Paradigm Plurality in Cross-Cultural management

As a relatively young discipline, cross-cultural management has been characterized by paradigm plurality. Receiving inspiration from various disciplines, e.g. engineering, management, organization studies, psychology, anthropology, sociology, international relations and business, cross-cultural management has never been a homogenous academic discipline. Still, three research paradigms dominate the field. These are the functionalist (positivist), interpretive (constructivist) and critical approaches. In this lecture, the underlying assumptions of each research paradigm will be discussed, as will their impact on cross-cultural management research and practice. Although the dominance of functionalist research is unquestionable, the interpretive (or social constructivist) approach is well-established, since anthropology is one of the main sources of inspiration of cross-cultural management, and it is strongly embedded in the interpretive research tradition. Critical approaches are relatively new, but definitely growing in terms of publications and academic interests.