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**Title : Cross-Cultural Management Thinking : An Intercultural Perspective Proposal.**

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**Abstract :**

In this paper, our reflection tries to show that the interaction between two individuals belonging to different cultures does not exist outside of an empirical context in which exist different agents on whom weigh the constraints of a system. In other words, cultures, psychisms and identity strategies constitute a fundamental explanatory framework that requires new explanatory concepts in the context of the current globalization, a new grammar that associate several concepts. In this context, the part of creative initiative, adaptation to the situation, and improvisation of a subject are difficult parameters for modelizing intercultural relations. They are based themselves on the living, unpredictable, deeply situational characters of intercultural interaction in which the meaning is never given but always in emergence. As any intercultural confrontation would induce an effect of situation, any intercultural situation refers deeply to the cultural background of the interlocutor, to his or her inscription within a particular group, to the logics of the social situations and to identity recognition. Such a process leads us to interculturalism. By proposing in this paper, the concept of interculturalism, as a way to understand cultures confrontations, we seek to instill a particular view. We define interculturalism as a normative reference horizon, inspired by some philosophical text and ethical approaches, which crossed, in our view, important works, notably published in French language, postulating the existence of an inter, as a potential alternative, and offering series of agreement points for a moral anthropology, specific to the disciplinary matrix of intercultural management.

*" Multicultural society is not characterized by the coexistence of different values and cultural practices; even less by generalized mixing. It is the one where the greatest possible number of individual lives are built, and manage to combine, each time in a different way, what brings them together (instrumental rationality) and what differentiates them (the life of the body and the mind, project and memory)."*

Alain Touraine, 1997.

The multicultural character of collective labor relationships, the question of the possible reciprocity between unequal partners, in oral societies or writing societies, has existed since human beings became aware of their existence. Understanding management from symbolic frameworks is to admit that humanity was constituted in hunter-gatherer societies and then in agrarian societies (Demoule, 2017), and that there were, for example, 145 feast days in the Middle Ages, and that the place of work in these societies was perhaps less central, if not inexistent (Godelier, 1984).

If the strong economic growth of the developed countries in the last century was based on a rationality supported by the scientific establishment of the same model of organization ("monocultural") where every technical advance should lead to an advance of morals, the actions relating to intercultural management, which we discuss in a future book (Chanlat & Pierre, 2018), appear based on a double observation : the failure of rational methods of organization when they declare themselves universal (Taylorism, for example) as well as the necessary reading of managerial practices in the mirror of national, regional or local cultures, with the idea that certain modes of organization are more adapted to cultures than others (d'Iribarne, 2008 ; Chanlat, Davel, Dupuis, 2013). The economic rationalism always referring to another constituent polarity of reason, based on moral pluralism, on memories,

on life projects, emotions ... which should not be mistaken for an irrational overflow (Weber, 1965).

It is the reason why we have highlighted throughout the reflections we have made in a coming book (Chanlat and Pierre, 2018), the importance of the concept of ethnicity and more largely, of ontological differences to redefine what can be a business or organization culture in a globalized context, that someone called "late modernity" (Rosa, 2010). Urry (2000) wrote that different mobilities are materially rebuilding the "social-as-society" into the "social-as-mobility". For him, the kinds of mobility we can make out in our society are a substitute for the preferred concept of society latent in the social sciences. The structure of these networks, their size, density, degree of hierarchialisation, is supposedly revealing of social structure.

This issue strongly contradicts the convergence hypothesis, which is still dominant in business circles, that differences between the forms of management mobilized in the countries tend to fade and disappear because of the application of universal principles of management. Never a national culture (the Chinese culture, the Brazilian culture ...) or a corporate culture, like that of L'Oréal, Vinci or Coca-Cola, magically correspond to the borders of a strict and isolable division of internal variations (geographical, social or generational). This observation comes to ruin the hope of those who strive to offer intercultural communication recipes such as a Swiss knife uses, and those would know every time how to work with a Chinese or a Brazilian because one were able to describe their « national » culture in advance !

**What is culture ?**

Intercultural management enters in its age of reason. As we observe it, a new generation of researchers wants to go out from a certain determinism and the programming of a certain hypothetico-deductive research tradition. Traditionnally, culture is defined as a system of symbols and meanings (beliefs, values, myths, rites) which, as a linguistic syntax, offers a combinatorial code of elements inside a determined existential repertoire. Winnicott thus designates culture as an intermediary space articulating the personal psychic code (for example, the identifications structure, relations to objects, defensive systems ...) and the social code (belief systems, values). Each culture defines data such as form of habitat, life rythm, eating habits, proxemics ... These characteristics refer to a specific social group and are visible from people who are outside this group. The members of the group do not perceive them or little, because they send themselves the same images to the other group members. These « cultural elements » are the organizers of the social relational space and the social historical time. They constitute references for who are within the group and for who are outside the group.

In this paper, our reflection tries to show that the interaction between two individuals belonging to different cultures does not exist outside of an empirical context in which exist different agents on whom weigh the constraints of a system. In other words, cultures, psychisms and identity strategies constitute a fundamental explanatory framework that requires new explanatory concepts in the context of the current globalization, a new grammar that associate several concepts.

In this context, the part of creative initiative, adaptation to the situation, and improvisation of a subject « from who everything comes from and to whom everything comes back » (Camilleri, 1989, p.24), are difficult parameters for modelizing intercultural relations. They are based themselves on the living, unpredictable, deeply situational characters of intercultural interaction in which

the meaning is never given but always in emergence (Mucchielli, 2006, p. 103). So, any intercultural confrontation would induce an effect of situation, which allows an interaction between structure effect and an agent resistance effect (Desjeux et Taponier, 1994 , p.158).

If, in Business, beliefs come often from primary socialization, values, habits, preferences, acquired very early in our lives, to persist in time, they must make sense for the agents in relation to their present situation. This led us to promote a dynamic conception of culture. It is no longer anymore individual primary socialization that only allows the analysis of the intercultural identities actors, as Sainsaulieu wrote it in 1998, but a process of recognition by others. This process is socially inscribed during the company socialization and characterized by what this process allows to live outside from this identity process. He added : « the national cultures found in corporate working life one of their main sources of expression and revitalization »... The organization contributes, de facto, to socialize for a second time the members of a society by bringing them an experience of power relations and interactions, rich in social dynamics and identity affirmations that cross-cultural management tries precisely to enlighten. Nation, family, ethnicity identities must constantly deal with other identities coming from social community, religious affiliations, cultural or political activities, and every business executive should have in mind that they does not replace society but shape it ".

### **Globalization : a process pushing to ethnic differences affirmation**

So, far from leading to assimilation, globalization has the effect of increasing the awareness and significance of an ontological difference and produce among more and more of us, values conflicts that create sources of uncertainty. This ontological difference is the ability to create differences. Consequently, for us, the contemporary situations of intercultural encounters refer to situations of

culture redefinition, which constantly question the relations of the individual and the collective, the person and the social systems in which he or she operates. In other words, intercultural management refers more and more to the understanding in each person of a story of learning between filiations and affiliations, belonging and sense of belonging ... which raises the issue of a possible continuity of his or her history in these time of globalization (notably, for these people who live between several languages, territories, citizenships, family anchorages ...) (Lahire, 1998).

World human movement diversification seems to promote the emergence of ethnicity belongings as a relevant category of social action. This category supposedly emanating from a common origin, would tend to change real loyalties and to impose collective rights which compete in social interactions with Nation democratic framewok, corporate culture or class consciousness. Thus, in companies and organizations, there is a possibility of the existence of some kind of informational strategy (Lyman and Douglas, 1972), which can be played through the communication of clues and ethnic roles (Poutignat and Streiff-Fénart, 1995, p. 166).

Faced with the organizational dimension of social action, it is also within co-constitution spaces of meanings, through relations of competition, domination or integration as well, that the cultural attributes take an expressive value for the actors, (Friedberg, 1997). "If a Spaniard refuses to enter into a business relationship with me, notes Deval (2000), it is not necessarily because I have ignored his proxemic rules, his perception of time or his inductive reasoning. He is a human being above all who reacts according to his personality and his intimate being". So, any intercultural situation refers deeply to the social position of the cultural background of the interlocutor, to his or her inscription within a particular group and to the logics of the situations. According to Bosche, « If a management discipline like finance (or accounting) rightly

appeals to modeling and concepts, he admits « that a practice like that of interculturality is too actively involved into the subjectivity of the learner to be able to put it aside. We must point here that Interculturality is subjectivity, or at least one of its essential forms : intersubjectivity "(1993, p. 243).

### **Individuals facing growing diverse identity confrontations**

In the so-called traditional cultures, one could certainly less play with his or her culture. One assumed it. One accepted it. One were in a schema in which each social agent was, if not totally absorbed by the system, at least not in opposition of it. Today, we are in a schema in which the actor can redefine permanently his or her subject construction process. Consequently, we must pay attention to this double movement by which employees and international managers continue to capture the spirit of the community to which they belong and, at the same time, how they identify with professional roles by learning how to play them in a personal and effective way out of their original cultural context (Berger and Luckmann, 1996)<sup>1</sup>. In the context of adding to the resources held by executives to enable them to live through the effects of the modernisation of large organisations, our research calls for a sociology of dynamic transactions of identity which does not bind them to a tragedy (obliging them to forget their roots in the name of conversion), but seeks instead to illustrate the possibilities for cultural enrichment and social distinction based on ethnicity. This has been rarely studied in sociology of business and can produce an interference with national categories (Lipianski, Taboada-Léonetti and Vasquez, 1997); the national identification having not be dissolved itself with the repeated experience of travels, journeys, migration, professional mobility of all kinds. In effect, there is a particular ability to manipulate different cultural codes around

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<sup>1</sup> : For example, a female German manager of Asiatic origin (a Vietnamese father and a Turkish mother) could be perceived, during a professional mission in Canton, as being of Chinese origin, perfectly understanding local manners and customs. Her contacts in the host country would be astonished at her inability to make contact with and translate her Chinese colleagues; in reality, she perceives herself as a citizen of the world, or, more precisely, a Bavarian smitten with cosmopolitanism.

ethnicity, for example, for use in social and professional transactions (Ouellet, 2003). It is, as if global trade growth and economical liberalization did not bring a complete homogenization of the different cultures but tended to construct a framework in which a given signifier receives, according to the receiving environment, a whole range of different interpretations. Globalization or rather the various ongoing globalizations modes (Martin, Metzger and Pierre, 2003), generate a differential production of cultures. One of its illustration is, for example, the success of Buddhism among the richest Western countries, which is aligned with the Western standards of individualism and conscious pursuit of self-fulfillment (Metzger and Pierre, 2003).

If, when this choice proves to be advantageous, some international managers identify with an ethnic group and live in private with traditional allegiances, in many social circumstances experienced in the company, ethnic identification is voluntarily dissolved, ceases to be cost-effective and other positive identifications are preferred. It is because everyone is more or less a foreigner in business company that the problem of the exercise of power raises today this identity issue. In companies experiencing globalization, everyone has knowledge and many want to see their identity respected ; small and medium organizations included. This leads us to what we call interculturalism, a reflection on a legitimate normative category, from which an ethical evaluation of the actions and decisions taken can be founded.

### **Interculturalism : a way of understanding cultures confrontations and hybridations**

The concept of " interculturalism " refers usually to a philosophy of political action, born in Quebec, which tries to develop an inclusive management of ethnocultural diversity in response to Canadian multiculturalism (Bouchard and Taylor, 2008). This is not the meaning we want to give here to our work.



As for us, we consider the notion of interculturalism, as a practice of otherness, from an ethical perspective. Dialogue and debate postulate the existence of the Sameness to integrate the possibility of Anotherness : this is the apparent democratic horizon of the normative referential project of an intercultural management condemned to find new communication requirements for the public space as for the workplace. According to us, Interculturalism is to be understood as "an invention thinking born from a meeting with the outside world ». (Laplantine and Nouss, 2001, p. 128).

### **Interculturalism as a moral anthropology**

By proposing in this paper, the concept of interculturalism, as a way to understand cultures confrontations, we seek to instill a particular worldview. Shared by a great number of researchers, this view defend the possibility of producing a true intercultural management experience as a mean to put in place new business governance modalities. We define interculturalism as a normative reference horizon, inspired by some philosophical text and ethical approaches, which crossed, in our view, important works postulating the existence of an *inter*, as a potential alternative and offering series of agreement points for a moral anthropology, specific to the disciplinary matrix of intercultural management. But this notion of interculturalism imposes to distinguish two levels : the intercultural dimension as "a social fact" (an observation made concerning the evolution of our late modernity societies); and the intercultural dimension as an ethical horizon (as a value judgment that we defend and assume). It is at this second level that we are going to situate now our reflection.

In effect, Interculturalism aims to scaffold, as Camilleri states, « an appropriately regulated relation system allowing to reach a new plan: that of a harmonious unitary social set transcending the differences without evacuating them " (1989, p. 389). Consequently, Interculturalism is not « a euphoric

resolution of contradictions among a homogeneous whole » (Laplantine and Nouss, 2001, p. 7) ; it is neither a synthesis nor a stable result since it is always occurring (Chanson, 2011, p.164 discussing the work of Laplantine and Nouss). This harmonious unitary formation, which we consider as a kind "of intercultural learning unthought » is present in many cross-cultural management landmark works (Abdallah-Preitceille, 2004).

### **Interculturalism as decentered look on the otherness**

To be an interculturalist is to disturb and invite everyone to break his or her own social reality evidence. Interculturalism is a school of distance to oneself and astonishment. Alter (2012) mentions that any difference is also a resource available to the stranger to be able to offer an alternative. Intercultural management prefers "disturbing talents » to the so-called « identified high potentials » who can reassure many people, but who put at risk any organization to become homogenous or imitative, because the disturbing talents interpret by themselves, are rebellious, « deconstruct » and « re-construct », rethink what seems to be acquired ... they are individuals who by definition like questioning, and who admit easily to be fragile, vulnerable and worried. In other words, to be an interculturalist is to point out the interstices, but also the defects, the failures, the difficulty in the activity, and thus recognize the right to the error in organization. It is precisely this character of inaccuracy that goes hand in hand with the reflection of a Métis thinker (2001).

In a constant tension between rivalry and sympathy, what intercultural management expresses is that there are situations in which people converge on a justifiable agreement, especially in cases where the balance of power is relatively equilibrated. In this vision, interculturalism considers that the incommunicability between two people, between two groups is never total. It sees itself as a set of propositions acquired by a fairly large number of speakers

who cannot be reduced to a pure intentionality, nor a pure hegemonic cultural struggle, but see themselves as a movement towards the Other. So, the paradigmatic scope of interculturalism is a quest for an ideal of cultures authenticity, trust and defense as opposed to abstract rights and authoritarianism of disembodied rules quest. It is not enough to consider the Other as similar to ours, but each of us must behave like himself or herself.

Between foreign partners, interculturalism carries with it a search for a stable grammar of correspondences, if not universals, fields of equivalence when it comes to produce, sanction a criminal act or reward good practices relating to efficiency ; the ways of judging what is small or great depending on the situation (D'Iribarne, 1989).

Since the aim of interculturalism is to identify tensions between incompatible values, the issue of distributive justice emerges. A justice that treats equally similar cases. Today, it exists a plurality of forms of equivalence which make it possible to bring people and things into a certain relationship, and to create a social order. These principles are not infinite, not contingent and not universal, only socially enrooted (Boltanski, 1993). So, interculturalism horizon is asking how in a political system the relationship of the parties to the whole system are produced (Dumont, 1977). For everyone, this horizon requires to weigh " what will be possible to say in public, what kind of arguments and evidence can be made, what will appear acceptable or unacceptable, normal or abnormal, lawful or scandalous " (Boltanski, 1990, p. 30). To the invariant notion, which supposes an overhang universalism, interculturalism prefers the equivalence mode, which invites to locate in each culture in presence a possible point of intersection from which they can put themselves in perspective, align themselves, built a bridge between themselves and foster cooperation (Jullien , 2008, p.139).

Henceforth, the intercultural intelligence becomes a common resource to apprehend equivalences rather than normative principles, coherences and communicate through it (Jullien, 2008; Sauquet and Vielajus, 2014). These equivalences are not symmetrical. We notice this when we translate foreign texts and concepts. We can say, as Moore, that " the culture begins where the dictionary stops and where the linguist discovers the deep meaning of the words » (2006, cited by E. Sizoo, 2008, 22). As Jullien writes, « The solution, in other words, is not in compromise, but in understanding » (2008, 220).

### **Interculturalism as a subjective revealing process**

Because any individual is not involved with the whole culture of the Other, interculturalism is interested in the production of culture by the subject himself without postulating that the individual is always aware of the purposes. Indeed, although the socio-cultural environment informs (in the etymological sense) social actors, the fact remains that they are the persons who, by embodying them, give them a meaning that can also be transformed metaphorically. Intercultural management research seem part of " a sociology of power to be yourself " (Sainsaulieu, 1977, p. 327), to better understand through the paths of psychology and other disciplines, how the social circumstances shape identity process (Sainsaulieu, 1987).

In France, Alter (2012) has explored the springs of a sociology of the stranger and of an experience lived from "elsewhere" that leads to have a different look than the "native", the " indigenous ", "... de Singly made an appeal to develop a sociology of "parentheses" linked to individuals seeking to set up "small pieces of stability ".The perpetual imbalances associated with different time that experienced a subject make the oneself narrative work endlessly. In that sense, interculturalism is a space where several disciplines could enrich each other, and illustrate each of them what it highlights.

## **Interculturamism as an ethical invitation towards otherness**

Interculturalism can also be understood as an ethical invitation to a benevolent position towards otherness. We recognize the otherness of the Other only under some constraint and not by pure inclination. This constraint is primarily ethical and far from contemporary politically correct deliberative forums. Such is the miracle of the "self-way out" by the test of responsibility to which the face of the other invites us. In intercultural dynamic, the sociable human being is not a passive spectator in front of suffering, inadequate work and incompleteness of the Other. For establishing interculturalism, it must put in place an upstream conscious space prior to the meeting. In effect, Ethics requirement arrives ahead to the meeting. In these dialogue spaces, violence does not disappear but is recognized, analyzed, and can be transfigured. Cultural differences can be clarified and each will endeavor to verify the specific similarities of each event. Interculturalism is not naive, but basically, a welcome posture towards Otherness.

In the field of business, what is at stake is to give meaning to an ethics of solicitude. To make the transition from a world view based on rights to a worldview built on social obligations. This is not to deny the usefulness of principles or rules of justice but to emphasize their failure. Impartiality based on fairness in rights and the " non-impediment " to obtaining these rights is far from sufficient. In these conditions, the dilemmas are not how to respect the rights of others or our own roghts but how have a live made of social obligations towards myself and towards others. In this context, what set up an intercultural human resources management policy ? May be, the ability to rise to new forms of " relationship to self ," to make visible the hidden discriminations, make audible the silent testimonies (Levitt 1958 ; Ballet and De Bry, 2001; Wood , 1991) .

## **Interculturalism as a clarifying contrast language and embodied relationship**

Interculturalism could be a clarifying contrast language, as Taylor used it, proposing itself as a working process on how we establish causal relationships in a context, refuse, or goes beyond cognitive shortcuts that immediately block the search for other possible causes to a problem. In effect, most of the time, especially when they work in teams, people tend to attribute to a single cause and not to several ones, a given action or event. One tend to say more than we know by drawing from our memories a plausible explanation without raising questions on our own cognitive processes (de Kanouse, 1971, p. 95). Interculturalism invites to the contrary.

As such, interculturalism is closer to the encounter than to the relationship, the latter involving only a suspension of violence and a compromise concern. The encounter involves more exchange, a constant interpretative work and evokes a sense of a common destiny breaking the too quickly attached self-images (Chirpaz 2001). It invites to be constantly kept awake by the enigma of the other (Nowicki 2008). At the basis of any genuine encounter, there is a body awareness of the other, an identification with the " features " of the other, that dimension being forgotten by many studies in intercultural management (Chanlat, 1990, 1998 and 2012). In effect, everyone at work is embodied and this embodiment must be taken into account in intercultural management. This human being embodiment gives to them opportunities both to move, to act, to think, to feel, to touch, to see, to taste, to feel pleasure or to suffer. When talking about communication, relationships with others, male/female relationship, space-time relationship, the body is always involved in the construction of the meaning of our behavior. We must accept to be similar to recognize ourselves as different , and such a passage is effected by the imagined bodies in presence.

But a culturalist and idealist tradition forget the body in favor of the spirit, which should allow a better expression of the « I ». The only real locus of thought and identity would be the spirit which assumes the existence of a permanent self, which can be defined through a multiplicity of representations. It is a big mistake because the other is not literally "thinkable".

Otherness is lived, feels itself always through a sensitive intelligence (Merleau-Ponty, 1945). Empathy is based on a simple distinction, between the self and the other, and also based on a faculty to include in its own environment the Other field of experience (Illouz, 2006). It is an effort of relationship to others which goes beyond the " golden rule " of sympathy (" act towards others as you would they act towards you ") to adopt the rule of empathy ("act towards others as they would do with themselves " (Marandon, 2003). Empathy is the capacity to put oneself at the place of the other without necessarily experiencing his emotions ;... sympathy is to experience the emotions of the other without necessarily putting in his or her place "(Jorland , 2004, p. 20). Access to the universal is not given by abstraction but through empathy, that is to say the ability to put ourselves in the place of others, to experience the relativity of systems and to distinguish oneself from the others.

In Husserl's perspective, empathy remains a cognitive act, based on the spatiality of our living body, a co-presence of two bodies which face specific and imaginative transposition of our psychic states in those of the other. Empathy is the experienced intuition of how the other feels through his emotional states. So, the intercultural encounter is a sensitive intelligence. Levinas calls for " an ethical blindness " since the view creates a distance between the subject and the object. Berthoz underlines that any expression penetrates the other. It penetrates it in mixing and transforming him or her. We know, thanks to brain imaging technology, that social contact activates the amygdala and the whole system of emotions. Suppress eye contact is to suppress a fundamental element of the

social exchange. Because looking is not only guiding our vision to the other, it is also being penetrated by the expression of the other. It is a moral duty to understand the meaning of it. « For, such a looking exchange is also the most basic form of understanding and acceptance of others "(Berthoz , 2004, p. 274). If justice look behind, the future, according to an interculturalist perspective, is perceived on the mode of hope, a plan be accomplished from the the present (Flahault, 2004).

According to us, Interculturalism is offered itself as " dialogical dialogue " and not " dialectical dialogue " (Von Barloewen, 2003, p. 25). For Ricoeur, ethics by itself is ternary, the base triangle of ethics being formed by self-esteem, concern for others and fair institutions. Mediation is basically ternary because in a multicultural context, the third party can not be the agent of one of mediators, what distinguishes it from the negotiation and conciliation which can work without this third party. An intercultural encounter area, in our understanding, is a space where partners who are often strangers, not mechanically accepting cultural images that are referred to them, do not necessarily assume them as true, but can seize them also to make an effective argument in an exchange ; for example, it is the case of a Chinese student who refuses to be associated with the dragon on a map of the world and wants that his country must be associated with the cock of his French colleagues. The compromise, in a interculturalist perspective, becomes a thing related to the ability of players to agree without having recourse only to a unique world of meaning. The migrants, mobile, and who carry different cultures embody these plural figures to do such a work.

Therefore, the novelty of our time is not the expression of an unfulfilled need for recognition but the risk that this need cannot be satisfied. Taken between the desire to affirm their original identities and the need to accommodate to the rapid changes of the outside world, acculturated human beings are submitted to what Toualbi calls "a serie of contradictions and ambivalences that parasitize the



identity unity and coherence when not seriously distort the reference marks (2000). As we can observe, the increasingly social issues are related to interpersonal relationships, respect, recognition, denial and humiliation which structure any social relationship. Identity is built in connection with self-esteem. Today, we become ourselves, when we appropriate subjectively the belief experience of the objectivity of our social rank. The differences have a real value that allows rights and give social obligations. The development of the disciplinary matrix of intercultural management is fully associated with this time of strong identifications but often incompatible with a modern model of dignity at work which is always conditioned by social recognitions requirements. As Guegen and Malochet say : « it is because they are defining themselves as citizens with equal dignity and rights that individuals may deny discrimination and require, by contrast, to be recognized for their own value." (2012 , p. 79).

### **Intercultural management future projects**

By the term « episteme », intellectuals wanted to identify discursive patterns, layers of constituents, historical knowledge and underground configurations which define what may or may not be the thinking of a period, and what is possible to say or see in an historical context (Foucault, 1966). As we know, Cross-cultural management traditionally has chosen the notion of culture (Chevrier, 2000 and 2012 ; Chanlat, Davel and Dupuis, 2013).

Thinking of cultural diversity looks for illuminating and distributing these levels without unduly privileging one and canceling the differences and the existing gaps. In this reflection based on a coming book (Chanlat and Pierre, 2018), we try to use theoretical and disciplinary currents, sometimes distant from each other (theory of social representations, social identity, concept of identity strategies ...) because we are convinced that the responsibility of teachers, practitioners, researchers, trainers in the field of cross-cultural management is to

seek complementarities between supposedly distant understanding frameworks for combating stereotypical visions, often highly amplified, which become real subjective differences or barriers for individuals as for public opinion (Bosche, 2002). This is the reason why we have emphasized the idea that the study of actors in a multicultural context must bring together the two terms often opposed : culture and identity, associating the collection of the contents of the interactions and observing them in its contextual frame.

The systematic use of national culture concept, taken as a statistical vision, contributed to the atrophy of cross-cultural management discipline. Indeed, it is too limited to describe the intelligibility of conducts between individuals in multicultural teams (Chevrier, 2003 ; Barmeyer, 2004 and 2007 ; Chanlat et Barmeyer, 2004). This is why we want to put the emphasis on the commitments and cultural resistance which can never be reduced to the individual dimension and to the social utility, but come from an intersubjective and symbolic life and issues related to imaginary cultural and social forms which are not devoid of reflexivity.

Too many cross-cultural management studies invite us to think of cultures as combinations that might be considered in themselves, regardless of the individuals for whom they would remain unconscious. Cultures are certainly not pure abstractions but “like mountains, they never meet themselves”. It is always some people which develop relationships and live these social interactions. Cultures as organizations are not suspended in the air (Chanlat, 1990, 1996 and 2012). So, the notion of "culture shock" or "clash of civilizations" is not justified. These are not cultures that clash or agree because they cannot be existing without people, frames and temporalities, which give them meaning. We defend here the epistemological significance of identity notion for all the researchers who wants to understand intercultural realities, in addition to more traditional uses of the term culture. Which leads us to ask these questions: cross-

cultural management discipline does should hesitate to link categories of political science with those of cultural psychology? Should do we choose between a cultural understanding (worn by cultural groups) or a social understanding (worn by individuals and groups)?

Because cultures are not passive reflections of a given being, and independent from human mind constructions, it seems to us that in the field of cross-cultural research, the issue is less consider something in context from categories attached to different cultures and value systems, than identify bricolage and interbreeding processes, clarify how these cultures and value systems highlight and oriented differently opportunities to be engaged in the world according to different action registers. Facing the belief of a sociology of "agent " in which every actor involved would be crushed by the conditions (cultural) of their domination, we defend a sociology of "translation", which, not eliminating power relationship and domination, also shows how actors develop discourse on their action ; consequently, the company cannot be reduced only to an actor games "theater", but characterized by its propensity to produce values, norms and performances, as a place in which symbolic meanings, interest, and cultural identity are combined and questioned.

### **Conclusive remarks**

Our reflection and our plea for an intercultural perspective conduct us to conclude by pointing three keys for those who practice and are interested by cross-cultural management, and also for those who teach it.

As French researchers, our first key is to keep a diversity of thinking in the cross-cultural management field of research, notably in encouraging in our case the diffusion of foreign non English literature, in particular, French works in other cultural areas. Up to now, the main reason which seem to explain the

relative ignorance of these works among Anglo-Saxon literature, despite some notable exceptions, such as Hofstede, Trompenaars or Crozier or Latour is the fact that these researchers, notably the French ones, publish largely in their language, few of their work being published in American journals or translated (Chanlat, 2014 ; Alcadimpani, 2017) ; even if it is changing in the last years. But the choice of a language for publishing is without any doubt cultural because language and culture are closely linked. Research in International Management and Cross-cultural Management illustrate it regularly, for, the choice of a language is also the choice of an interpretive scheme embedded into the chosen language (Mayrhofer and Urban, 2012; Henderson and Louhiala-Salminen, 2011; Usunier , 2010; Chanlat, 2014 ; Tréguier-Felten, forthcoming).

For our field, the challenge of promoting non English production is essential to maintain a critical pluralism in the creation and innovation among the social sciences and management. In effect, if, among contemporary management research, the weight of US production is historically dominant and significant, it has existed and still exists interesting thinkings in other parts of the world (Bayley and Clegg, 2008). For example, as French researcher, we can observe easily that a number of important works in French language have never been translated and therefore accessible to English-speaking researchers. These fundamental works in our field does not appear, with rare exceptions, among the bibliographies of our English-speaking colleagues. The lack of translation is an explaining factor, these works become invisible (Chanlat, 2014).

More, in the last two decades, the role and importance granted and played by journal ranking systems, more generally in the evaluation of intellectual productions are not without effects of mimicry and systematic alignment to the Anglo-American production model (Berry, 2004 ; Chanlat, 2014 ; Chevrier, 2014 ; Alcadipani, 2017). This social process forgets the fact that many other language scientific fields, and notably the French ones, distinguish themselves

from the American field by their epistemological and social choices. But, as in the Cross-Cultural management field of research, the concepts largely used come from research instruments originally designed in the United States, notably psychometric scales and interview guides, these research instruments in using textual elements designed, written and published in English, incorporating some key elements of this language oriented towards action and facts, in a low context and explicit messages style (Usunier, 2011; Hagège, 2012 ; Borer, 2015 ; Edwards, 2017), in many cases, they are not relevant to describe foreign situation far from the American cultural experience.

The second key is to ensure a professional horizons, an employability for educated professionals in multicultural context interventions and, more broadly, to those preparing for these professions interested by intercultural issues. As wrote Sainsaulieu : « Talking about profession means that one recognizes the existence of milieu defined by the effective implementation of specific operational skills and the desire to manage their learning and transmission "( Sainsaulieu , 1995, p. 19 quoted by D. Felder , 2007).

The aim of any educational program in cross-cultural management should be to train, at the same time, in the analysis of practices, anchored in the real occupation, culture, discourse, action, and in the research which introduces the necessary distance and importation of theories and concepts. It can also invite (and help) practitioners who capitalizes oftent little by writing and sharing his discoveries or confronting them with others (Cloet, Guénette, Mutabazi and Pierre, 2017). In this regard, the contribution of ethno-sociological methods (life stories and participant observation methods), used extensively, in particular by the French team « Gestion et Société » led by d'Iribarne in Paris (2014), seems important for us to situate what is happening in a theater of interactions (Girin, 1990 and 2016). Cross-cultural field is a particularly fertile field for cultivating

qualities of endurance, emotional strength and ability to know how to build a plurality of argument registers.

At last, the third key for the development of cross-cultural management, in our view, is the current shortage of places where we can share questions on these issues (as the SIETAR and the new Atlas Francophone association, AFMI do) . In effect, research subjects in intercultural management (work in multinational teams, international mobility, migration, sociology of elites and leaders ... exercised in a context of growing standardization, certification, labelling processes, often in several languages) invite to understand unfamiliar and unknown worlds, and avoid to use formulations of common sense but analyze and deconstruct them (Cloet and Colomb, 2014). These pitfalls remind in one hand, that bringing together in one place specialists from various disciplines is not sufficient to achieve a fruitful interdisciplinarity, which would be defined as a possible integration of knowledge from different disciplines (D'Iribarne, 2011; Chanlat, 1990 and 1998) ; On the other hand, they help to be aware of the cross-cultural management separation existing between the scientific-academic field and professional, politico-administrative or media field of symbolic recognition.

Given the traditional division between a " theoretical sociology " (mainly based on a critical analysis of job categories, concepts, ideas, references ...) and an « applied sociology", " commissioned ", and empirically grounded, we stand for a medium range research position.

The cross-cultural management is a field that opens into “ a dynamics of becoming ” (Laplantine and Nouss, 1997, p. 113), a versatile totality that invites us to limit our control pretensions, or our vision of greatness. Europeans and French, open to the world, in affirming ourselves, could oppose to this planetary uprooting and sign finally a passage from the « to » to the « and », from the monocultural to the intercultural.

In this task, we have to remember that each country has a unique historical experience in how to live this intercultural issue. From this point of view, the United States experience is very different from our countries, for example, like France or Denmark. Panikkar, noting the disintegration risk of existences wrote that « it is Europe that must work to the « dewesternization of the world » (1992, p. 50 quoted by Latouche, 1989); and in some cases, Europeans paradoxically have to take the lead about it towards these Westernized elites of other continents, which, as new rich people, are often more papist than the Pope ... Europe, with its own culture experience and having conscious of its limits, is, may be, better placed to perform this metanoia (regress / regret) than those who are only obsessed by enjoying the Western civilization goods.

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