Call for papers for a special issue of *International Journal of Cross Cultural Management*

Investigating otherness:

which differences should be considered by cross-cultural management studies, and how?

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We invite articles that contribute significantly to cross-cultural management scholarship through the conceptual and/or empirical investigation of 'otherness', its meaning, scope and implications.

Cross-cultural management (CCM) is the discipline that investigates and manages the interrelations between culture, and management or organizations. The notion of difference – as objectively definable and/or as experienced in interaction – is thus central to CCM. Increasingly so, difference is no longer thought of as an obstacle to be overcome, but as an opportunity for learning, growth, complementarities and synergy (e.g. Stahl et al., 2010). For instance, whereas early theories spoke of "culture shock", newer theories speak of the need and potential of "cross-cultural adjustment", and also stress the need to not only consider difference 'abroad' but 'at home' as well (Gullahorn & Gullahorn, 1963; Black & Mendenhall, 1991; Maznevski, 2020). It is thus the researcher's and manager's task to utilise difference for a positive outcome.

Yet, at the same time, the differences which are relevant to CCM today, have multiplied: the borders and boundaries between (national) cultures are no longer clear-cut. Due to migration and individual mobility many individuals are bi-and multicultural, or at least cross cultural boundaries on a daily basis. Due to globalisation and information and communications technology, many people have cross-cultural encounters at work without any physical movement at all. The phenomenon underlying all these developments is 'otherness'.

Otherness refers to a process by which (cultural) differences are located and made manifest in an otherwise culturally-complex world, often to affirm the interests of some over others (Hall, 1987). It is linked to well-known phenomena such as similarity-attraction phenomenon or in-group bias (Tajfel & Turner, 1986). It creates a preferable cultural identity of those who are 'the same' and who represent the 'We', and those who are 'different' and represent the often

undesirable (cultural) 'other'. In the contemporary world, otherness takes place against the background of the global rise in certain ideologies and practices such as nationalism, populism, xenophobia which disadvantage, marginalize or exclude certain individuals and groups, and which also manifest on the level of management and organizations (Zanoni et al., 2010).

Otherness, and the perceptions and realities of difference in societies and organizations are thus closely intertwined. Still, we use the term 'otherness' (and not difference) to acknowledge that difference is never just a factual reality: It is also linked to interests, power games and many other factors and individual agendas. For instance, otherness is ascribed to individuals based on certain diversity and identity categories (e.g. race, gender, ethnicity or a combination thereof), it can be triggered by changes on organizational or supra-organizational levels (e.g. virtual work due to the COVID-19 pandemic), it might be rooted in societal beliefs (e.g. public sentiments of ethnic homogeneity) or it can emerge from national policies (e.g. regarding refugees and migrants). Whatever the causes of othering, its effects are similar: a certain group of people is made and/or becomes the (marginalized, disadvantaged, excluded) 'other', and we consider this a harmful scenario to be prevented and/or overcome ((Mahadevan, Romani and Primecz, 2020).

What is outdated from this perspective, is the idea of clear-cut, objectively definable and mono dimensional national or societal cultural borders. To identify and, thus, manage relevant difference, managers therefore need to carefully assess the situation to find out which realities and perceptions of otherness are salient and for whom and for what reasons. Rather than speaking of singular 'cultures', one would thus need to speak of 'cultural identities' (Brannen, 2020) or 'social identities' (Maznevski, 2020).

We thus propose that a CCM that wishes to remain relevant under the aforementioned conditions, needs to investigate otherness as central to a contemporary cross-cultural management theory and practice. To this end, we invite empirical and conceptual studies that shed light onto

1) who is made and/or becomes the (marginalized, disadvantaged, excluded et cetera) Other,
2) the root causes and consequences of otherness,
3) how to overcome the critical effects of otherness for a more ethical, inclusive and responsible CCM theory and practice
4) the potential synergies and potential of otherness and how to utilize them for CCM

Contributions might focus on, but are not limited to, questions such as:

- <u>Otherness in relation to specific and intersecting identity and diversity categories</u>, e.g. What are the conditions faced by migrants and refugees when they wish to integrate (Hilde & Mills, 2017)? What about the situation of cultural, ethnic and religious minorities in a certain society or organization (Mahadevan & Kilian-Yasin, 2017)? Which religious practices are thought of as signifiers of otherness at work (Mahadevan, Cetinkaya & Özer, 2020, Hidegh & Primecz, 2020)? Why and how do members of a certain gender become 'the Other' (Primecz & Karjalainen, 2019)? How gender identity influences organizational visibility and invisibility (Beauregard et al, 2018)? How do notions of race implicate CCM (Jackson, 2017; Nunka Dikuba & Mahadevan, 2020)? What about individuals who are made the 'other' from multiple, intersecting angles (e.g. LGBTQ* Muslim individuals, see Rahman & Chehaitly, 2020)?

- <u>Specific manifestations of otherness</u>, e.g. in certain places, in certain times, or in certain occupations. What about dominant ideas and images of certain professions, such as management? What happens in terms of otherness if minority individuals climb up the organizational ladder? Who is the implicit norm, and how can it be challenged (e.g. Mayer, Surtee & Mahadevan, 2018)?

- Otherness, technology and new forms of cross-cultural management and organizing, e.g. do virtual workplaces and new forms of organizing, e.g. as triggered by the COVID-19 pandemic, disadvantage those with caring commitments? What is the effect of digitalization and new technologies on who becomes 'the other'? Does technology have a democratizing effect, or does it create even stronger, yet, less visible inequalities?

- Contextualized and comparative perspectives on otherness, e.g. how are perceptions and realities of culture, class and social status linked to who is made, becomes and/or perceives themselves as 'other'? Do negative perceptions of certain diversity and identity categories differ across cultures and places?

- Otherness and the International Business environment: How are negative processes of otherness linked to the wider inequalities of the contemporary International Business system, such as which national culture is perceived as superior or inferior at work (Kakar & Mahadevan, 2020)? Who should these negative process of otherness be overcome via a better cross-cultural management practice? How can the investigation of otherness help organizations develop cross-cultural business networks and establish insidership across cultural differences (Johanson & Vahlne, 2009)?

- Methodologies for investigating otherness, e.g. which classic or novel methodologies can help investigate otherness in relation to diversity and identity, and to overcome inequalities (Romani, Mahadevan & Primecz, 2018, 2020)? What about researcher role and reflexivity (Mahadevan, 2011, 2015)? What are incidents and cases of best practice by which manifestations of 'otherness' can be overcome (e.g. Crenshaw, 1989; Helms Mills, Thurlow & Mills, 2017)? Which (multi-) paradigmatic angles are particularly helpful for overcoming negative otherness and utilizing its positive effects (Primecz, Romani & Sackmann, 2009; Primecz, Romani, Topçu, 2015; Romani et al., 2018)?

- Alternative angles on otherness, e.g. what about individual agency and resources of 'the others' themselves: Should they not speak for themselves rather than others speaking for them and studying how 'the others' are disadvantaged? How would cross-cultural management look like, if conceived solely from the perspective of 'the others' (e.g. Jackson, 2013)? How to 'mainstream' the lived experiences of those who are presently made 'the other' (Crenshaw, 1989; Hall, 1987)?

- The potential of otherness, and how to utilize it for CCM: what can be learned from the otherwise hidden boundary-spanning abilities of those 'in-between' cultures and cultural identities? What is the hidden potential of otherness, if included in CCM (Rahman & Chehaitly, 2020)? What can be learned from the experiences of those who are marginalized or excluded (Mahadevan, 2015; Mahadevan & Kilian-Yasin, 2017)? What does this mean for the role of the cross-cultural manager: how should they include what they do not know and are not aware of and work towards a more equal and inclusive practice (Primecz, Mahadevan & Romani, 2016; Mahadevan, Romani & Primecz, 2020)?

- Cross-cultural management competencies and otherness: what is the potential of otherwise marginalized cultural identities (bicultural, migrant, third culture, hybrid et cetera identities) for CCM (Brannen, 2020)? Which cultural identities and which cross-cultural experience can help utilize otherness for developing the required contemporary cross-cultural competencies (Maznevski, 2020)? How should these cross-cultural competencies be trained and supported? How can the investigation of otherness help managers to act more appropriately and effectively (Spitzberg and Changnon, 2009)?

This call is open to all paradigms and methodologies; both conceptual and empirical papers are welcome. We particularly invite interdisciplinary submissions which bring in knowledge not normally considered as being part of CCM studies, in order to enlarge the scope of contemporary CCM theory and practice. Contributions from the social sciences are welcome.

Submissions

If you would like to discuss a possible submission, and for any further information, please contact the guest editors. Papers should be submitted through the IJCCM online submission system. Please visit our SAGE webpages at http://journals.sagepub.com/home/ccm, for more information on formatting and submission criteria, and submit your article via our online submission system at https://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/IJCCM, ensuring you submit to the special issue ('Investigating otherness'). Submissions are subject to a rigorous double-blind review.

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