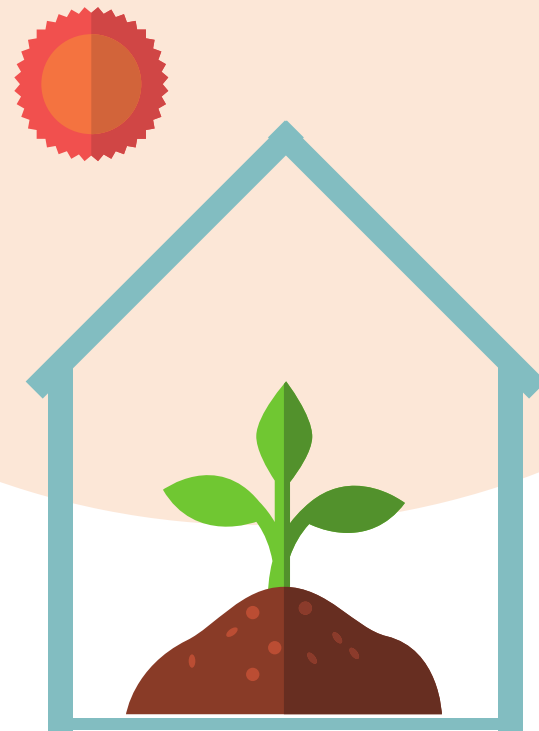
Life is unpredictable and scheduling is not fundamental. Previous commitments will be respected if possible. Members of a polychronic culture manage interruptions well and tend to do many things at once.

Culture Clusters: the Eastern Europe Cluster

HONOUR/SHAME
cultures:
Shame, a reaction to other people's criticism, is the main tool of social control in collectivist societies.
Eastern European cultures are usually shame-based, while Western cultures tend to be guilt-based.

"In true shame-oriented cultures, every person has a place and a duty in the society. One maintains self-respect, not by choosing what is good rather than what is evil, but by choosing what is expected of one." (Paul Hiebert)

"Honor-shame cultures do have morality, but their basis for defining right and wrong happens to be communal and relational (not legal or philosophical). For them, what is best for relationships and honors people is morally right; what shames is morally wrong." (Georges and Baker, 2016)

Culture Clusters: the Eastern Europe Cluster

BEING
Cultures:
Relationship-oriented.
The needs to maintain the collective well-being and to respect tradition are prioritized over task outcomes.
Trust and affiliation are important.

Eastern European cultures tend to value cooperation, social harmony and group consensus.
The development of a supportive social networks is considered a priority.

Culture Clusters: the Eastern Europe Cluster

COLLECTIVIST
Cultures:
The common good is more important than personal interest. The group takes care of individuals, individuals are loyal to the group. Relationships are likely to be formed within the group people belong to, often inaccessible to outsiders.

Defining one's identity in terms of one's social role is typical of collectivist cultures. Conformity and selflessness are highly valued in this family- and group oriented cluster (family intended as "extended" rather than "immediate" family).

Culture Clusters: the Eastern Europe Cluster

A peculiarity of this cluster is that it scores high in In-Group Collectivism ("the degree to which individuals express pride, loyalty, and cohesiveness in their organizations or families") and significantly lower on Institutional Collectivism ("the degree to which organizational and societal institutions encourage individuals to be integrated into groups and organizations").

While individuals tend to feel a strong sense of obligation toward their families and organizations (a clear distinction is made between in-groups and out-groups), they don't necessarily strive to ensure that resources and opportunities are accessible to all members of the society.

Culture Clusters: the Eastern Europe Cluster

GENDER EGALITARIANISM, that for Eastern Europe falls in the middle-range, is the belief that people should receive equal treatment regardless of their gender. With reference to Hofstede's Masculinity - Femininity cultural dimension, it's worth noting that some of societies that belong to this cluster share a "Feminine" orientation while the remaining ones qualify as "Masculine".

Feminine Societies: Kazakhstan, Russia, Slovenia	Masculine Societies: Albania, Georgia, Greece, Hungary, Poland
"Work to live" mindset, people value social and private time, they place emphasis on harmony, modesty, cooperation, on the need to nurture relationships and to care for the "weak" members of the society.	"Live to work" mindset, people value success and individual achievements, they tend to be competitive and highly assertive, conflict is likely to be resolved through confrontation. Gender roles are clearly defined.

Culture Clusters: the Eastern Europe Cluster

POWER DISTANCE:
In high Power Distance societies, people depend to a large extent on "power holders". Subordinates are not empowered and are expected to take orders, not to act independently. They refrain from expressing disagreement and accept to comply without questioning the situation.

Communication (vertical /downwards) is cautious and highly ineffective: subordinates do not often have the chance to approach their managers and when they do, they fear raising issues that might put the power holder in a difficult position. Hierarchy is normal and accepted, there is an emotional distance between individuals believed to be at different social levels.

Culture Clusters: the Eastern Europe Cluster

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UNCERTAINTY AVOIDANCE: Eastern European societies tend to score high in this particular cultural dimension. Tradition matters, social interactions are often formal and conservative, decisions are based on consensus. These societies have a strong emotional need for rules and regulations in order to prevent uncertain outcomes or to mitigate their impact, even though they are not necessarily followed. In Eastern European countries bureaucracy tends to be elaborated and time-consuming.

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