53 2015 November

Culture studies in the field of international business research: A tale of two paradigms

Verner Worm, Xin Li, Michael Jakobsen, Peihong Xie

Editor of the Copenhagen Discussion Papers:
Associate Professor Michael Jakobsen

Asia Research Centre
Copenhagen Business School
Porcelænshaven 24
DK-2000 Frederiksberg
Denmark

Tel.: (+45) 3815 3396
Email: mj.int@cbs.dk
www.cbs.dk/arc

Culture studies in the field of international business research: A tale of two paradigms

Verner Worm
Asia Research Centre
Department of International Economics and Management
Copenhagen Business School
Denmark
vw.int@cbs.dk

Xin Li
Asia Research Centre
Department of International Economics and Management
Copenhagen Business School
Denmark
xl.int@cbs.dk

Michael Jakobsen
Asia Research Centre
Department of International Economics and Management
Copenhagen Business School
Denmark
mj.int@cbs.dk

Peihong Xie
School of Management,
Shanghai University of International Business and Economics
China
phxie68@suibe.edu.cn

29 June 2015

Abstract

Purpose - The purpose of this paper is to describe the status of culture studies within the field of international business research, and to examine how two main paradigms – essentialism and social constructivism – relate to the discourse in this field. We analyze the main points of the two paradigms, and discuss how the relationship between them has evolved.

Findings - We show that essentialism and social constructivism have a paradoxical relationship. They seem to be mutually exclusive, yet each offers unique insights into the notion of culture. Both are necessary for a complete understanding of culture, yet they cannot be integrated in any normal sense. We see the relationship between the two paradigms as paradoxical: that is, we see them as ontologically complementary yet epistemologically incommensurable. Taking inspiration from Bohr's principle of complementarity, we understand the two competing paradigms of culture studies as both necessary and yet as incompatible.

Research limitations - Future research should help to improve the conceptual clarity with which the relationship between the two paradigms is portrayed here, thereby enhancing the empirical rigor of the argument we make in this paper.

Practical implications – We encourage practitioners to learn how to switch, both sequentially and spatially, between the two paradigms of culture (fundamentally incommensurable though they are). This involves taking a "both/or" approach to the two paradigms.

Originality/Value - We show for the first time that Bohr's complementarity principle is illustrative and useful for understanding the paradoxical relationship between essentialism and social constructivism. Inspired by two principles enunciated by Bohr – that of complementarity and that of classical concepts – we argue that the two competing paradigms are necessary yet

incommensurable. We therefore suggest that culture scholars switch between the two paradigms, instead of seeing each as negating the other.

Paper type – Research paper

Keywords: Culture, essentialist, social constructivist, complementary, incommensurable.

Introduction

In a globalized world, culture plays a more and more important role in facilitating or hindering international business. One of the modern definitions of culture stems from Tylor (1871), who defines culture as a complex whole including knowledge, belief, art, moral, law, custom and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society (Holden, 2002).

Studies of culture in international business research are characterized by two major paradigms: i.e., essentialism and social constructivism. Merriam-Webster's online dictionary defines a paradigm as "a philosophical and theoretical framework of a scientific school or discipline within which theories, laws, and generalizations and the experiments performed in support of them are formulated."

The essentialist paradigm, with its positivist approach, normally divides culture along various dimensions – value orientation being one such (e.g., Kluckhohn & Strodtbeck, 1961; Hofstede, 1980). The social constructivist paradigm takes an interpretivist approach, studying culture in accordance with the notion of thick description (e.g., Geertz, 1973; Feldman, 1989). Basically, we identify the two paradigms as conceptualizing "culture" in terms of values (essentialism) and meaning (social constructivism), respectively.

The two paradigms are hostile towards each other; each feels superior to the other and refuses to discuss any possible complementary aspects. Facing various kinds of criticism from social constructivists, Minkov (2013), a prominent proponent of essentialism, has renamed the essentialist paradigm "culturology" – as opposed to "anthropology," with its interpretivist or constructivist approach (Geertz 1973). This stance of mutual hostility might be termed an "either/or isolationist" approach. The consequence is either a lack of communication or a jockeying for primacy (Martin, 2002; Jackson & Carter, 1993).

However, while the essentialist paradigm has been dominant within the international business field during the last 30 years (Taras and Steel, 2009), more and more scholars are applying a social constructivist approach (Brannen, 2004). And recently the pendulum has swung back towards the middle. Thus, in addition to either/or isolationism, there is "both/and integrationism." Some scholars argue, that is, that both essentialism and social constructivism are insightful and necessary: the two paradigms can and ought to be synthesized or integrated.

In this article, we critique both either/or isolationism and both/and integrationism. We believe that neither is correct. Instead we see the relationship between the two paradigms as a paradoxical "Both-Or" (Li, 2014): in other words, they are complementary yet incommensurable. A Both-Or relationship of this kind is well explained, we contend, by Niels Bohr's complementarity principle.

In the following, we first present the two paradigms separately. We then introduce the social constructivist critique of essentialism, and the essentialist reaction and defense. After that we take our recourse to Bohr's complementarity principle, in order to describe the paradoxical relationship between the two paradigms and to reconcile them. We suggest that, in order to gain a deeper understanding of not only cultures but also paradigms, culture studies scholars ought to make use of both paradigms – by switching between them.

The two paradigms in the field of international business research

It is only during the last 50 years that the two main paradigms for the study of culture have evolved systematically, despite the many definitions of culture available earlier. The first paradigm is the classic anthropological concept touched upon above. This paradigm sees culture as *meaning*. C. Geertz, one of its main proponents, puts the focus on a "thick" qualitative emic

description of culture (Geertz, 1973).[1] This approach is often referred to as the social constructivist paradigm. The other paradigm, normally known as the essentialist paradigm, focuses mainly on values. It seeks to group similar national cultures or ethnic groups into clusters (based on a few value-based dimensions), and to measure cultural distance. This paradigm only emerged on a full scale in the 1980s, with the publication of Hofstede's (1984) *Culture's Consequences*. It has mainly been popular within business studies – a field in which national differences are important, due to the operation of many companies in foreign markets.

Both paradigms see culture as acquired, not as biologically based. In other respects, however, commonalities between the two paradigms are few, and each has heavily criticized the other. Indeed, research groups have split up because of differences among their members over the choice of paradigm.[2]

The social constructivist paradigm

The social constructivist or emic paradigm sees culture as "constructed with a specific purpose in mind and … [as] constantly in the making" (Abu-Lughod, 1986, Adams & Markus, 2004, Blasco et al., 2012). It has a longer history than the essentialist or etic paradigm. Were a work in this tradition to be judged as seminal, it would have to be that of C. Geertz (1973).

Geertz writes that "the concept of culture I espouse … is essentially a semiotic one. … [I see man as] an animal suspended in webs of significance he himself has spun. I take culture to be those webs and the analysis of it to be therefore not an experimental science in search of law but an interpretive one in search of meaning. It is explication I am after, construing social expressions on their surface enigmatical" (Geertz, 1973, p. 5).

---

[1] A more detailed discussion can be found in the section on the social constructivist approach to culture.
[2] Personal experience of one of the authors.

According to Geertz, then, we must proceed by interpreting a culture's web of symbols. We should try to specify the internal relationships among these elements, and to characterize the whole system in some general ways. The underlying structure of such a system is what he calls culture.

The study of culture, he contends, can only be interpretative. Cultural analysis is thus a kind of semiotics, in which the way in which meaning is created and ascribed is traced. Culture is a bearer of social identities that are constructed both by self-definition and by the ascription and interpretations of others. The subject of interpretation is the flow of social discourse. The task of interpretative ethnography, according to Geertz, is to produce the codes required for decoding social events.

Social constructivist was mainly developed by students of organization with an interest in interpretive research, who were seeking to explain how participants in organizations make sense of their social world. According to the paradigm they developed, reality is socially constructed – and multiple as well. Different actors may define their reality differently (Sackmann et al., 1997)

The key premise on which social constructivist rests is that subjective and social realities are built through societal and cultural processes – processes which are historically based but which change over time. The subjective and social realities are performed in a context of relationships in which individuals are embedded, and discourse (text and talk) plays a central role in such ongoing negotiations.

This implies that culture is not an observable essence but rather a process, through which worldviews, identities and social relations are continually constructed and reconstructed through discursive action. A culture comes into existence in relationship to, and in contrast with, another

culture. Social constructivist thus emphasizes the symbolization, communication and identification processes of actors.

The social reality of each person is made up of meanings, interpretations and cultural constructions that are kept in place by negotiation and mutual consent. Cultural patterns are thus the result of social and discursive processes, understood as ongoing negotiations that constantly create, uphold and transform perceptions of reality. Nevertheless, cultural patterns may become internalized, thus appearing as stable and "objective." But cultural meanings are actually contingent and contextual. Therefore, the culture of a nation or organization may well be fragmented, and it may change according to circumstances. Cultural patterns of interpretation are produced, reproduced, and continually changed by the people identifying with them. Moreover, people's affiliation with national and organizational cultures, as well as with cultures of other kinds, is subject to change; the boundaries between cultures are accordingly fluid (Sackmann and Phillips, 2003).

Since reality is socially and discursively constructed, it cannot be seen either as determined by external factors or as something natural and given. Cultures and social identities have no internal essence; they are not genuine or stable, but rather negotiated and contingent. They are fluid in nature (Roseberry, 1989)

The essentialist paradigm

Early works which are considered essentialist include Maslow's (1966) study in Haire, Ghiselli and Porter (1966), which covered 11 nations; and that by Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck (1961), which found five value orientations: (1) human nature orientation; (2) man nature orientation; (3) time orientation; (4) activity orientation; and (5) relational orientation (Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck, 1961).

Geert Hofstede, essentialism's leading advocate, defines culture as the "mental programming of the mind" (Hofstede, 2001, p. 9). His book, *Culture's Consequences*, has been cited several thousand times and has been called a "super classic" (Taras and Steel, 2009). Hofstede distinguishes four layers of culture: values, rituals, heroes and symbols (he groups the last three together as "practices"). Culture at the group level can be seen as a propensity towards a certain position on a value dimension, such as individualism/collectivism or degree of hierarchy (Hofstede, 2001).

Culture is learned, Hofstede contends, and it is mainly acquired during childhood and before the age of 10. Groups such as families, nurseries and schools convey the core values (Hofstede, 2001). During the first 10 years of a child's life, he/she has a nearly unlimited ability to absorb learning for survival. Values are difficult to change, because they are acquired early in life. Hofstede (2001) also stresses that core values are non-rational. They are ends, not means; and they are either taken for granted unconsciously or seen as directly derived from one's own experience or from an external authority.

Students of culture, essentialists argue, should focus on values. All variants of essentialism portray values as that which is desired or is desirable, or both. Values, Hofstede points out, are often different from deeds (Hofstede 2001)

Values are "broad tendencies to prefer certain states of affairs over others" (Hofstede 2001, p. 5). They are "feelings with arrows to them: Each has a plus and minus pole" (Hofstede, 2001, p. 6). Examples are good versus evil, dangerous versus safe, paradoxical versus logical, and appropriate versus inappropriate.

In *Culture's Consequences*, Hofstede sought to pinpoint differences in cultural values at a national level. At the time, with 116,000 questionnaires returned, his was the most ambitious

empirical study of cultural values ever carried out (Hofstede, 1984). It was inspired by the work of North American researchers, such as that of the sociologist Alex Inkeles and the psychologist Alex Levinson. During the 1950s and 1960s, Inkeles and Levinson had published a series of books and articles on national character and the influence of socialization (see, for example, Inkeles and Levinson, 1969, original 1954). Hofstede praised the two authors, among other things because they discussed at least three of the four dimensions he found empirically in the first edition of *Culture's Consequences*: namely, "relation to authority [i.e., power distance], conception of self [i.e., individualism and femininity] and primary dilemmas or conflicts and ways of dealing with them [i.e., uncertainty avoidance]" (Hofstede, 1984, p. 37, […] inserted). Hofstede was critical, however, of the authors' concept of "national character," and turned for inspiration to the studies of culture carried out by the sociologists Talcott Parsons and Edward Shils (Parsons and Shils, 1951).

Culturology, as this paradigm has been labelled by its champions (Minkov, 2013), sees culture as an empirical category referring to a relatively stable, homogeneous and internally consistent system of values that can be objectively described (cf. Hastrup, 1995). A culture is something which the members of a group, an organization, or a nation have or bear collectively.

Values are considered the core part of culture, and social behaviors – which Hofstede labels rituals, heroes and symbols – are seen as partly caused by values. Hofstede likens values to the outer layers of an "onion" (Hofstede, 2001; Leung & Bond, 1989). Kluckhohn defines a value as "a conception, explicit or implicit, distinctive of an individual or a characteristic of a group of the desirable which influences the selection from available modes, means and ends of action" (Kluckhohn, 1967, p. 393). Hofstede visualizes culture as an "onion," with values as the core which is surrounded by rituals, heroes and symbols (the last-mentioned being the outermost layer,

which people like to exchange between cultures). For example, Westerners like to taste Chinese food, Chinese like to try Western food, and so on.

Hofstede identified five value dimensions initially individualism/collectivism, degree of power distance, degree of uncertainty avoidance, femininity/masculinity, and long-term versus short-term orientation. Recently, the long-term versus short-term dimension was changed to the pragmatic versus normative dimension found in Minkov's analysis of the World Value Survey, because this latter value correlates closely with Hofstede's long-term versus short-term orientation. A sixth value dimension – indulgence versus restraint – was added later in Hofstede, Hofstede & Minkov (2010), also based on Minkov's analysis of the World Value Survey. (For a more detailed review, see Li, Worm & Xie, 2014).

After the publication of *Culture's Consequences*, other researchers proceeded along similar lines, such as Schwartz (1994). Schwartz is the only researcher within the paradigm with a theoretical point of departure. The others are empirically driven. He finds three dimensions overall. The first is embeddedness versus autonomy. Embedded people are viewed as entities embedded in the collectivity. In autonomy-oriented cultures, by contrast, people are viewed as autonomous, bounded entities. The second is hierarchy versus egalitarianism. Egalitarianism seeks to induce people to recognize one another as moral equals, whereas hierarchy relies on a hierarchical system of ascribed roles. The third dimension is mastery versus harmony. Harmony emphasizes fitting into the world as it is. Mastery encourages active self-assertion, so that people might master and change the natural and social environment in order to attain group or personal goals. Trompenaars (1993) operates with three dimensions, the first two being achievement versus ascription and individualism versus collectivism. He gives no label to the third dimension, but it resembles particularism versus universalism (Smith, Dugan & Trompenaars 1996).

Other anthropologists too have found various cultural dimensions. Edward T. Hall finds three dimensions, namely high and low context cultures, small and large distance space cultures and finally monochronic versus polychronic time cultures (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Edward_T._Hall). Recently Michelle Gelfand developed an empirical measure for a dimension called tightness versus looseness. It registers societal differences in the tolerance of deviation from social norms (Gelfand et al., 2011).

Triandis finds 10 cultural "syndromes," which are similar to dimensions: (1) degree of complexity; (2) tightness versus looseness; (3) individualism versus collectivism; (4) vertical versus horizontal; (5) active vs. passive; (6) universalism versus particularism; (7) diffuse versus specific; (8) ascription vs. achievement; (9) instrumental vs. expressive; and (10) emotional expression versus suppression (Triandis, 1996).

The GLOBE study finds 9 dimensions: (1) performance orientation, which refers to the extent to which an organization or society encourages and rewards group members for performance improvement and excellence; (2) assertiveness orientation, which is the degree to which individuals in organizations or societies are assertive, confrontational and aggressive in social relationships; (3) future orientation – the degree to which individuals in organizations or societies engage in future-oriented behaviors such as planning, investing in the future, and delaying gratification; (4) Human orientation – the degree to which individuals in organizations or societies encourage and reward individuals for being fair, altruistic, friendly, generous, caring, and kind to others; (5) collectivism I: institutional collectivism, reflecting the degree to which organizational, societal and institutional practices encourage and reward collective distribution of resources and collective action; (6) collectivism II: in-group collectivism – the degree to which individuals express pride, loyalty and cohesiveness in their organizations or families; (7) gender

egalitarianism – the extent to which an organization or society minimizes gender role differences and gender discrimination; (8) power distance, defined as the degree to which the members of an organization or society expect and agree that power should be unequally shared; and (9) uncertainty avoidance – the extent to which the members of an organization or society strive to avoid uncertainty by relying on social norms, rituals, and bureaucratic practices to alleviate the unpredictability of future events (House, 2004)

Based on the World Value Survey, Inglehart developed two dimensions: traditional versus secular-rational, and survival versus self-expression (Inglehart, 1997)

In 2002, finally, Leung and his co-authors introduced the concepts of belief and belief systems (religiosity) into cultural studies, with five dimensions: (1) cynicism; (2) social complexity; (3) fate control; (4) spirituality; and (5) reward for application (Leung et al., 2002)

The above description shows that the number of values is unknown at the group level. At least so far, they have mainly been ascertained through the statistical outcome of empirical studies.

The difference between the two paradigms

As shown in Table 1, Hofstede's essentialist definition portrays culture as collective programming of the mind: i.e., as comprising objectively ascertainable values that are acquired during childhood and which are therefore rather stable throughout one's life. The essentialist focus is on propensities revealed in quantitative studies covering many countries.

In contrast, Geertz's social constructivism describes culture as consisting of webs of significance, on the basis of which we create meaning in our surroundings. These webs alter and change in the course of our interaction with other people throughout our lifetime. Social constructivists tend to

do qualitative studies devoted to thick description of a single unique culture. The central understanding of culture is interaction-driven.

A summary of the differences between essentialism and social constructivism is shown in Table 1.

Table 1. The two paradigms of culture study

	Essentialism	Social constructivism
Representative work	Hofstede (1980)	Geertz (1973)
Culture as	Values	Meaning
Definition of culture	Collective programming of the mind	The webs of significance we weave around ourselves
Stability of culture	Stable	Transformative
Socialization	Childhood	Lifetime practitioning
Tendency	Propensity	Uniqueness
Research methodology	Quantitative	Qualitative
Depth of description	Thin	Thick
Kind of understanding	Objectively described	Interaction

Attitudes towards the other paradigm

Each paradigm has been severely criticized by business scholars, as well as by supporters of the other paradigm. We will not discuss internal inconsistencies within a paradigm.

Fang (2006) criticizes the bipolar nature of the essentialist paradigm. According to Fang, culture is not either/or; rather, it is by nature both/and – and accordingly paradoxical. A culture can under certain circumstances be collectivist but in another context individualist. Intra-cultural values are not consistent, and they are context-dependent. The contextual view highlights the importance of "moment," as predominant cultural values change according to context. Furthermore, Fang sees culture as a living organism and not as a "fossil," meaning that culture changes continuously instead of being static. He uses the metaphor of an "ocean," instead of Hofstede's "onion". Oceans are open and mix with each other; onions by contrast are layered, and they roll in different direction after bumping into each other. The onion metaphor suggests that the core decides the condition of the outer layers, which accords with Hofstede's conception of culture as involving the substantial determination of behavior by values. Fang sees the interaction between values and behavior as much more interactive, and as going both ways. Finally, he contends, Hofstede's national "black boxes" are being today transformed today by globalization – towards a much more fluid, mobile and virtual condition. Whereas the acquisition of cultural values, according to Hofstede, takes place primarily before the age of ten, it is a continuing process according to Fang and other social constructivists. Basically the difference is not an either/or one; rather, it is a matter of degree. Social constructivists also speak of socialization and identity-building among young people, but they see these processes as less stable than essentialists do.

Søderberg and Holden (2002) criticize essentialism for portraying culture as "a stable, homogeneous, internally consistent system consisting of […] values and norms transmitted by socialization" (pp. 107-108). Instead, they contend, culture is not stable but dynamic, not consistent but contradictory and paradoxical.

The essentialist paradigm portrays culture as a stable, homogenous, internally consistent system of distinctive assumptions, values and norms that can be objectively described, and which the members of a group, an organization or a nation have or bear collectively (Gertsen and Søderberg, 2000). But in fact, Gertsen and Søderberg (2000) argue, culture is a complex phenomenon that cannot be captured through simplifications. Finally, essentialism tends to use the nation-state as its basic unit of analysis. In this connection Gertsen and Søderberg (2000) emphasize that most nation-states consist of several ethnic groups – a growing trend with increased globalization. In addition, any nation-state contains cultures of many other types besides: e.g., regional, professional, gender and educational.

Finally, social constructivists emphasize that culture constantly changes and that it is internally contradictory. They dismiss essentialism's dimensional way of understanding culture as binary. They themselves prefer the metaphor of a spiral or even a circle.

Jacobsen ventures a more radical criticism (2015). He stresses that culture must be perceived as a process. One consequence of such an approach is that an individual is only partly conceived of as a representation of a particular national culture, and thus is only partly expected to act accordingly. What if culture, instead of being perceived as an explanatory framework in itself, is seen as an aggregated reflection of coordinated social processes that do not reflect perceived cultural differences of "the other," but which rather are based on social strategic processes of various types that are constructed in order to safeguard or justify one's position in the local community? If we take such an approach to the study of culture, it is important that we delineate and document the origin and context of such processes, so that we can map the social landscape that an individual navigates.

In order to engage these processes further, the analyst has to move beyond an etic perspective and towards an emic one. This means we must move towards an actor-oriented perspective. According to Weber and Glynn (2006), this perspective is governed by processes of sense-making of an individual's immediate social environment. Said individual thus perceives, interprets and reacts to changes taking place therein, so as to enhance his or her strategic positioning in that particular environment (Weber and Glynn 2006).

A processual approach towards culture thus aims at avoiding a separation between structure and agency. Structures provide opportunities for agency, as well as imposing constraints on it. The next logical step in such an analysis is to introduce the notion of practice. A social constructivist account is generally based on practice, as behavior-based practice can be understood as a representation of specifically selected extroverted experiences – experiences gained during interaction within a given societal context. Practice is thus one of the guiding systems that govern "navigation" in a known as well as an unknown (trial and error mode) social-economic context.

Agency is never purely individual, for it always takes place in a social context. Since transactions are mediated by significant symbols in the Geertzian sense, social agency can never be attributed to any singular actor. In other words, an act has no agency capacity unless it calls forth some sort of response. By this is meant that hermeneutics encompasses everything in the interpretative process, including verbal and nonverbal forms of communication, as well as prior experiences that affect communication, such as presuppositions and pre-understandings in relation to a given context (Jakobsen, 2015).

A nuanced understanding of culture *per se* thus debunks sophisticated stereotypes (Osland and Bird, 2000). On the basis of this, we assume that self-reflection and self-adjustment will result –

due to contradictory experience in a cross-cultural context – in first-hand experience that goes beyond sophisticated stereotypes.

Culture in this perspective is seen as a process whereby individuals recreate themselves continuously. Whereas the culturologist paradigm focuses on a collective socialization process that mainly takes place before the age of 10, the social constructivist paradigm – which is dominant in organization studies – sees the individual as an agent of change throughout his or her entire life. The agent thus reacts to people and their choice of action in a specific context, and acts accordingly.

Essentialists criticize the social constructivist paradigm in turn, but in a considerably more limited way. Their main criticism is that social constructivist studies are emic, and are therefore neither comparable nor relevant for the conduct of global business. According to Minkov (2013), such studies cannot say anything about the cross-cultural interaction which is becoming increasingly common in a globalized world. Social constructivist studies lack comparability, and comparability is particularly important if cultural analysis is to be useful in connection with international business, where cultural distance plays a critical role. By contrast, etic essentialist analyses put the stress on similarities and differences, which are crucial for a multinational enterprise to know about when it enters a new market and begins operations there (Minkov, 2013). Social constructivist studies lack comparability, so the transferability of insights about varied cultural practices in connection with business activities is therefore not possible either.

In short, the two paradigms have differing purposes, perspectives and methodologies. They appear, therefore, to be incompatible and mutually exclusive. Minkov (2013) contends that the two paradigms cannot be merged. The authors of this article agree with this argument, yet we

also consider both approaches to be valuable in certain contemporary settings, where contextual intelligence and dialecticism is gradually becoming a more crucial competence.

A reconciliation inspired by Bohr's complementarity principle

A quantum physics solution to a social science paradox?

It would appear, then, that we face a paradoxical situation. The two paradigms of culture studies seem to be mutually exclusive, yet each offers some insights about culture. Both paradigms are apparently indispensable, yet they cannot be integrated in any normal sense of the word.

In an attempt to resolve this paradox, we have reviewed the management literature on organizational paradoxes (e.g., Clegg, 2002; Dodd & Favaro, 2006; Farjoun, 2010; Lewis, 2000; Poole & Van de Ven, 1989; Quinn, 1988; Quinn & Cameron, 1988; Seo, Putnam & Bartunek, 2004; Smith, 2014; Smith & Berg, 1987; Smith & Lewis, 2011). Unfortunately, however, this literature does not appear to offer any satisfactory solution for this particular paradox.

We are thus forced to look for solutions outside the management literature, and indeed outside the social sciences altogether. Arguably, we have found a similar paradox in quantum physics: i.e., the wave-particle duality of light; as well as the philosophical solution to said paradox: i.e., Niels Bohr's complementarity principle. We believe this paradox and its solution can provide guidance for reconciling the paradox reviewed above in the field of culture studies.

The immediate question facing us, then, is whether this theory from quantum physics, a field in the natural sciences, is relevant or applicable to a social science problem. We have searched the social science literature, and fortunately have found – in the literature on management and organization – a precedent for applying ideas derived from quantum physics to issues of management.

Lord, Dinh & Hoffman (2015: 267) argue that studies of organization face a fundamental problem of uncertainty: namely, forward-based prospection cannot explain how events unfold probabilistically in the future. The authors then note that quantum physics has grappled with uncertainty, and that it offers a method for modeling it. It may be possible, therefore, to extend the quantum way of thinking to the social sciences: in particular, it may help us to understand how human systems construct the future. The authors accordingly propose a quantum approach to time and organizational change.

Heisenberg's uncertainty principle, Born's probability rule and Bohr's complementarity principle are the three core principles of the Copenhagen interpretation of quantum mechanics. And if the uncertainty concept can be applied in the field of organization studies, there is no reason in our view to think that the complementarity idea cannot be too. In fact, Bohr himself 'pointed to examples to indicate that the idea of complementarity could be fruitful also within the fields of psychology and biology, and he saw in the concept of complementarity a possibility for greater understanding between different cultures and different nations' (Blædel, 1985). Taking our inspiration, then, in the work of Lord, Dinh & Hoffman (2015), we seek in what follows to apply Bohr's complementarity principle to the essentialism vs. social constructivism paradox in the field of culture studies.

The wave-particle paradox and Bohr's complementarity principle

According to Heisenberg (1958: 14), "The Copenhagen interpretation of quantum theory starts from a paradox." For many physicists, the paradox lies in the wave-particle duality of light. On the one hand light can be seen as wave, because it exhibits wave properties in certain experiments; but it can also be seen as a particle, because it displays particle properties in certain other experiments. The wave-particle duality of light is a paradoxical phenomenon, because

waves and particles are fundamentally different (indeed they are mutually exclusive, in that waves are continuous while particles are discrete). Expressed technically, "particles are localized while waves are not" (Pais, 1991: 57). Einstein once put the paradox as follows:

> But what is light really? Is it a wave or a shower of photons? There seems no likelihood for forming a consistent description of the phenomena of light by a choice of only one of the two languages. It seems as though we must use sometimes the one theory and sometimes the other, while at times we may use either. We are faced with a new kind of difficulty. We have two contradictory pictures of reality; separately neither of them fully explains the phenomena of light, but together they do (Einstein & Infeld, 1938: 262-263).

> There are . . . now two theories of light, both indispensable and…without any logical connection (Pais, 1991: 88).

As one of the three core principles of the Copenhagen interpretation, Bohr's complementarity principle was initially proposed as a philosophical solution to the wave-particle paradox. According to Bohr, light (and in later formulations all matter and energy) has both wave and particle properties. In other words it is both wave and particle, *ontologically* speaking. When we try to observe it or to measure its properties in experiments, our instruments for doing so disturb or interact with it. Our observations register, then, the interaction between our observational instruments and the object we are observing. This is the so-called measurement problem. An experiment designed to observe the wave properties of light will disclose its wave properties, and an experiment designed to observe the particle properties of light will disclose its particle properties. Due to the fundamental difference between wave and particle, moreover, the two properties can never be captured simultaneously in a single experiment or observation. In technical terms, this is "a simple consequence of the noncommutativity" of wave and particle

(Pais, 1991: 304). However, no matter how contradictory the wave and particle descriptions of light are, *epistemologically* speaking, they are complementary to each other – and both are necessary for a complete description of the phenomenon in question.

At the epistemological level, moreover, we have another paradox. According to Bohr the quantum theory is universal, while the classical theories are at best approximations of it. A pure classical description of the world is therefore incomplete. Yet it is also impossible, due to the above-mentioned measurement problem, to give a pure quantum description of the world. Bohr's solution to this paradoxical situation is his principle of classical concepts, which proposes "to divide the system whose description is sought into two parts: one, the object, is to be described quantum-mechanically, whereas the other, the apparatus, is treated as if it were classical" (Landsman, 2006: 221). This quantum-classical division or separation is known as the "Heisenberg cut," because Heisenberg elucidated this principle in a clear manner. In this sense, the relationship between quantum physics and classical physics resembles that between wave and particle: i.e., they are contradictory to, yet complementary with, each other.

A generic view inspired by Bohr's complementarity principle

One of the insights of Bohr's complementarity principle is that the measurement problem gives rise to differing descriptions of any object. Different methods for observation and measurement produce differing interactions between subject and object, and thus differing descriptions of these interactions.

The suggestion we take from Bohr's complementarity principle is that, in the social sciences too, the clash between paradigms over the same empirical phenomenon is epistemological in nature, rather than ontological.

The epistemological contradiction is caused by two main factors: cognitive differentiation and paradigmatic thinking. The differentiation in cognition in turn arises from two factors: differing academic background and a focus on different aspects of the same phenomenon. Observers differ in terms of academic discipline and methodological training. Economists and sociologists, for example, tend to see things differently. For instance, Gary Becker (1973), a Nobel Prize-winning economist, uses economic rationality to explain family issues including marriage; his theory is thus very different from those proffered by sociologists, who do not normally restrict themselves to the terms of economic rationality. Differentiation in cognition may also arise because observers focus on different aspects of the same phenomenon. For example, focusing on structure and focusing on function will yield different descriptions; similarly, focusing on outcome and focusing on process will cause cognitive differentiation.

Paradigmatic thinking reflects what Lewis & Grimes (1999: 672) call a "paradigm mentality." Persons with such a mentality tend to take an either/or approach. They assume that, when opposite views are found regarding the same phenomenon, the one has got to be wrong if the other is correct. Under no circumstances, they feel, can the two contrary views be correct simultaneously. This either/or mentality is in line with Aristotle's formal logic. Paradigmatic thinking, coupled with cognitive differentiation, will tend to accentuate the contradiction and to overlook the complementarity between opposite views. By contrast, those engaged in dialectical thinking tend to see the less visible links and the complementarity between seemingly contradictory views. Put in philosophical terms, they regard opposite views are complementary – indeed, as necessary for a complete description of anything, like the two different sides of a coin.

From a less philosophical and more substantive point of view, the assessment of competing approaches is context-dependent. In organization studies, there are two main competing

paradigms: i.e., functionalism and interpretivism (Burrell & Morgan, 1979). In some spatial contexts (i.e., certain academic disciplines), functionalism is more relevant or applicable than interpretivism. This is often the case in the field of organization studies. Yet in other contexts, like communication studies, interpretivism is more relevant than functionalism. Where the temporal context is concerned, it could be argued that the relevance of functionalism versus that of interpretivism has varied over the history of various academic fields, and that there is now reason to call for a more balanced use of both paradigms.

Therefore, we would argue, no matter how contradictory the competing paradigms seem to be, they are in fact complementary – as well as both necessary for a more comprehensive understanding of the same phenomenon. Figure 1 contains a sketch of our argument. We shall now apply this generic view in an attempt to understand the contradictory yet complementary relationship between the two paradigms in culture studies.

Figure 1. A Bohr-inspired reconciliation of competing views of the same phenomenon
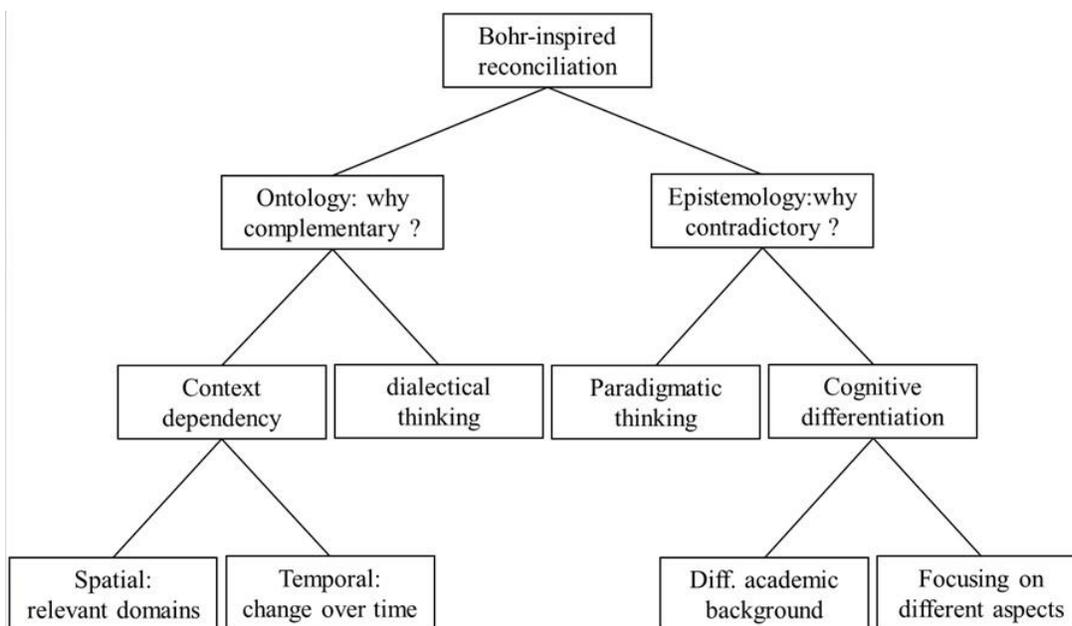
Application of the generic view to competing paradigms in culture studies

As we see it, the two paradigms of culture studies – essentialism and social constructivism – are epistemologically contradictory yet ontologically complementary.

They are epistemologically contradictory, first of all, because their champions have different academic backgrounds and focus on different aspects of culture.

Essentialists are often psychologists by training, while social constructivists are often anthropologists and sociologists. Different academic disciplines often have different methodological training. Economists and sociologists tend to have a quantitative training, while ethnographers tend have a mainly qualitative training. Research conducted by the former, such as Hofstede (1984), is often quantitative in character; that done by the latter – e.g., Geertz (1979) – is often qualitative or ethnographic in nature.

In addition, social constructivists tend to focus on the process aspect of culture, while essentialists mainly focus on outcomes. For example, Hofstede's work from 1984 is a quantitative and apparently outcome-focused study of the differences between national cultures; by contrast, Jacobsen's book from 2015 takes a qualitative and process-focused perspective, which tries to get into the head of the cultural other.

The two paradigms are also seen as contradictory and mutually exclusive, because of the paradigmatic thinking in both scholarly camps. Paradigmatic thinking entails continuity within the same paradigm, as well as incommensurability between different ones (Willmott, 1993). Engaging in a paradigm war for theoretical primacy (Baum & Dobbin, 2000; Martin, 2002;

Jackson & Carter, 1993), the two camps do not just perceive the two paradigms as mutually exclusive; they also *make* them so. Such dogmatic thinking prevents the contending parties from seeing the less visible links between the two seemingly contradictory paradigms. If one adopts dialectical thinking, on the other hand, the complementarities between the two paradigms become more visible.

Which of the two major paradigms in culture studies is more appropriate depends on the spatial and temporal context.

Where the spatial context in concerned, the essentialist approach is applied more often than the social constructivist one in academic domains like international business studies; by contrast, social constructivism is more common in such fields as organization and communication studies. In general, the essentialist paradigm is most appropriate for etic cross-cultural comparison, while the social constructivist approach is more appropriate for emic thick description of a particular culture. Essentialist cross-cultural comparison can handle multiple cultures, but it provides insufficient detail on each of the cultures compared. Thus, etic essentialist culture studies are wide in scope but thin in depth. In contrast, emic social constructivist culture studies are narrow in scope but thick in depth.

Furthermore, the appropriateness of either paradigm changes over time. For example, anthropological studies were predominant from 1900 until 1980, when Hofstede's *Culture's Consequences* was published. Before Hofstede a few studies took a dimensionization approach (Inkeles & Levinson 1969); and mainstream studies on culture – e.g., Benedict (1947) and Kluckhohn (1951) – were emic or social constructivist works focused on in-depth studies or thick description of a particular country or culture. After 1980, due to globalization, researchers in culture studies became more interested in cross-cultural comparison. Essentialism thus

emerged as the dominant paradigm in culture studies; representative works include Trompenaars (1993) and Schwartz (1994). Even so, the dominant essentialist paradigm has been supplemented and balanced by the less prominent social constructivist paradigm; representative works here include Geerts (1973), Brannen (2004), Brannen and Peterson (2009) and Jakobsen (2015), among others.

In the 21st century, finally, the pendulum has swung back to the middle, and both essentialist (Minkov, 2013) and social constructivist studies are now common (Jacobsen 2014). The need for a more balanced and nuanced view is widely appreciated. Neither paradigm is now as dominant as the essentialist one was during the late 20th century.

Conclusion

In this paper we describe the current situation in culture studies, wherein two major paradigms contend: the essentialist paradigm and the social constructivist. We show that the two paradigms have a paradoxical relationship. They appear to be mutually exclusive, yet each offers unique insights into culture. Both are necessary for a complete understanding of culture, yet they cannot be integrated in any normal sense. In the course of our review of the field, we critique two common stances. One is either/or isolationism, whereby each paradigm is hostile to the other and proclaims its own superiority. The other stance we criticize is one that some IB scholars have taken: both/and integrationism, according to which the two paradigms are complementary and can be integrated or reconciled. In our view, neither either/or isolationism nor both/and integrationism is correct. We see the relationship between the two paradigms as paradoxical: that is, they are ontologically complementary, yet epistemologically incommensurable.

We show too that Bohr's complementarity principle is illuminating and useful for understanding this paradox. Our position is neither "either/or" nor "both/and"; rather, it is "both-or" (Li, 2014).

It combines an ontological "both/and" with an epistemological "either/or." Taking our inspiration in Bohr's principles of complementarity and of classical concepts, we contend that the two paradigms are both necessary, and yet mutually incompatible as well; they should therefore be kept separate from each other, and then each one utilized in turn. This is in line with Burrell & Morgan's (1979: 25) suggestion that organization scholars switch back and forth between fundamentally incommensurable paradigms, such as functionalism and interpretivism.

In the same spirit, we argue, scholars in culture studies should use both essentialism and social constructivism. They should switch back and forth between them, according to the purpose and need – especially given that the merit of either paradigm (i.e., width or depth) is precisely the drawback of the other. Switching, we argue, is not just possible but also important, if we are to gain a deeper understanding of both other cultures and our own. Every culture has some taken-for-granted assumptions, and people raised within a particular culture are normally unaware of these assumptions (or at least indisposed to challenge them). According to Wallner (1994), it is only when people strangify themselves – by moving out of their own culture and into a foreign one – that they are able to identify these taken-for-granted assumptions and thus to gain a deeper understanding of their own culture. We believe this idea applies equally well to social science paradigms: namely, scholars only gain a deeper understanding of their own paradigm and that of others when they strangify themselves – by switching between their own paradigm and that of others. We provide a brief illustrative example here.

According to Hofstede's cultural map, Chinese and Japanese cultures are collectivist and long-term-oriented. This essentialist account is basically binary – meaning, a culture is either collectivist or individualist, either long-term-oriented or short-term-oriented. A binary approach of this kind cannot tolerate paradox. Paradox is defined here as a situation involving the presence

of contradictory and mutually exclusive elements which are nonetheless equally operative (Osland & Osland, 2005). Some scholars have found that the cultures of contemporary China and Japan are paradoxical (e.g., Fang, 2012; Osland & Bird, 2000). That is to say, Chinese/Japanese people are sometimes collectivist and sometimes individualist, and sometimes long-term-oriented and sometimes short-term-oriented. How can we explain this cultural paradox? To understand it, we would argue, we must turn to certain social constructivist accounts or thick descriptions of Chinese and Japanese culture. In the case of China, Fang's (2012) theory – with its focus on notions of Yin-Yang – is useful for explaining the cultural paradox. According to Fang, any culture contains opposite values (such as collectivism and individualism) within itself. In any culture, individuals dynamically activate or enact certain values while deactivating certain other (opposing) ones, according to changing environmental conditions.

When it comes to the Japanese case, powerful tools for understanding the paradox include the distinction between shame culture and guilt culture (Benedict, 1946), and that between the interdependent self and the independent self (Markus & Kitayama, 1991). Shame mentality and self-other interdependence, we believe, can enable people in such a culture to act as a switch between binary paired items, such as collectivism vs. individualism and long-term vs. short-term orientation. For example, whether or not an individual with an interdependent self will judge an action of his or hers to be shameful is dependent on the behaviors of people in the surrounding community. We can identify two contingent situations here. If the surrounding people are strangers, the individual in question will feel less ashamed of behaving in an individualist or short-term-oriented or even immoral way. Moreover, if numerous persons in the individual's surroundings act in an individualist or short-term-oriented or even immoral way, then the individual in question will feel less ashamed of doing the same. This may explain why many

Chinese do not obey traffic rules. There are a good many people in China, namely, who do not obey traffic rules. Many other people in the country, therefore, do not feel ashamed when they too disobey them (this is especially the case when the other persons in their environment are mainly strangers rather than acquaintances). This may also explain why many Chinese make fake or even harmful products (which surely qualifies as short-term-oriented and/or immoral behavior). The same reasons as those mentioned above apply here.

As Poole & Van de Ven (1989) point out, there are two types of switching: sequential and spatial. Sequential switching is a stage-dependent approach, whereby the student of culture starts with the essentialist approach but then switches to the social constructivist or interpretivist one (or vice-versa). Worm (1997), for example, takes a sequential switching approach. Osland & Bird (2000) also recommend sequential switching for culture studies. Spatial switching, on the other hand, is a context-dependent approach, whereby the student of culture selects the appropriate approach according to the purposes and needs of the study. For example, if one wants to compare 100 cultures, then one should use the essentialist approach; but if one seeks a deep understanding of a particular country or of just a few countries, then one should have recourse to the thick description associated with Geertz.

Both organization studies and international business research have been undergoing change in recent years. More and more scholars have come to the realization that both of the paradigms examined here are insightful and necessary; they therefore deem it best to use both in their research. In this article, taking our inspiration in Bohr's principles of complementarity and of classical concepts, we argue that the two competing paradigms are necessary yet incommensurable; we therefore suggest that culture scholars switch back and forth between them. Future research should help to refine the conceptual clarity with which the relationship

between the two paradigms is portrayed here, thereby enhancing the empirical rigor of the argument we make in this paper.

References

Abu-Lughod, L. (1986). Veiled sentiments: Honor and Poetry in Bedouin society. Oxford University Press, New York.

Adams, G., and Markus, H.R. (2004), Toward a conception of culture suitable for a social psychology of culture. Schaller, M. and Crandall (Eds.). The Psychological foundations of culture, pp 335-360. Mahwah, NJ, Lawrence Erlbaum.

Baum, J. A., and Dobbin, F. (2000), "Doing interdisciplinary research in strategic management – without a paradigm war," *Advances in Strategic Management*, Vol. 17, pp. 389-410.

Becker, G. S. (1981), *A Treatise on the Family*. Boston: Harvard University Press

Benedict, R. (1946). *The chrysanthemum and the sword: patterns of Japanese culture*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin

Blædel, N. (1985) 'Niels Bohr', in Hansen, P. (Ed.) Factsheet Denmark. Royal Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Copenhagen.

Blasco, M., Egholm Feldt, L. and Jakobsen, M. (2012). "If only cultural Chameleons could fly too: A critical discussion of the concept of cultural intelligence," International Journal of Cross Cultural Management, Vol. 12, pp. 229-245.

Brannen, M.Y (1995) Does culture matter? Negotiating a complementary culture to successfully support technological innovation. Liker, J. Ettlie, J and Campell, J (Eds) Technology and management: America and Japan. Oxford University Press, Oxford

Brannen, M. Y. (2004), "When Mickey Loses Face: Recontextualization, Semantic Fit, and the Semiotics of Foreignness," *The Academy of Management Review*, Vol. 29, pp. 593-616

Brannen, M. Y. and Peterson, M. (2009), "Merging without Alienating: Interventions Promoting Cross-Cultural Organizational Integration and Their Limitations," *Journal of International Business Studies*, Vol. 40, pp. 468-489.

Burrell, G., & Morgan, G. (1979), *Sociological paradigms and organisational analysis*. Heinemann, London.

Clegg, S. R. (Ed.). 2002. *Management and organization paradoxes*, Vol. 9, John Benjamins Publishing, Amsterdam.

Dodd, D., & Favaro, K. 2006. "Managing the right tension," *Harvard Business Review*, Vol. 84, No. 12, pp. 62-74.

Einstein, A. & Infeld, L. (1938) *The Evolution of Physics: The Growth of Ideas From Early Concepts to Relativity and Quanta*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

Fang, T. (2006), "From 'Onion' to 'Ocean' – Paradox and Change in National Culture," *International Studies of Management and Organizations*, Vol. 35, No. 4, pp. 71-90.

Fang, T. (2012). "Yin Yang: A new perspective on culture," *Management and organization Review*, 8(1), 25-50.

Farjoun, M. 2010. "Beyond dualism: Stability and change as a duality," *Academy of Management Review*, Vol. 35, pp. 202-225.

Feldman, S. P. (1989). "The broken wheel: the inseparability of autonomy and control in innovation within organizations." *Journal of Management Studies*, 26(2), 83-102.

Geertz, C (1973). *The interpretation of Cultures – Selected Essays*. Fontana Press

Gelfand, M. J., Raver, J. L., Nishii, L. Leslei, L., Lun, L. M. & Lim, B.C. (2011), "Differences between Tight and Loose Cultures: A 33-nation study," *Science*, Vol. 332, pp. 1100-1104.

Haastrup, K. (1996), *A Passage to Anthropology. Between Experience and Theory*. Routledge. London.

Haire, M., Ghiselli, E. E. and Porter, L. W. (1966) *Managerial thinking: An international study*. New York: John Wiley

http://culturalstudiesnow.blogspot.dk/2012/05/clifford-geertzs-thick-description.html.

Heisenberg, W. (1958), *Physics and philosophy: The revolution in modern science*, Harper, New York

Hofstede, G. (1984). *Culture's Consequences: International Differences in Work-related Values*, Sage, Beverly Hills, CA.

Hofstede, G. (2001), *Culture's Consequences. Comparing Values, Behaviors, Institutions and Organizations across Nations*, Sage Publications, Thousand Oaks.

Hofstede, G., Hofstede, G. J., Minkov, M. (2010), *Cultures and Organizations: Software of the Mind.* 3rd Ed., McGraw-Hill. New York.

Holden, N. J. (2002), *Cross-cultural Management – A Knowledge Management Perspective*, Prentice Hall, London.

House, R. (2004), *Culture, leadership, and organizations, The GLOBE Study of 62 Societies*. Sage, London.

Inkeles, A. and Levinson, D. J. (1969), "National Character: The study of Modal personality and sociocultural systems," Lindzey, G. and Aronson, E. (eds.), *Handbook of Social Psychology*, McGraw-Hill, New York. (original work published in 1954).

Jackson, N. and Carter, P. (1993) "'Paradigms Wars': A response to Hugh Willmott," *Organization Studies*, Vol. 14, pp. 721-725.

Jakobsen, M. (2015), *Ethnic Chinese entrepreneurship in Malaysia. On the contextualization in international business studies*. Routledge, London.

Johns, G. (2006) "The Essential Impact of Context on Organizational Behavior," *Academy of Management Review*, Vol. 31, pp. 386-408.

Inglehart, R. (1997) *Modernization and postmodernization: Cultural, economic, and political change in 43 societies*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

Kluckhohn, C. (1967), Values and value-orientations in the theory of action: An exploration in definition and classification. Parson, T. and Shils A.E. (eds.) Toward a general theory of action pp 388 – 433. Harvard University Press, Cambridge, MA.

Kluckhohn, F. R. & Strodtbeck, F.L. (1961), *Variations in Value Orientations*. Row & Peterson, Evanston.

Kroeber, A. L. and C. Kluckhohn, 1952. *Culture: A Critical Review of Concepts and Definitions*. Peabody Museum, Cambridge, MA.

Landsman, N. P. (2006), "When Comparison meet: Rethinking the Bohr-Einstein Debate," *Studies in History and Philosophy of Modern Physics*, Vol**.** 37, pp. 212-242.

Lewis, M. (2000), "Exploring Paradox: Toward a More Comprehensive Guide," *Academy of Management Review*, Vol. 25, pp. 760-776.

Lewis, M. W., & Grimes, A. I. (1999). "Metatriangulation: Building theory from multiple paradigms," *Academy of Management Review,* Vol. 24, pp. 672-690.

Lord, R. Dinh, J & Hoffman E. (2015), "A quantum approach to time and Organizational Change," *Academy of Management Review*, Vol. 40, pp. 263-290

Leung, K. & Bond, M. H. (1989), "On the empirical identification of dimensions for cross-cultural comparations," *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, Vol. 20, pp. 133-151.

Leung, K., Bond M. H.,Carrasquel, M., Hernandez, M., Murakami,F., Yamagachi, S., Bierbrauer, G. and Singalis, T (2002), "Social Axioms. The search for Universal Dimensions of General Belief about how the World Functions," *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, Vol. 33, pp. 286-302.

Li, X. (2014), "Can Yin-Yang Guide Chinese Indigenous Management Research?" *Management and Organization Review*, Vol. 10, pp. 7-27.

Li, X., Worm, V. & Xie, P. (2014). "What is culture? Toward a 6-VHC structure to cultural dimensions." Copenhagen Business School, Denmark. (Unpublished Manuscript)

Maleki, A. & de Jong, M. (2014), "A proposal for clustering the dimensions of national culture" *Cross-Cultural Research*, Vol. 48, pp. 107-143.

Markus, H. R., & Kitayama, S. (1991). Culture and the self: Implications for cognition, emotion, and motivation. *Psychological Review*, 98(2), 224.

Martin, J. (2002), *Organizational Culture: Mapping the Terrain*, Sage, Thousand Oaks, CA.

Minkov, M. (2013) *Cross-cultural Analysis – the Science and Art of Comparing the World's Modern Societies and their Cultures*, Sage, Los Angeles.

Osland, J. & Bird, A. (2000). Beyond sophisticated stereotyping: Cultural sensemaking in context. *Academy of Management Executive*, 14(1), 65-77.

Osland, J., & Osland, A. (2005). Expatriate paradoxes and cultural involvement. *International Studies of Management and Organization*, 35(4), 91-114.

Parsons, T. and Shils, E. A. (1951), *Towards a general Theory of Action*. Harvard University Press, Cambridge MA.

Pais, A. (1991), *Niels Bohr's times: In physics, philosophy, and polity*, Clarendon Press, Oxford.

Poole, M. S., & Van de Ven, A. H. (1989), "Using paradox to build management and organisational theories," *Academy of Management Review*, Vol. 14, pp. 562-578.

Quinn, R. E. (1988), "Beyond rational management: Mastering the paradoxes and competing demands of high performance", Jossey-Bass, San Francisco, CA.

Quinn, R.E., & Cameron, K. S. (eds.), (1988), *Paradox and Transformation: Towards a Theory of Change in Organization and Management*. Balinger Publishing, Cambridge, MA.

Roseberry, W. (1989), Anthropologies and histories. Rutgers University Press. New Brunswick, NJ.

Ross, L. (1977). "The intuitive psychologist and his shortcomings: Distortions in the attribution process," *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology*, Vol.10, pp. 173-220.

Sackmann, S. (ed.) (1997) *Cultural Complexity in Organizations: Inherent Contrasts and Contradictions*. Sage, Thousand Oaks, CA.

Sackmann, S. and Phillips, M. (2003), "One's Many Cultures: A Multiple Culture Perspective," Boyacigiller, N., Goodman, R. and Phillips, M. (eds.), *Crossing Cultures – Insights from Master Teachers*. Routledge. London.

Schwartz, S. H. (1994), "Are There Universal Aspects in the Structure and Contents of Human Values?" *Journal of Social Issues*, Vol. 50, No. 4, pp. 19-45.

Scollon, R. and Scollon, S. W. (1995), *Intercultural Communication: A discourse Approach*. Blackwell: Cambridge, MA.

Seo, M., Putnam, L. L., & Bartunek, J. M. (2004), "Dualities and tensions of planned organizational change," M. S. Poole, & A. Van de Ven (eds.), *Handbook of organizational change*, pp. 73-109. Oxford University Press, New York.

Shapiro, J. M., Ozanne, J. L., Saatcioglu, B. (2008), "An interpretive examination of the development of cultural sensitivity in international business," *Journal of International Business Studies*, Vol. 39, pp. 71-87.

Søderberg, A. M. and Holden, N. (2002) "Rethinking Cross Cultural Management in a Globalizing Business World" *International Journal of Cross Cultural Management*, Vol. 2, pp. 103-121.

Smith, W. (2014)." Dynamic Decision Making: A Model of Senior Leaders Managing Strategic Paradoxes." *Academy of Management Journal*, Vol. 57, pp. 1592-1623.

Smith, K. K., & Berg, D. N. (1987*), Paradoxes of group life: Understanding Conflict, Paralysis, and Movement in Group Dynamic*, Jossey-Bass, San Francisco, CA.

Smith, W. K., & Lewis, M. W. (2011), "Toward a theory of paradox: A dynamic equilibrium model of organizing," *Academy of Management Review*, Vol. 36, pp. 381-403.

Taras, V. and Steel, P. (2009) "Beyond Hofstede: Challenging the ten Commandments of Cross-Cultural Research," Nakata, C. (ed.), *Beyond Hofstede: Cultural Frameworks for Global Marketing and Management*, pp. 40-61.

Triandis, H. (1996), "The Psychological Measurement of Cultural Syndromes" *American Psychologist*, Vol. 51, pp. 407-415.

Trompenaars, F. (1993), "Riding the Waves of Culture − Understanding Cultural Diversity in Business*"*. Nicholas Brealey Publishing: London.

Tylor, E. B.(1871) "Origins of culture", Harper and Row, New York

Wallner, F. (1994), *Constructive realism: Aspects of a new epistemological movement*, Braumuller, Vienna.

Weber, K. and Glynn, M. A. (2006),"Making sense with institutions: Context, thought and action in Karl Weick's theory," *Organization Studies* Vol. 27, pp. 1639-1660.

Willmott, H. (1993), "Breaking the Paradigm Mentality," *Organization Studies*, Vol. 14, pp. 681-719.

Worm, V. (1997), *Vikings and mandarins: Sino-Scandinavian business cooperation in cross-cultural settings,* Copenhagen Business School Press, Copenhagen.

COPENHAGEN DISCUSSION PAPERS

2005:

2005-1 May: Can–Seng Ooi - Orientalists Imaginations and Touristification of Museums: Experiences from Singapore

2005-2 June: Verner Worm, Xiaojun Xu, and Jai B. P. Sinha - Moderating Effects of Culture in Transfer of Knowledge: A Case of Danish Multinationals and their Subsidiaries in P. R. China and India

2005-3 June: Peter Wad - Global Challenges and Local Responses: Trade Unions in the Korean and Malaysian Auto Industries

2005-4 November: Lenore Lyons - Making Citizen Babies for Papa: Feminist Responses to Reproductive Policy in Singapore

2006:

2006-5 April: Juliette Koning - On Being "Chinese Overseas": the Case of Chinese Indonesian Entrepreneurs

2006-6 April: Mads Holst Jensen - Serve the People! Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) in China

2006-7 April: Edmund Terence Gomez - Malaysian Investments in China: Transnationalism and the 'Chineseness' of Enterprise Development

2006-8 April: Kate Hannan - China's Trade Relations with the US and the EU WTO Membership, Free Markets (?), Agricultural Subsidies and Clothing, Textile and Footwear Quotas

2006-9 May: Can- Seng Ooi - Tales From Two Countries: The Place Branding of Denmark and Singapore

2006-10 May: Gordon C. K. Cheung - Identity: In Searching the Meaning of Chineseness in Greater China

2006-11 May: Heidi Dahles - 'Chineseness' as a Competitive Disadvantage, Singapore Chinese business strategies after failing in China

2006-12 June: Émile Kok- Kheng Yeoh - Development Policy, Demographic Diversity and Interregional Disparities in China

2006-13 June: Johannes Dragsbaek Schmidt - China's "soft power" re-emergence in Southeast Asia

2006-14 September: Michael Jacobsen - Beyond Chinese Capitalism: Re-Conceptualising Notions of Chinese-ness in a Southeast Asian Business cum Societal Context

2006-15 October: Ng Beoy Kui - The Economic Rise of China: Its Threats and Opportunities from the Perspective of Southeast Asia

2007:

2007-16 February: Michael Jacobsen - Navigating between Disaggregating Nation States and Entrenching Processes of Globalisation: Reconceptualising the Chinese Diaspora in Southeast Asia

2007-17 April: Émile Kok-Kheng Yeoh, Shuat-Mei Ooi - China-ASEAN Free Trade Area: Implications for Sino-Malaysian Economic Relations

2007-18 May: John Ravenhill, Yang Jiang - China's Move to Preferential Trading: An Extension of Chinese Network Power?

2007-19 May: Peter J. Peverelli - Port of Rotterdam in Chinese Eyes

2007-20 June: Chengxin Pan - What is Chinese about Chinese Business? Implications for U.S. Responses to China's Rise

2007-21 September: Charles S. Costello III - The Irony of the Crane: Labour Issues in the Construction Industry in the New China

2007-22 October: Evelyn Devadason - Malaysia-China Network Trade: A Note on Product Upgrading

2007-23 October: LooSee Beh - Administrative Reform: Issues of Ethics and Governance in Malaysia and China

2007-24 November: Zhao Hong - China- U.S. Oil Rivalry in Africa

2008:

2008-25 January: Émile Kok-Kheng Yeoh - Ethnoregional Disparities, Fiscal Decentralization and Political Transition: The case of China

2008-26 February: Ng Beoy Kui - The Economic Emergence of China: Strategic Policy Implications for Southeast Asia

2008-27 September: Verner Worm - Chinese Personality: Center in a Network
2009:

2009-28 July: Xin Li, Verner Worm - Building China's soft power for a peaceful rise

2009-29 July: Xin Li, Kjeld Erik Brødsgaard, Michael Jacobsen - Redefining Beijing Consensus: Ten general principles

2009-30 August: Michael Jacobsen - Frozen Identities. Inter-Ethnic Relations and Economic Development in Penang, Malaysia

2010:

2010-31 January: David Shambaugh – Reforming China's Diplomacy

2010-32 March: Koen Rutten - Social Welfare in China: The role of equity in the transition from egalitarianism to capitalism

2010-33 March: Khoo Cheok Sin - The Success Stories of Malaysian SMEs in Promoting and Penetrating Global Markets through Business Competitiveness Strategies

2010-34 October: Rasmus Gjedssø and Steffen Møller – The Soft Power of American Missionary Universities in China and of their Legacies: Yenching University, St. John's University and Yale in China

2010-35 November: Michael Jacobsen - Interdependency versus Notions of Decoupling in a Globalising World: Assessing the Impact of Global Economics on Industrial Developments and Inter-Ethnic Relations in Penang, Malaysia

2010-36 November: Kjeld Erik Brødsgaard – Chinese-Danish Relations: The Collapse of a special Relationship

2011:

2011-37 April: Masatoshi Fujiwara – Innovation by Defining Failures under Environmental and Competitive Pressures: A Case Study of the Laundry Detergent Market in Japan

2011-38 November: Kjeld Erik Brødsgaard - Western Transitology and Chinese Reality: Some Preliminary Thoughts

2012:

2012-39 December: Kjeld Erik Brødsgaard - Murder, Sex, Corruption: Will China Continue to Hold Together?

2013:

2013-40 January: Sudipta Bhattacharyya, Mathew Abraham and Anthony P. D'Costa - Political Economy of Agrarian Crisis and Slow Industrialization in India

2013-41 February: Yangfeng Cao, Kai Zhang and Wenhao Luo - What are the Sources of Leader Charisma? An Inductive Study from China

2013-42 April: Yangfeng Cao, Peter Ping Li, Peter Skat-Rørdam - Entrepreneurial Aspiration and Flexibility of Small and Medium-Sized Firms: How Headquarters Facilitate Business Model Innovation at the Subsidiary Level

2013-43 October: Zhiqian YU, Ning ZHU, Yuan ZHENG - Efficiency of Public Educational Expenditure in China

2013-44: November: Yangfeng Cao - Initiative-taking, Improvisational Capability, and Business Model Innovation in Emerging Markets

2014:

2014-45 January: Michael Jakobsen - International Business Studies and the Imperative of Context. Exploring the 'Black Whole' in Institutional Theory

2014-46 February: Xin Li - The hidden secrets of the Yin-Yang symbol

2015:

2015-47 March: Aradhna Aggarwal and Takahiro Sato – Identifying High Growth Firms in India: An Alternative Approach

2015-48 May: Michael Jakobsen - Exploring Key External and Internal Factors Affecting State Performance in Southeast Asia

2015-49 May: Xin Li, Peihong Xie and Verner Worm - Solutions to Organizational Paradox: A Philosophical Perspective

2015-50 June: Ari Kokko - Imbalances between the European Union and China

2015-51 August: Chin Yee Whah - Changes of Ownership and Identities of Malaysian Banks: Ethnicity, State and Globalization

2015-52 November: Abdul Rahman Embong - State, Development and Inequality in Selected ASEAN Countries: Internal and External Pressures and State Responses

2015-53 November: Verner Worm, Xin Li, Michael Jakobsen and Peihong Xie - Culture studies in the field of international business research: A tale of two paradigms