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## EDITORIAL

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Pursuit of Happiness is increasingly considered as an important goal of human beings.

Finuras is asking: "How do we do that?" His answer because we can simply invent ideas, narratives, stories and other fictions and, above all, believe in them". By the evolution, human beings have managed to create another ' sphere of ideas ', which corresponds to ' another reality ', above the ' objective reality '. This is called the ' noosphere '. Finuras: "The human ability to 'believe ', and all ' mental mechanics ' involved in the process, result from an adaptive instinct and our cognitive evolution, which is unique to our species. By trusting anything just ' because it believes ', the individual fixes a belief, and in doing so, from the standpoint of ' rational choice ', avoids the state of doubt or uncertainty and reduces complexity. And this includes belief in happiness".

A reoccurring theme in the different articles in this special is the need to define culture and to differentiate it from well-being and life-satisfaction. A warning is given not to confuse the levels of research happiness of individuals versus the happiness of societies. Geert Hofstede says: "I think that personality has an influence to a lesser extent than people think and that culture has a larger influence." Free choice and control over one's own life continuously has been found to be associated with life satisfaction and happiness.

In the interview with Geert Hofstede by Pernilla Rorso, Hofstede explains why a new dimension, Indulgence vs. Restraint, was added to his model: "We felt that there was something, which had been missing and while other people had been working on it, they had never found any link with our work." Here was the connection, through the World Values Survey, and this is why we together with Michael Minkov added "Indulgence vs. Restraint". This dimension is related to happiness and life satisfaction.

Liviu and Iulian Warter together with Friedman write in their article: "three items make up the Indulgence versus Restraint dimension. These items concern the extent to which people feel that leisure time is important in their life, people's level of happiness, and how much freedom of choice and how much control people feel they have over their life". Higher scores on Indulgence versus Restraint are associated with increased importance of leisure time, higher levels of happiness, and higher levels of freedom of choice and control. Hofstede suggests that other dimensions also play a role, i.e., Power Distance and Individualism versus Collectivism: "If you have high Power Distance, you would accept that control was in other people's hands, not your own. In a Collectivistic society, the control is in your group." Two of the authors, Lanzer and Wursten, strictly use only the combinations of the first 4 Hofstede dimensions (the Mental Images) to explain the influence of culture on Happiness. They find the combination of small Power Distance and Individualism to be the most important. The highest scores in the worldwide Happiness rankings however are cultures combining this with a low score on the third Hofstede dimension (Femininity) and a moderate score on the Uncertainty Avoidance Index.

Income has also been found to be related to life satisfaction and happiness, especially to life satisfaction. At lower levels of income, it is a predictor of life satisfaction. After that, other things become more important. It depends on the average level of income of the society and the rate of inequality.

A special element coming back in the contribution of Wursten and in the Haiku by George Simons is about the need for constraint. Norbert Elias is quoted who even defines the progress of Civilization itself by the development of constraint. The Haiku of Simons says:

“Hell is others,” snarled Sartre.

For me, paradise.

A knock on the door.

The pleasure of your visit,  
what more could I ask?