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AU COEUR DE LA DIMENSION
CULTURELLE DU MANAGEMENT | Book
Review

Being published in 2017 by the L'Harmattan Publishing House, Paris, under the coordination of Pierre Dupriez and Blandine Vanderlinden (MIME-ICHEC, Brussels), the book *Perspectives on interculturality* manages to capture the main aspects of the cultural dimension of management, using a multicultural and multidisciplinary team.

The book's foreword is written by famous French researcher Philippe d'Iribarne, the author of numerous books and articles dealing with cultural diversity, and the afterword belongs to Pierre Calame, the author of several essays on the role and place of the state in contemporary society.

The content of the book is structured in thirty chapters, organized in four parts, each reflecting new manners of theoretical and practical approach, revealed by an international collective of elite authors with intercultural experience.

The first part, *Culture and Management. Fundamentals and Methodology*, is generally dedicated to the theoretical and methodological aspects that are necessary for an incursion of the type proposed by the authors, into the field of interculturality. We recognize the perspective of interpretive anthropology that addresses culture as a sense-bearing system. The individual is not determined in the behavior and values that belong to his personality and his own history, but the reactions to a situation or an action will appear according to the given interpretations, i.e. these sense systems. The referential systems that organize the forms of social ties are also present in work situations. Crossing the historical path, political culture is also integrated into this ensemble. Culture appears as a *total social fact*.

It's not about the universal logic, but the local, permanent logic that expresses itself through the global functioning practices of a society. The functions of integration and creation of the identity of national culture and organizational culture and their relationship with management are highlighted in a systemic approach. It is important to know and understand the situations in which the enterprise is located, in a historical, social, economic, political and cultural context.

The systemic approach is associated with the hypothetical-deductive model, in which the theoretical construction has the observation as its starting point. In this way, as the theory advances with empirical data gathered through observation, the field of observation is also widened, in a circular process, characterized by searches and returns needed in a field of research in which the capturing and analysis of the *specifics* is sought for homogeneous culture, and the analysis of the *incoherences* is sought in the case of heterogeneous cultures. The abductive approach directs the researchers to the best possible interpretation. The recourse to these methodological choices is justified by the specific characteristics imposed by the intercultural approach, which presupposes, above all, the *recognition of the other*. The methodological perspective is complemented by the presentation of the possible sources of errors in multi- and intercultural approaches that need to be avoided both in the proposed research and in future research.

The second part, *Culture and the Challenges of Management*, includes analyzes in which the culture-management couple generates different problematic situations in the enterprise: intercultural teams work, cultural dimension of organizational social responsibility, the relationship between organizational culture and organizational social responsibility, the strategic integration of responsible sustainable innovations, cultural dimension of organizational learning, culture and quality management, human resource management practices, cultural dimension of managerial training, etc. In these analyzes on the influence of culture on management, theoretical details, examples and clarifications are provided.

In the third part of the book, *A World of Cultures*, the treatment of intercultural situations and the effects they produce (enrichment, valorisation, cultural shock, domination, cooperation, etc.) are presented. The periplus is characterized by diversity. After explaining the course of the other's perception in Africa, drawing our attention to a history where the "other" was associated with domination and exclusion, the necessity to build a negotiated culture in the case of a Franco-German merger is explained, then we are provided with details concerning human resource management practices evolution in a complex environment characterized by the coexistence of inherited traditional aspects and modern aspects, taken over by adaptation or imposition, starting with the case of some Russian enterprises. We are further led into the African managerial space where the aspects of paternalist leadership in relation to local cultural specificity are analyzed. There are clarifications on the mode of expression and adaptation of the individuals who have to deal with a job obtained in another country (the case of Magrebiens and French employed in Canadian enterprises), but also on the complex cultural dynamics involved in such situation, in which the acculturation is not unidirectional and the individual expresses, ultimately, according to the values that define him, contributing to the cultural redefinition of the environment in which he acts. The analysis of the Andean rural communities in Peru offers the authors of this study the opportunity to discover a space characterized by the coexistence of many opposing aspects, yet integrated using the culture perceived as the spine of existence, not just as its certain dimension.

Each provided example is placed in the context of the enterprise and the country / countries in which it was analyzed. There is an insistence on the detailed presentation of the particular context which describes the intercultural situation and on the cultural aspects that generated / generate difficulties, with the indication of solutions, mediation paths, valorization recommendations or painful critical comments where appropriate (for example, in the situation when "*the other* is nothing else but a source of profit").

The last part of the book, *From Culture to Ethics*, directly reveals the humanistic dimension of the approach. The focus is on the interrogation of values in the environment in which the enterprise is integrated. The enterprise should express openness to cultural universes that surround it, although, at the same time it should be interested in its own capacity to generate change.

The West has exaggerated the desire to impose its own vision, and this attitude must cease. Without respecting cultural pluralism, on the one hand, and without connection with the world, on the other hand, mankind can not overcome the economic, social and cultural impasse of the modern world. Both the individual and the organization are parts of something much larger, something that encompasses them. The emphasis on individualism and materialism has created a crisis of the values of modern human that seems to be lost in a senseless world that no longer allows him to recover himself.

The connections with others, with the world, with values must be restored. This is possible through spirituality. A well understood spirituality, generating authentic values, which can also be used by management. The enterprise must be increasingly interested in the ethical dimension and the social responsibility component, and by orientation towards spirituality, a culture can be created in order to support the change in these directions.

Criticism shared by authors in the last part of the book, being rather vehement, yet reflects an optimistic view. There are tools and solutions at the organizational and social level for the creation of sense not only in businesses but also in the world we live in.

Browsing the text reveals national and professional dominants of the authors, beyond the discovery of specific cultural aspects noted in the situations investigated and presented by them. In fact, through the richness of experiences and interpretations offered, this cultural mix leads to the coverage of a generous research space where the cultural dimension is the center of attention.

In terms of issue and level of exposure, the text is addressed especially to the specialists in the field of intercultural management or related fields, researchers, doctoral students and also the young people in training (students, master students) interested in the issues raised by the cultural diversity.

We note that the work is a very good appearance, a representative one, able to provide a pertinent overview of the most important situations that may generally arise related to interculturality, and in particular, the culture-management relationship, which is why we warmly recommend it.

Iași, September 25, 2017

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AFTERWORD Management, Culture and Society

Pierre CALAME

AU CŒUR DE LA DIMENSION CULTURELLE DU MANAGEMENT

Sous la direction de Pierre Dupriez et Blandine Vanderlinden



L'ouvrage renouvelle la manière d'aborder la dimension culturelle. On retiendra que la culture est essentiellement construction de sens, que l'entreprise doit se lire comme un système ouvert sur son environnement, que seul un regard attentif permet d'interroger les représentations différentes, que la recherche dans ce domaine doit adopter ses propres règles méthodologiques et qu'au final, la démarche interculturelle est avant tout reconnaissance de l'autre.

Ces fondements permettent d'évoquer de nombreux défis posés au management dans des situations bien concrètes comme la gestion et la composition des équipes, la RSE, l'innovation responsable, la qualité, l'apprentissage organisationnel, la GRH renouvelée dans des contextes culturels différents, le leadership, la transition culturelle ou encore le développement des communautés rurales. C'est également transcender le quotidien de l'entreprise et voir comment la prise en compte de la dimension culturelle peut contribuer à la construction du futur. En cela, cet ouvrage peut être considéré comme unique et original. Il va bien au-delà de ce qui est généralement enseigné dans les Business Schools et dans plusieurs universités sous le nom de Management interculturel.

Une trentaine de collaborateurs, parmi les plus avertis dans les domaines concernés, ont contribué à sa rédaction.

Avec les contributions de Christoph Barmeyer, Ignace Berten, Pierre Calame, Pascal Chabot, Sylvie Chevrier, Annie Cornet, Pierre Dupriez, Jean-Pierre Dupuis, Youssa Essid, Camelia Fratila, Raül Fomet-Betancourt, Ulrike Haupt, Christelle Havard, Marc Ingham, Philippe d'Iribarne, Albert Kasanda, Emmanuel Kamdem, Valery Krylov, Daniel Labaronne, Laki Maurice Musewa M'Bayo, Mezziani Mustapha, Philippe Pierre, Astrid de Poix, Vidal Pino Zambrano, Michel Sauquet, Pascal Sem Mbimbi, Géraldine Thiry, Blandine Vanderlinden, Martin Vielajus et Dumitru Zait.

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Préface de Philippe d'Iribarne
Postface de Pierre Calame

L'Harmattan

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