Ville Kivivirta

PEOPLE, INTERNATIONAL PROJECTS AND PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION:
Interpreting the International Human Resource Management Frame

University of Lapland
Faculty of Social Sciences

Contents

Acknowledgements

Foreword

The institutional home of this research has been in the Faculty of Social Sciences under the auspices of the discipline known in certain Finnish universities as Administrative Science. This research process was commenced when I realised that my understanding of the dynamics of people management in international public sector projects was far from perspicacious. After a cursory search, I found that there was not much existing research on that topic. The starting point of my research was the question, what would it take to adopt IHRM as a framework through which to interpret public sector phenomena.

This was due to the observation that both the public sector and project environments have often been neglected by IHRM research, but IHRM research seemed to be well-established in business schools. I also had some qualms about the way IHRM or management research was commonly conducted, so I adopted a somewhat critical stance. Nevertheless, my position was pragmatist and theoretically reflexive. When it comes to pragmatism, philosopher Richard Rorty was willing to name social hope as the highest virtue. I was wondering if IHRM could accompany in this or was it simply a failed prophesy. In the meanwhile, my thesis evolved and ended up as an attempt to bring IHRM to the Finnish public administration context, making the case for and against it. During the research process my monograph started to resemble increasingly a *Bildungsroman*, as adopting IHRM and taking it to an unfamiliar context and colliding it with other vocabularies produces some peculiar side effects. This hybridisation of genres then sparked further reflection.

Every now and then I have also used my polemical style, refusing to treat research as boring and cloistered. However, I acknowledge that for some, my style can be excessively florid, but for me an ideal administration science researcher is captured in Rorty's notion of "liberal ironist" who irons out the injustices, who combines commitment with a sense of contingency of their own commitment, considering that it is the poet as revolutionary artist who embodies the virtues of the society. After all for Rorty irony was primarily an appreciation of the contingency of final vocabularies.

Ville Kivivirta, Rovaniemi, February 2014

Abstract

International public sector projects bring the Finnish public sector into contact with management thinking related to international assignments and international project work. In business literature especially practices related to IHRM have been posited as a potential avenue for making sense of international work experience of individuals and providing the formation of more systematic management practices. IHRM research in business schools is well established, but IHRM research focusing on the international people aspects of public administration is scarce.

Drawing on a reflexive analysis of management literature and empirical material produced in a qualitative interview study of Finnish public sector international project professionals within the EU funded Twinning projects, this thesis argues that in public sector context IHRM is a mixed blessing. Mainstream accounts about international assignments and international project work are problematised in the research using IHRM as a cultural frame that includes the elements of international assignment cycle and project HRM practice areas.

The results show that identity construction that has taken place during international assignments might not be accommodated after repatriation to Finnish public sector work, and that the role of international projects in developing personnel was often viewed to be a missed opportunity. From management perspective projects were viewed to be resource-intensive and somewhat detached from other public sector activities. Furthermore, postcolonial dynamics and failures to interpret bureaucratic scripts in international project work prompt an element of potential friction that should be addressed more thoroughly.

Considering these findings, it is concluded that IHRM vocabulary must be enhanced when translated into public sector project environment. Building mainly on concepts in social anthropology and pragmatist philosophy, it is suggested that IHRM frame can be conceptualised as a boundary object between administration cultures. It is suggested that an approach to IHRM that would go beyond managerial thinking should be further developed. In this incorporating an element of critical reflection of the metatheoretical assumptions would enable IHRM to become more

aware of its caveats. With such a conceptualisation of IHRM in place, the focus shifts to operating in between the different administration cultures, in the interstitial, and to reflecting actor's own position.

Key words: international human research management (IHRM); public sector; project governance; individual reactions to IHRM

1   INTRODUCTION

In contemporary administration various projects and networks are typically seen as ways to organise things. In theoretical literature, this is especially highlighted in the perspectives known as public governance and new public administration. Furthermore, internationalisation of administration and a shift from government to governance are accompanied by a set of management practices, both formal and more ad hoc, itself chancing the way people make sense of public sector work. Meanwhile human resources remain the largest cost item in many international public sector projects, but international public sector project professionals[1] are not mere instruments of administration or containers of knowledge; they process, interpret and shape the social worlds.[2]

What makes this thesis unique is that this is a pioneer study where one boldly goes where no   administration researcher has gone before. In this study IHRM (International Human Resource Management)[3] frame is developed to interpret and understand public sector project environments, and reflexive methodology is adopted to analyse the limits of this frame. To be more precise, the task is to interpret IHRM in public sector projects environments. The context studied is the case of the European Commission funded Twinning institution building project environment, and the purpose is to develop a theoretical understanding of the IHRM challenges in the Finnish public sector in light of project environments.

---

1   In this research project professionals are those with years of public sector experience and who have worked in international projects. Terms HR and people management practitioners are used interchangeably and are not limited to pure HR professionals, referring to all the persons with some HR responsibilities. Word "worker" is not limited to those doing manual or non-executive work, nor those belonging to working class, but all persons who work. These definitions are common in Finnish context.

2   On a general level, Tuomikorpi (2005, 134) argues that three main categories shape the administrative thinking ability of the Finnish public servants: knowledge and experience based reality (rooted to the environment in question), performance based working reality (connected with the administrative processes), and developmental individual reality (broadly based on personally and learned people skills).

3   There are oodles of people management acronyms utilised like HRM (**H**uman **R**esource **M**anagement), MHRM (**M**icro), HRD (**D**evelopment), SHRM (**S**trategic), CHRM (usually **C**ritical, also **C**omparative), IHRM (**I**nternational) and PHRM (**P**ublic). More exotic related acronyms of that ilk also exist such as HRP (**P**lanning), HRM-P (HRM-**p**erformance link), GHRM (**G**lobal HRM), **A**HRM (Asian), or any possible alphabet soup combination of the ones mentioned before. This list is not exhaustive. Furthermore, some academics prefer the term human resource studies.

This thesis is a final report of the author's doctoral research project of this until now under-researched subject.

Studying the topic is also made more complex and interesting by the fact that it is in a state of continuous change. If IHRM in the public administration is somewhat of a rare beast, what we used to know as the "public sector" is transforming and hybridising. The way public policy implementation and public services delivery is conducted in the age of globalisation is not what it used to be, and the notion and context of work performed in the public sector — and expectations about how this work should be managed — are in a state of flux. Management is more often an inter-organisational and collaborative activity requiring governance of complex systems (Osborne 2010, 421), more international governance takes place in the transnational sphere of social action (Kennett 2010), and there public sector professionals have a role as "carriers of global policy processes involved in diffusion of ideas, standards, and policy practice" (Stone 2008, 30).

On top of this, state bureaucracies are embedded in a complex web of interdependencies and have to rely more on integrative mechanisms (cf. Pierre and Peters 2000), where temporary instruments (such as projects) are used in governance (see edited volume of Sjoblom et al. 2006). However, although the public structures are moving towards increasing temporality and project form, the implications of all of the above have often been neglected in governance debate (ibid.). Furthermore, research about the international dimension of how to manage work in public sector is somewhat lacking. However, there has been plenty of research about it in private sector context, where the so-called human dimension of international management research has often been "isolated and assigned to a separate stream of research, namely international human resource management" or IHRM (Piekkari and Welch 2010).[4]

_____

4   Various definitions of IHRM and HRM are explored later on. However, I refuse the make a sharp distinction between people management, leadership and HRM, partly because the practitioners often use these concepts interchangeably and the research findings seem to confirm that there are often no clear distinctions between administration, leadership, and management in what managers actually do (Alvesson and Sveningsson 2003). Furthermore, although I know the difference between the typical scholarly definitions of these concepts, the same distinction does not exist in my native Finnish: common English terms "administration", "management" and "leadership" do not have direct Finnish equivalents and their Finnish translations have different semiotic and etymological roots (Peltonen 2012). Without starting euphemistically inventing new management concepts, one could say that the main distinction between these concepts in this thesis is that people management is assumed to be more workforce centred than HRM.

Policy transfer researchers Vaughan and Rafanell (2012) claim that Francis Fukuyama (2004, 17) is (once again) wrong when claiming that "[w]e know how to transfer resources, people and technology across cultural borders". He is wrong because the literature does not undergird the inherent open-endedness or the locally and socially contingent nature of these "transfers" (policy transfers, see edited volume by Carroll and Common 2013). Then again Fukuyama (ibid.) fairly points out that "well-functioning public institutions require certain habits of mind, and operate in complex ways that resist being moved." One would think that also "IHRM professionals would benefit from an understanding of the extent to which these locations can accommodate a range of specific HR practices" (Scullion, Collings and Gunnigle 2007). Like Pollitt (2011) has pointed out, in public administration research complexity of time and place has often been obliterated in oversimplified models and classifications. However, research has for long pointed out that organisational life involves messiness and emergent, unstable elements (see for example Lindblom 1959; cf. Stacey 2011).

Unfortunately, many aspects regarding the values, place and affect of HRM upon and within this regime remain unclear (cf. Osborne 2010, 419–421), requiring research approach capable of capturing "the complexity and diversity of public governance in this global context [...] within the fragmented, interorganizational and contested space" of the new public sector environments (ibid., 425). With this firmly in mind, later on in this research reflexive research approach to study IHRM in public sector project environments in being presented and applied. It must be stressed that this requires somewhat broader approach to grasp the complexity of the topic than it is maybe usually seen in administration or management research.

1.1   Key issues: IHRM frame and the context

Key issue in this thesis is to conceptualise IHRM in ways that allow it to be translated to interpret public sector project context. The term interpretation, as dictionaries define it, is related to the action of grasping the meaning of something, but the word can also draw attention to the representation of a creative work. For me it is also the fundamental activity in social sciences, because inquirers are never mappers of something language-independent

(Rorty 1999, xxvii). Basic pragmatist premise is that when the environment changes one try to find new tools, words and vocabularies, to cope with the perceived alterations. To put it simply: one does not sail in unknown waters with old charts, expect when one purposely takes a route not charted yet.[5] This is what happened in this research; thus the nature of trying to figure how IHRM vocabulary fits to the picture of public sector transformations made this study explorative. This is also why reflexive research strategy that is later explained in detail is adopted in this study.

This is also a research where the international dimension is taken seriously. It is argued that the nature of many contemporary administrative problems makes them global, that is to say, they are intermingled with the administration processes of multiple interdependent localities. Based on this logic, one would assume that public sectors require instruments of international governance and competent people to work in international environments. However, compared to the international people management practices of mobile multinational enterprises (MNEs), the administrations of the old-fashioned nation-states are said to be faltering. Furthermore, to meet the assumed challenges, various new forms of international public administration, often in project form, have also been emerging much faster than academic theorising. As a researcher exploring these topics, I often felt like a lone settler as I had to begin by conceptualising IHRM as a cultural frame, the public sector international project context, and their relationship. Next a word about them.

About the IHRM frame

IHRM is revisited many times during this thesis, but some of the main issues are next summarised from IHMR perspective before conceptualising the IHRM frame and its role in this research. Due to what is dubbed globalisation the myriad factors of international life today have an impact on many aspects of work life, something that is recognised in the growing interest towards the international elements of HRM (Scroggins and Benson

---

5　As Foucault (2010, 105) reminds us, the ship metaphor is common in administration literature because it implies that the field of governance is holistic and intermingled. He could also have mentioned that the root of the word governance in Greek language, like the word government, is a word related to steering a boat (*kubernan*).

2010; Keating and Thompson 2004). The acronym IHRM is commonly used when referring to the dominant international people management discourse. Narrower definitions of IHRM deal with issues related to the international assignment cycle, including pre-assignment and on-assignment activities, career management and end of assignment options, usually focusing on Western managers in strictly private sector or even only MNE environments. Middle-ground definitions can also include various internationalisation processes affecting HRM function. A broader definition covers "all issues related to the management of people in an international context" (see Stahl and Björkman 2006, 1). I tend to follow the broader definition, but acknowledge that the narrower definition contains the traditional core of the IHRM.

HRM practitioners sometimes produce objective sounding managerial knowledge for their purposes, implying that HRM more or less has universal applicability, but as it later turns out this view has been challenged. European HRM scholars acknowledge the importance of pluralistic perspective in HRM and argue that the way forward is in small-scale contextual studies of HRM (see Boselie, Brewster and Paauwe 2009). Leading European project HRM researchers Bredin and Söderlund (2011) stress the importance of considering the context of the work systems and operational level of individual project professionals. Still, the IHRM practices that are studied are often connected to the debates within the IHRM research community: including the role of culture, strategy and questions related to the divergence, convergence and source of various IHRM practices (Scroggins and Benson 2010).

Furthermore, traditionally most HRM research has studied the employment experiences of workers within the confines of a single organisation, but the increasing importance of inter-organisational networks has challenged this approach.[6] The benefits of inter-organisational collaboration are advertised as delivering improved performance, workforce flexibility and

---

6   Following Batteu (2001) the term organisation could be defined as "a social form defined by goal-oriented instrumental rationality," making it "a more tightly coupled alternative to the loose regimes of local diversity" characteristic of the premodern era. As one moves from modernity into something else that lies ahead, the conceptualisations of organisation are also about to change, or contested from amodern perspective. And if poststructuralism has taught us something, then one also has to accept that there is no (clear) boundary between the inside and outside of an organisation.

novel career paths, but the factors related to differences in employer goals within networks, tensions within internal labour markets, and ambiguities when working offsite can make the gains contestable for individual worker (Marchington, Rubery and Grimshaw 2011). Furthermore, IHRM is criticised of disciplinary sectarianism, with too much ethnocentric and managerial focus (Keating and Thompson 2004).

That was just important background information. To recap, the title of this thesis speaks of people and international projects in the public administration. The issue is approached by interpreting the IHRM frame, exploring the themes from the position of individual employees in public sector international project environments. This to say that interpretation itself is done in a specific cultural context. Following the ideas of so-called interpretative/linguistic/narrative turn in social sciences, this thesis proposes that IHRM is a cultural frame related to sencemaking; sort of narrative construction that emerges and is tried out. Czarniawska (2009) has adopted the idea of translation to understand a continuous circulation of management ideas and practices.[7] One of the developers of sociology of translation, Michel Callon (1986) stresses that translation processes are enacted in floppy networks of associations between ideas, human beings and other entities. Thus, when the context changes IHRM is always constructed in a new series of translations, because "to set something in a new place or another point in time is to construct it anew" (Czarniawska 2009). It has to be noticed that IHRM practices themselves do not travel, they have to be simplified and formulated into an abstract idea first and then materialised in a new context, their symbols always reinscribed.

---

7   The idea of translation was introduced in the work of philosopher Michel Serres in his Hermes series of books, named like that because Hermes, the messenger of the gods and god of merchants and thieves in Greek mythology, was then Serres' avatar signifying his ideas about science and culture (see Brown 2002). In the same book series Serres also practically formulated a structuralist manifesto. Is maybe also worthwhile to note that words Hermes and hermeneutics have the same root in Greek. In hermeneutical tradition Gadamer (1981, 346) once noted that "every translation is at the same time an interpretation." Later on the concept of translation was further elaborated by certain sociologists associated with actor-network theory, who apparently drew from the ideas of sociologist Gabriel Tarde on imitation (see an edited volume of Czarniawska and Sevón 2005).

Sociologists Erving Goffman once (1986) wondered whether translation is a second version of the original text or a new keying in a new pattern of expression, and concluded that it is probably both. Following Clifford Geertz's (1983) original notion in symbolistic anthropology where culture can be seen as a text, the conclusion is that one basically translates cultural practices. As such, IHRM has its own symbols or cultural artefacts in the forms of common IHRM practices that can be potentially translated into another context. In this research IHRM is used to interpret public sector project environments, and as a focal point of reflexive interpretations. However, there is always some interference in the translation process, a risk of failure when the context changes. When speaking about translating IHRM into another context, interpretation of the symbols in the cultural frame of ideas forming IHRM is also required, while not forgetting the interpretation of the context where the materialisation of IHRM takes place.

Thus, the basic premise is that IHRM forms a cultural frame(s) with its own values and practices one can use to interpret people doing international work. As such, frames sort out and organise the ways people interpret the social worlds (see Goffman 1986). What makes things somewhat confusing in this research is that the IHRM frame is both a (theoretical) context, but at the same time it requires and produces other contexts. In other words IHRM provides a frame within which various work-related activities can be conducted meaningfully, but since this context is itself text-like it also requires its own context. Bending the anthropological theorising of Appadurai (1995, 209; emphasis added) for my purposes, this complex double-nature of a context such as IHRM frame can constitute a so-called multiplex interpretive site "within which meaningful social action can be *both generated and interpreted*."

Following this logic the IHRM frame is utilised as an interpretative side to conceptualise practices of organising people in the international public administration projects. Unlike in some branches of social sciences that have sought to move beyond modernist ontology (cf. for example Latour 1996), the projects themselves or any other technical artefacts do not suddenly start to speak for us during the research process as a stunt of prosopopoeia (although sometimes I wish that they could), here mostly interpreting human beings or individuals of flesh and blood, namely researchers and project workers, have a voice that allows them to interpret the environment where

the employment relationship is being managed.[8] As such, people focus is not an accident or naivety, but a reaction to the lack of existing research. A deluge of research about international people management has focused on big private sector actors and their "strategic" management, while policy research has often sidelined people management issues as too mundane. However, term individual or form of produced subjectivity that is called individual is itself more or less an invention of early liberalism as we are all social animals, but I am inclined to carry the ideological payload of that political ideology with me (birth of Western individuality, see for example Fromm 1976). One returns to these themes later on, but next a word or two about the context where this research takes place

The context of international projects in public administration

In his 1990s bestseller Manuel Castells (1996, 165) envisioned a society where the actual operation unit where the work is done becomes a "project, enacted by network." This is evidently related to internationalisation processes and neoliberal projects that are connected to the phenomenon or at least a rhetorical device called globalisation, which is neatly defined by Held et al. (1999, 16) as:

> [A]process (or a set of processes) which embodies a transformation in the spatial organisation of social relations and transactions – assessed in terms of their extensity, intensity, velocity and impact – generating transcontinental or interregional flows and networks of activity, interaction, and the exercise of power.

It must be noted here that the popular flow metaphor can be somewhat misleading here because global capital and connections are often globe-hopping from point-to-point and not globe-covering (problems of the flow metaphor, see Ferguson 2006). However, it is worthwhile to note tthat

---

8   For Latour (2006, 165–166) this dualism between human and non-human is not an evidence of modernist fixation per se, but rather a way us Westerners who think we are modern (alas, period which has never existed according to Latour) define our relationship towards others. However, a move towards object-oriented ontology might help to conceptualise the governance of phenomena that transcend spatiotemporal specificity (good introduction to object-oriented ontology, see Miller 2013).

processes related to globalisation seem to generate various transformations in the modes of governance. In short, the dynamics of globalisation make governance international; leading the public sectors to produce various "hybridised" forms and practices of governance if they want to keep in pace. Then again in the context of "Europeanisation" it is claimed that multilevel EU administration is in the process of emerging, "incorporating parts of national administrations and recoupling at the EU level what has been decoupled at the national level" (Ongaro et al. 2012, 407). This incorporation is not possible without networks of individuals, and various frameworks to guide the co-operation. Twinning instrument is one of them.

All in all, European administration has moved beyond the state, which is partly replaced by more diffused systems of control and network of non-state actors in various and quite complex forms of administration often labelled as "European governance." EU member states nevertheless still play a role in different organisational forms existing in the interface between the European and the national levels. Still, there is no consensus of the exact meaning of contemporary European governance, as it is effectively a mixture of various modes of governance that are said to include civil society involvement in public policy-making, extensive use of informal networks, and more open methods of co-ordination where legal enforcement capacity does not exist (Olsen 2008), or "all those activities of social, political and administrative actors that steer, control, and manage society" (see also Albert and Kopp-Malek 2002).[9] As such, this transformation towards governance (however defined) is firmly connected to the increasing popularity of project form in public administration where projects are often used as a cost-effective ways to implement supranational programs in a local context (Sjöblom 2006).[10]

To grossly generalise, Twinning is a form of institutional development aimed at altering cultural practices in the so-called beneficiary countries

---

9   The White Paper on European Governance published by the European Commission in 2001 stated that "'[g]overnance' means rules, processes and behaviour that affect the way in which powers are exercised at a European level, particularly as regards openness, participation, accountability, effectiveness and coherence." Other ways to conceptualise governance are examined later on.

10   The redistribution of administrative tasks in project governance raises the problematic questions of democratic accountability. One could at least note that the multifaceted mutations in liberal democratic administration change the face of democracy by challenging it for better or worse.

to support European co-operation. History of administration in these countries varies. In the Maghreb area local administration of the beneficiary countries of Twinning was mostly set up by the European colonial powers, in the East once extensively reformed by the Soviet Socialist model, and in some places like Turkey traces of its own colonial heritage are carried on. Twinning activities play a role in facilitating integration between them and member state administrations. A large portion of Twinning outputs flows into public infrastructure of the EU neighbouring countries to transpose EU *acquis communautaire* (common legislation). This is considered necessary to secure the administration structures of these countries to develop their administration in ways that enable efficient co-operation with the EU[11] Thus, Twinning becomes a matter of European governmentality, and to do this necessarily involves people management practices that can foster European integration of the administration cultures involved.

In her small research report Twinning co-ordinator Susanne Thau (2009, 16) defines Twinning activities as "Unterstützung der Beitrittskandidaten ab, indem es effiziente Verwaltungen und Strukturen schafft und den Aufbau von personellen Kräften und Managementtechniken unterstützt, die für eine effektive Umsetzung des Acquis benötigt werden." Naturally the scope of Twinning activities has moved from purely EU candidate countries to other neighbouring areas, but even this basic definition captures the rationale of Twinning activities from people management perspective: Twinning is about building structures and administration, and in so doing, developing human resources and personnel management techniques. Naturally the rationale behind this may vary, but as Thau (ibid., 36) observers, it is connected to European governance and creation of instruments for institution building that support it.

Thus, the basic idea international public sector project activity like Twinning is relatively easy to summarise from people management perspective: For individuals Twinning "can be a crucial part of their efforts to acquire

---

11   In the auspices of the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) of the European Union so-called ESPI or European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument is designed by the European Commission to promote good governance and equitable social and economic development. ESPI South includes the countries of the Euro-Mediterranean partnership while ESPI East is mostly limited to the newly independent countries of the former Soviet Union. In addition IPA or Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance for the candidate and pre-candidate countries of the EU covers institution building, regional and cross border co-operation, regional development, rural development and human resources.

the skills and expertise", but when it comes to international public sector developments Twinning has been used in sustainable capacity building of public sector institutions (see Burnett 2006). The EU funding provides a Resident Twinning Adviser (RTA)[12] from the member state public sector for a longer-term international assignment and an assemblage of various experts to provide more specific services in Twinning projects. Twinning funding has been available for EU candidate states, new members and increasingly for other neighbouring countries.

In Finland NCP (National Contact Point for Twinning) is currently situated in the Ministry for Foreign Affairs that also commissioned an evaluation of the results and effects of Twinning participation that took place at the same time as this research was done. Although the evaluation is written in a more positive light that this research, the authors utilised the objectivist approach and overall used more high ranking people as a sample, the evaluation placed importance in developing the HRM dimension of Twinning participation that took place in the same time when this research was done. Although the evaluation is written in more positive light that this research, utilised the objectivist approach of an evaluation research and overall used more high ranking people as a sample, the evaluation considered important to develop the HRM dimension of Twinning activities towards a more strategic direction (more about Finnish Twinning participation in the aforementioned evaluation, see Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland 2013).

European Union auditors who have inspected Twinning program, insist that instruments of project governance like Twinning work as a cost effective instrument of governance, although it has been noted that the objectives of individual projects have sometimes been unrealistic, and there has been a lack of ownership and managerial shortcomings (see Court of Auditors 2003). This does not say anything about the people matters, it is just stated that the money has been "effectively" spent based on cur-

---

12 RTA or a Resident Twinning Adviser is a civil servant from a member state (MS) administration who works in the beneficiary country (BC) on a full-time basis for at least one year in the framework of a Twinning project. Before RTAs long-term experts in Twinning where called PAAs or Pre-Accession Advisors to signal that beneficiary countries were eventually expected to join EU. In addition to RTAs another key position in a Twinning project is project leader directing the implementation of the Twinning project, who is a high-ranking official in MS and BC respectively. Project leader is also commonly referred to as project manager.

rent standards. When evaluating these projects the issue comes down to which representation strategies are used to interpret the social reality in the rhizosphere of these project environments. But that is enough of the IHRM frame and the context of international project administration for the moment. Before moving forwards it is maybe time to assert my relationship to management research.

1.2   Critical management studies: Finding and making

Because this research draws from the so-called Critical Management Studies (CMS) and broader social sciences literature, it is necessary next to explicate the relationship between this research and the critical school (however defined). During the research process this thesis also evolved into a commentary to what CMS literature has been and has not been saying about the research topics. As it turns out, CMS scholars have developed a cottage industry out of the soul-searching their personal positions vis-à-vis the wider CMS movement, and I intend to do the same, while at the same time also raising some of my concerns regarding critical research based on my own experiences.[13] Therefore, the purpose of the short genealogy of CMS and critical management research traditions that follows also summarises my own relationship to critical orientations in an attempt to show in what ways CMS is relevant not only for this research, but potentially also for the Finnish Administrative Science community.

One could label this research as an endeavour to develop CMS thinking that can be pragmatically utilised in reflexive research strategy about to be presented in the next chapter. By explaining how I found myself moving towards the direction of certain elements of CMS, whilst considering other parts of CMS less pragmatic for administration research purposes, if not downright ludicrous, I intend to lay my own cards on the table when it comes to this matter. To summarise, it all comes down to searching ways

---

13   This is not only because critical research orientation has sometimes been used to legitimise the ill-treatment of people who dare to think differently, and students might have been instrumentally regarded as the mere recruitment pool of future critical scholars. Not to forget absurd competitions about who is the most critical. To say that there should be more critical research does not has to mean that university should only educate students to be critical researchers while excluding others.

to criticise, while not condemning, and allowing a tiny possibility for social hope, in addition to utilising reflexive research in this process.

Critical theories and management studies

CMS can be described as, more or less, a broad movement[14] connected to critical social sciences that are mainly practised in business schools and management departments, making it primarily an academic phenomenon. To cut the long story short, social scientists had been doing critical organisation research long before the rise of business school institution. As a crude overview, for example during the Cold War especially some sociology inspired administration scholars were already reading Weber and Marx, studying Frankfurt School critical theory, and making experiments with hermeneutics and structuralism.[15] Critical school was usually defined in a narrower sense around these themes. Especially Frankfurt School inspired research aimed to challenge the one-dimensionality of our cultural beliefs and the ways in which ideological constructions serve the interests of the powerful or the capitalist system, taking the Habermasian view that work is no longer meaningful for the alienated employees because of its instrumental motivations shaped by power structures (see Nikkilä 1983; cf. Alvesson and Willmott 2012). Research addressing these issues was about to be emancipatory for the employees.[16]

When it comes to the history of Finnish Administrative Sciences, Nikkilä (1983) once observed that hermeneutical research orientation had been historically virtually nonexistent and ideology critique lacking.[17]

---

14 Rorty (1998, 114-115) argues that movements share a passion of the infinite and provide a larger context, but unlike finite campaigns they neither succeed or fail as such. Rorty (ibid., 118) mocks that "[m]ovements are suited to onto-theological Platonists, campaigns to many-minded men of letters."

15 In the meanwhile for example Finnish political science research stemming from *Allgemeine Staatslehre* tradition seemed to continue age-old assails against "*kameralistisch Polizeiwissenshaft*" or any discipline in social sciences incapable of critically reflecting its conceptual foundations (see for example Palonen 1980).

16 For example Marcuse (1969) maintains that the purpose of critical theory is to make live worth living and that only emancipated individual can decide which needs to develop and fulfil, as those needs do not have to maintain alienation.

17 The shortcomings of *Ideologiekritik* I can think of are related to the difficulties to define ideology in the first place and to the often rather predictable leftist undertones of the whole activity.

This historical situation has certain important implications still today, for someone doing administration research in Finland, because more interpretative or critical positions usually fall outside the mainstream. However, outside of Finland Burrell and Morgan (1979) made groundwork to develop organisation theory that was to challenge the dominant positivist "functionalist paradigm" and broaden the scope of organisational research. They connected critical theory to "radical humanist paradigm," which along with hermeneutical orientations rejects objectivist stance in organisational research (see also Sädevirta, chapter 3). On top of this, variants of Marxist work research that often focused on control over the labour process was located in a distinct "radical structuralist paradigm."

This took place before the historic defeat of the communist Left and the success story of the business school institution that took place after the Cold War in the spirit of disillusionment when the history of competing ideologies was deemed to be over. Outside business schools more radicalised part of Western academia sparked bewilderment and formed what Rorty (1999; cf. also 1998) has called an unpatriotic Nietzscheanized left that has often been hopelessly marginalised with its ideas. However, social constructivism also became mainstream in Nordic social sciences and some interaction occurred when the billow of "French school" poststructuralism and the associated "postmodern" influences reached Finnish universities. To summarise, in administration and management research one started to analyse how various discourses structure organisational life and how various techniques of management construct specific identities (cf. Peltonen and Vaara 2012).

However, largely unnoticed by the wider Finnish social sciences community, CMS was also gradually gaining popularity among the researchers in the Finnish business schools that had close connections to Sweden and a desire to be respected as international players. CMS was originally invented by a group of more radical management and organisation scholars who had come to terms with their institutional location within business schools. They subsequently began to institutionalise CMS as a distinctive research orientation, sort of unionised dissidence (collection of key texts in CMS, see edited volume by Alvesson 2011b). CMS management was conceptualised "as a pervasive institution that is entrenched within capitalist economic formations" (Alvesson, Bridgman and Willmott 2009, 1). CMS

was to become an umbrella term and a so-called broad church movement incorporating most of the critical research orientations that could assist in breaking with the managerial mainstream organisation research.[18] (See Alvesson, Bridgman and Willmott 2009 for a survey of the field, cf. also Ackroyd 2004; paleo-Marxist views of CMS, see Adler 2007.)

To define what CMS contains, Fournier and Grey (2000) moderately list non-performative stance, commitment to denaturalisation, and reflexivity as the founding principles of CMS. Stenvall and Virtanen (2012, 168) believe the heart of CMS lies in its reflexive stance and moral commitment where ethical action is understood relationally. On top of this, Alvesson and Willmott (2012) have also proposed five general themes that define CMS research agenda.[19] There have also been internal struggles within the CMS movement over what counts as critical research or so-called critical performativity (see Spicer, Alvesson and Kärreman 2009). However, what also unified all of these more critical research orientations was a common enemy and the experienced difficulty in engaging with management practice in empirical research because of the more philosophical or overtly radical research themes being pursued.[20]

18　The scope of more critical research orientations that found home under the broad definition of CMS increased from the original Frankfurt School critical theory and different variations of French (post) structuralism to include the newer candidates like feminist and postcolonial theory, and many of the more exotic ones like organisational theology or queering, among others. CMS has also been engaged with various other traditionally more critical disciplines, most notably with anthropology and sociology. The relevance of individual (Continental) philosophers has also been debated. From my perspective, the relationship between CMS and the radical Left is somewhat problematic, as some have the habit of seeing only their version of criticism as Truly Critical, which is maybe not that reflexive although even Marxism, labour process theory and critical realism can be worth reading. Furthermore, for example Grey (2013, xiii) has personally experienced what he calls "the traditional tendency of the political Left" in CMS "to prize `purism´ and punish perceived `betrayals´."

19　These include, in a summarised form:
　　1.　Taking a non-objective view to management techniques and seeing them in the same way as other social practices.
　　2.　Exposing asymmetrical power relations that reproduce wider power structures.
　　3.　Counteracting discursive closure and challenging the so-called rational management practices.
　　4.　Revealing the partiality of shared interests by challenging the way management decisions are legitimised.
　　5.　Acknowledging that language reproduces and transforms social reality.

20　These are by no means new problems. Marcuse (1969, 17, 33) considered that the high levels of abstraction in critical theory is due to lack of practical means of critique in a society where resistance is often portrayed as incapacity to take part.

As I see it, CMS is connected with the attempt to swallow the consequences of the so-called linguistic and associated practice turns in social sciences, where the former produced a set of cultural theories used in reconstructing the symbolic structures of knowledge, enabling and constraining "the agents to interpret the world according to certain forms, and to behave in corresponding ways", whilst also revitalising practice-based approaches where social life is constituted in ongoing practices (see for example Reckwitz 2002). Unfortunately a certain existential crisis can take place when the focus shifts from the relationship between texts and "reality" to mere intertextuality or the relationships between various texts and vocabularies.[21] In this process universalism usually has to be abandoned and many dualisms have to go.[22] Then again when one acknowledges that social reality is a mess and something less messy makes a mess of describing it, mobilising different linguistic resources, playing different vocabularies against each other and mixing genres suddenly starts to feel quite interesting, even emancipating after overcoming the initial resistance.

Mainstream	CMS
Functionalist	Anti-functionalist
Aims to develop management	Anti-management tendencies
Often work-place centred	Aims to incorporate wider society in analysis
Foundationalist vocabularies and belief in objective reason	Predominantly anti-foundationalist aspirations
Seeks effectiveness	Seeks emancipation
Works with the establishment	Hopes to destabilise dominant subjugating knowledge systems

Figure 1. Some distinctions between so-called CMS and mainstream views

However, there are certain issues limiting the appeal of the critical research orientations. The very limited, almost non-existent effect of CMS writings outside the critical business schools has been described by

---

21 Move to intertextuality has disappointed numerous readers with foundationalist beliefs, as research texts now seem to lack something essential (more about the disagreements and innuendos that followed, see Smith 1997).

22 To be precise universal validity but not necessarily universal reach has to be abandoned.

Parker (2002) as an "endless glass-bead game (...) doomed to have relative irrelevance in the bigger games that shape our lives." Outside their own parochial community CMS scholars can be usually labelled as "harmless intellectuals", because the pervasive capitalist forces of production effectually often neutralise its critics or even turn them into a profit (Spoelstra 2007, 7). Furthermore, at least for me critical thinking should require something other than party membership or agitation of the established dogmas.[23] But maybe I have been too harsh. However meaningless the activism of CMS might be, from a culturalist perspective CMS can also be interpreted as a movement that provides a repertoire of critical codes to mark disaffiliation (Rowlinson and Hassard 2011). Part of the appeal of CMS is that it creates an illusion of staying outside the system where one can at least continue some forms of resistance.

Moving forward: CMS and reflexive pragmatism

All in all, CMS can offer a springboard to develop Administrative Science research that study IHRM in/and international project environments. To overcome the limitations of CMS that were just described, I advocate something I call reflexive pragmatism, that is to say reflexive research informed by pragmatist thinking. I argue that a move towards pragmatism should be done because critical theory often seems to offer a mere critical mirror image of problematic constructions they study, something that Gabriel Tarde (1962 [1903]) might have called counter-imitation. Like Alvesson and Sandberg (2013, 6) politely phrase it, "a lot of disturbance-specialized research (...) tends (after some time) to reproduce its own favored assumptions and thereby capacity to provide novel problematizations." Or like Baudrillard (1988, 116) more fatalistically concluded, "[e]very critical theory is haunted by this surreptitious religion, this desire bound up with the construction of its object, this negativity subtly haunted by the very

---

23 As it turns out, the nature of many revolutionary projects initiated by critical scholars have been summarised by Irving Howe (1989), who complained that these people had "gone to the universities to die in comfort." This can sometimes make affluent academics who blame the system to look like a group of hypocrites. Howe (ibid.) concluded that after rejecting the old-fashioned goal of taking over the government these people now just wanted to take over the English department (or equivalent). Still, one can ask what is the fate of management departments if people who effactually oppose management or at least only approve progressive forms of it are running them?

form that it negates." This is to say that critical knowledge appears parasitical. To be more specific, Grey and Willmott (2002) note that CMS has been mainly parasitic to business schools. In short, CMS is accused of the age-old intellectual's sin of criticising without creating; tearing apart but offering no viable alternative.

The response advocated in this research to the criticism against CMS outlined before could be labelled as reflexive pragmatism towards CMS. In reflexive interpretation the vocabularies offered by more critical research orientations are mobilised but also played against each other. For rhetorical reasons the somewhat misleading and simplistic, but serviceable, dualistic distinction between "mainstream views" and "CMS position" has been maintained in the structure of the thesis. It is misleading and simplistic because these streams are not often monoliths or unified positions and not always worlds apart, but serviceable nevertheless as a tool of inquiry.

All in all, in this thesis a pragmatist position towards CMS literature that is in line with reflexive research strategy is advocated. I will return to different types of reflexivities later on in this thesis, but suffice to say that in my view studying CMS can help us identify and jettison some of the unnecessary ideological ballast and positivist dogmas the so-called mainstream research is still dragging, the ones as innocent as the one between finding and making I intentionally used in the title of this chapter. Finnish administration research could also benefit from this, as it has already moved towards more qualitative and "softer" direction, while sometimes also losing faith in excessive managerialism after witnessing public sector reforms inspired by New Public Management (NPM) thinking.

1.3   Reflexive research strategy

As mentioned, this is a pioneer study in an under-researched domain, because IHRM research in the Finnish public sector context, let alone critical research focusing on international project environments, is lacking. However, practitioners utilise IHRM practices to organise social reality. In some cases IHRM practices are in the process of being institutionalised as Finnish public sector organisations formulate policies and procedures for international work. When these representations are institutionalised they play a role in defining the worlds and legitimising the practices involved

(Rottenburg 2009, xxx). What is missing though, is academic research containing critical reflection about this topic. For various reasons these representations are not going to be validated in terms of correspondence theory, but what one can do is to interpret, to learn to see from the perspective of others and other representations – to reflect. This is a prerequisite to reflexive research strategy that contains various reflexivity positions and self-reflexive practices. Indeed, as we are about to see, there is no single reflexivity, but a profusion of reflexivities a researcher can utilise.

It was perhaps Pierre Bourdieu, who popularised the ideas of reflexivity to a wider Finnish social sciences audience by noting that it is also important to ask what constructs a social constructor, that is to say the researcher. From a Bourdieusian perspective a more collectivist reflexive empirical research has been advocated. Reflexivity is seen as a program to support research in social sciences, something where the researcher is inserted to the social field and academic tribe as a cultural producer, and where the associated competitive power conditions generate a certain habitus or action disposition one has to take into account. It is probable that many research traditions have somewhat unjustifiably favoured researchers with certain personality traits and mindsets. This might have then produced one-sided if not biased understandings. Indeed any approach to research (such as this one) can discriminate others if its viewed as the only or best way of doing research, and reflexive researcher should be aware of these caveats. There has also been other forms of reflexive research, some of which Bourdieu criticised for being too individualistic, most notably research being inspired by interpretive anthropology. (See Bourdieu and Wacquant 1995.)

Then again for example Miller and Rose (2008) suggest that reflexive project of the self is characteristic for the late modernity itself. For me reflexivity, as it is used here, is primarily a research philosophy, or as this is after all administration research, something that can be called a research strategy. From this position it is acknowledged that the facts are theory-laden, and the case is interpreted using the logic of abduction, where hypothetic patterns can help to understand the case in question, leading to adjustment of the original framework as a result of interplay between empirical materials and theoretical insights gained during the process (abductive theorising in management research, see for example Dubois and Gadde 2002; Hansen 2008). The point is that abductive researcher should see certain, sometimes

hidden and underlying patterns that laypersons might not spot. Naturally people with different backgrounds can interpret things differently because their frame of reference is different, or researcher can be biased. That is where reflection steps in. After all, as Rorty would say, theory must be viewed as a product of reflection about practice.

Often the words reflexive and reflective are used as synonyms and defining the terms is not easy. Competent language uses might make a distinction between being reflective or only thoughtful and reflexive or something that refers to the subject. For Alvesson and Sköldberd (2009, 8) both of these terms draw attention to "the complex processes of knowledge production and the various contexts of such processes, as well as the involvement of the knowledge producer." However, strictly speaking it is reflexivity that is used as a method in social sciences to highlight the presence of the researcher and different interwoven elements in the knowledge production on what is being investigated.

Reflexive research itself contains two elements: interpretation and reflection. The approach to reflexive methodology I have adopted and modified for my purposes, follows a guideline proposed by Alvesson and Sköldberg (2009), where the aim is to stimulate reflection between the orientations forming the overall frame of reference. There is a four-level structure of interpretation: interaction with empirical material with focus on accounts in interviews, interpretation of underlying meaning, critical interpretation (of the context and social reproduction), and self-reflection of the author about issues, such as selectivity of the voices represented. The idea is to set in motion the reflective interpretation between these four elements considered vital in reflexive social science research, that together form the framework of the so-called quadruple hermeneutics. Reflexivity itself arises in interaction between the elements mentioned. According to Gopinath and Prasad (2012) hermeneutics gains a critical dimension when the interpreter takes a self-critical stance as well as a critical stance towards what is being interpreted, often facilitating the critical hermeneutic interpretation with various critical scholarly perspectives.

The basic idea behind reflexivity is also to show what the frame of reference in question is *not* capable of saying. In addition, because the frames of reference or levels of analysis interact, reflexive research can create a meaning greater than the sum of its parts (and/or more confusion). Drawing

from hermeneutics and relying heavily on intuition, in reflexive research the meaning of the part can only be understood if it is related to the bigger picture. However, the available repertoire of interpretations effectively limits the possibilities of interpretation; while breadth and variation in the repertoire is considered positive, the research context and available resources mean that one cannot and should not say everything about everything in a single study. When the repertoire and levels of interpretations increase, so does the complexity of reflexive research.

Next, I present how my modified variant of the four master tropes proposed by Alvesson and Sköldberg (2009) as they are adopted in this research, with the aim to adopt the relevant principles to stimulate reflection between these orientations. It is worth pointing out that the idea is *not* to integrate these elements, but to abstract ideas for reflexive research project. The core elements of my reflective interpretation that can be dubbed as "master tropes" are:

1) Empirically oriented currents
The role of empirically oriented currents is to provide systematics and techniques in research procedures to allow reasoned basic logic in interacting with the empirical material and analysing results. I adopted relatively low-risk semi-structured research interviews, supported by suitable additional methods, to produce empirical material that was preliminarily analysed utilising theory oriented content analysis, and where the content emerges in the process where empirical material relevant to the context is analysed.[24]

2) Clarification the primacy of interpretation
Primacy of the interpretative notion of the research means that not only interviews are interpreted, but also the research work on a whole is an interpretative activity. Not only does the researcher interpret empirical material or is engaged with interpreting interviews, but interacts with other people who produce texts, ergo other interpreters. The ideas of interpretative anthropology are also utilised. From interpretative position it should be clear

---

24 Some variant of grounded theory would have been a strong candidate in this master trope instead of more unsystematic content analysis. However, grounded theory was grounded in this research because I was not entirely happy with its positivist undertones, nor I was not convinced how much added value it would bring to this research.

that understanding cannot be done without interpreting, and also that it requires intuition where the ideas of hermeneutics are often helpful. The downside is that intuitive cognitive processes are often difficult to explain to others, and require the usage of indicative metaphors (role of metaphors in organisational research, see Morgan 1997; cf. also Oswick, Keenoy and Grant 2002). In order to be more convincing the interpretation process requires more (self)reflection of the context of the research and the position of the researcher. Thus I have tried, when possible, to go to the roots of the ideas, not solely focusing on newest sources (Sköldberg 1998).

3) Awareness of the political-ideological character

To generate awareness of the political-ideological vantage points in the research, selected parts of the critical theory are introduced to question the underlying assumptions and values of the research. This should not only deconstruct, but also offer alternative points of departure to deepen the conclusions. I have also adopted postcolonial theory as a counterweight to the often implicit assumptions of the mainstream IHRM theory to illustrate some of the culturally and ideologically embedded assumptions, and to relate the research topic to the broader context, to avoid being trapped by our culturally shared blind spots. Postcolonial perspective is useful in IHRM as it acknowledges that the Other cannot be fully known, thus escaping the pitfalls of universalism (Janssens and Steyaert 2012).

4) Reflection in relation to the problem of presentation

To acknowledge that research(er) is always tied to the socially embedded environment, one has to address concerns initiated by the linguistic turn in social sciences. Texts might have a life of their own, and vocabularies they contain are fragile and contingent. It must be noted that in a multidisciplinary research process such as this one, the interplay of different vocabularies causes stir and confusion, but also allows us to question the possibility for a final vocabulary, be impressed by other vocabularies that can then be played against each another. With this in mind it might be helpful to conceptualise research orientations mentioned as discourses containing various sub-discourses. A discourse view addresses problems with power and authority, raising serious questions on the possibilities of a research text reproducing assumed external reality. Furthermore, while

hermeneutically inspired interpretation is suited to understand concepts with basic harmony and coherent entity, it is not well suited for contexts where the social world is fragmented and contains contradictory wholes. International project environments are a good case in point.

For someone only familiar with conventional research traditions, this might feel far-fetched, and in some ways it is, but it has a certain logic. Firstly, empirically oriented currents provide the empirical material and the bottom line for research. Secondly, mere representation is supplanted by interpretation, which can then generate understanding. The problem is that interpretation is never value-free or taking place in an a theoretical context; often researchers get emotionally attached to familiar discourses, theories or research topics, so an element of critical suspicion and reflection of the context of the interpretation is instructive to incorporate into the research process. Finally, researchers often construct a certain meaning of themselves as coherent subjects creating meanings, which must also be contested. After all, when we construct ourselves as individuals and human beings, we ultimately support certain world view and vested interests.

The rhetorical figures manifested in the last two master tropes are synecdoche and irony (Alvesson and Skoldberg 2009, 318). Their use is bound to cause opposition, especially if they are (mistakenly) interpreted as "final truths." Although the halcyon days of post-isms seem to be over (remember Sokal?), the consideration Harvey (1990, 291) made after observing these "shifts in the structure of feeling" is still as useful as ever: "If it is impossible to say anything of solidity and permanence in the midst of this ephemeral and fragmented world, then why not join in the [language] game?"[25] And in so doing why not try to freshen our own interpretations, reflect our own practices, and basking in the opportunity to ironise from the inside.

---

25 Some question whether postmodern has really existed, or is it just a new variant after the first modernity, something that Bauman (2011) has called liquid modernity, or that the modern period has never been fully achieved or exists less and less, so the correct term would be premodern (Latour 2006). Habermas (1981; see also 1987b) feared that the alliance of postmodernity with a "touch of premodernity" contains anti-liberal tendencies. Furthermore, it is indeed probable that the Western style modernity might not be the only possible one, that there has been multiple modernities or even post-premodernities (Harding 2008), or at least self-contained surmodernités (Augé 1995). Indeed, so much has been written about the condition of Western modernities that for an outsider the whole debate can appear almost like witchcraft involving words, but the debate also touches important themes related to mismanaged modernisation attempts and counteractions to them.

The reflexive movement between these tropes is utilised when interpreting theoretical literature and produced empirical material, but being reflective also means that the different levels in question are reflected in one another. All in all, the reflexive movement allowing reflection and interpretation is key to reflexive research, furnishing opportunities for understanding, and allowing the plurality of perspectives to bring inspiration. As mentioned, metaphors can be utilised to stimulate and encourage reflection between various frames. An example of hermeneutical movement can be read in the classic Hölderlin's *Brot und Wein* (1996), or at least in hermeneutical commentaries of it, as the same movement goes on through the elegies. Without going into detail, first the night (*lethe*) arrives, creating confusion among those who cannot sleep. This metaphorical dusking nightfall where the voices of the day can still be heard is a popular theme in lyrical poetry. Secondly, the brightness of the Hellenic antiquity, which can be interpreted to symbolise the beginning (*arkhe*) of the Western culture, is reached with reflection. Finally, an understanding of how to survive in the darkness of the long winter period called modernity emerges.[26]

The solution being offered is the ancient myth of bread and wine, where the grapes survive the winter in wine giving us joy, and grain can be baked for bread (not brewed), giving us persistence.[27] Hermeneutic interpretations of Holderlin's work by various poetry analysers, such as Adorno and Heidegger, have produced multifaceted understandings.[28] In Hölderlin's *Brot und Wein* the main task of those who produce texts is to move between different realms ("Welche von Lande zu Land zogen in heiliger nacht" [BuW VII 124]), but how this movement exactly takes place remains

---

26 Hermeneutics is sometimes seen as an attempt to come in terms with the loss of social cohesion that was claimed to be found in premodern communities (cf. Rorty 1989, 62).

27 As such, in Greek mythology eating bread defined what was meant to be human, and wine in Dionysiac sense inspired creativity in poetry.

28 The quarrel between philosophy and poetry is said to be ignited by Plato. The other side sees that Heidegger was working on ways how philosophy could surrender to poetry (Rorty 1989, 26), while others like philosopher Alain Badiou (2012, 53–54) claim that Heidegger was mainly uniting philosophical criticism against objectivism and its poetic omission to understand the dissolute state of affairs when it could not be conceptualised otherwise. Badiou further tried to argue that the age of poetry in philosophy ended when poet Paul Celan apparently started to show signs of trusting Platonism after all tears – before committing suicide in Seine.

unclear.[29] What is clear is that hermeneutics as a method was developed in Europe and is a product of the modern age.[30] As Gadamer (1981) notes in his *magnum opus*, hermeneutical tradition has for long resisted against the requirement of universal(isabil)ity of the scientific method and questioned the legitimacy of such claims. Instead, the aim of hermeneutics has been to connect human sciences to our experience of the worlds, to make this understanding the purpose of our reflection. Hermeneutics has also turned to other modes of experience (such as poetry) where truth claims could not be verified using the traditional scientific methodological means.

Western ethnocentrism; suited for interpreting text with basic harmony, but struggling with the contradictory wholes (cf. Alvesson and Sköldberg 2009, 139). Therefore, it is argued that reflexive methodology must go beyond hermeneutics and take the lessons of the linguistic turn seriously, adding tropes required to interpret contemporary phenomena of the social worlds. When it comes to the problems of ethnocentrism, Rorty (1991b) advocates a continuous debate between various models of meaning and reality. It is like we come from our own club to the bazaar where certain procedures of evidence are agreed, and where our interpretations are results of feedback and power-laden bazaar negotiations.

In such citations self-reflective actors can hopefully relativise our conventions after leaving the bazaar back to our private club feeling content of not possessing the truth but content of our increased self-awareness. Like Weick (2002) acutely points out, reflexivity is not an end itself; it should *not* be a mere collection of narcissistic manifests about researcher's own positions, but instead something that involves the ongoing negotiation

---

29 Friedrich Beißner published a draft fragment from Hölderlin´s BuW that can be interpreted to analyse the problems of international assignments: "nämlich zu Hauß its der Geist / nicht im Anfang, nicht an der Quell. Ihn zehret die Heimath ./ Kolonie liebt, und tapfer Vergessen der Geist. / Unsere Blumen erfreuen und die Schatten unserer Wälder / Der Verschmachteten. Fast wär der Beseeler verbrandt." Derrida considered this passage so problematic that translating its meaning was impossible even for him. Initially, Heidegger interpreted Hölderlin to mean that the Other during the colonial encounter remains a mere instrument to understand the Self, but after Nazi-era considered that his interpretation of Hölderlin´s "patriotic turn" could have been partially mistaken. (See Niku 2009, 75–81.)

30 Latour (2008, 245) comments that "[h]ermeneutics is not a priviledge of humans but, so to speak, a property of the world itself" (Latour 2007, 245). For him to live is to interpret.

between the infinite demands of the wholly Other and the possibilities for action of the self. Like Rhodes (2009) neatly abridges:

> [T]o be after reflexivity does not just mean to be subsequent to it as if it could be dealt with through new programmes and practices; instead, it means after in the sense of the continual pursuit of the horizon of reflexivity and its promises and potential. This means writing in a way that asks questions rather than provides answers; that refuses the hubris of generalizations; that provokes thinking rather than provides answers; that generates possibilities rather than prescriptions; that seeks openness rather than closure; that cultivates poiesis [imagination] instead of pretending or pretending to extend mimesis.

All in all, for myself, reflexivity is not a magic word to justify eclectic research design, but a research philosophy that addresses some of the concerns I hold towards social sciences. It is hoped that being reflexive can help us when aspiring towards more heterodox understanding of the public sector IHRM. To be honest, reflexive approach reflects my own personality: relying on intuition, concentrating on broad holistic perspective rather than fine details, together with fostering criticism and creativity (which everyone talks about but which are not always encouraged). Accepting this requires a sense of irony towards oneself. Other pivotal aspect associated with reflexive methodology is the use of metaphors to guide analysis and to develop ideas, not just for inspiration but also as research outcomes, and I have always been a man of metaphors. In the same vein it just might be that my gloomily cynical-romantic world view might resonate with some of the themes partly reified in critical social sciences. But because I do not wish to reflect on the role of researcher more at this point, it is time to outline the design of the thesis that follows.

1.4   The thesis

Basic premise of this thesis is that objective constructions of social reality stand on thin ice. For example the foundations of mainstream IHRM quickly begin to shake when the context changes. Furthermore, practitioners who work in international environments might feel that their

constructions of social reality are securely fastened on firm ground, but still they often have to be changed or have problematic consequences especially during international assignments. In a way one has to find ways to avoid frameworks that are simply inappropriate, maybe parochial in ways that limit our understanding, or dominant and harmful for others. Then again there is a problem of relativism that has to be taken into account. The only solution I have for avoiding getting tangled is reflection, but unfortunately reflexive destabilising practices also destabilise author's own position (possibilities and dangers of reflexive multi-voicing practices, see Alvesson, Hardy and Harley 2008). Still, the benefits of shifting the observer's perspective, altering vocabularies and shifting frames in my opinion outweigh the pitfalls (advantages of "frame changes", see Goffman 1986; cf. Rottenburg 2009, xxix). When it comes to textual strategy this means that different perspectives have to be played against each other.

Objective of the study

Considering objectives of the study is important because they set a "broader intellectual motive of a study" (cf. Alvesson and Sandberg 2013, 11). Alvesson and Sandberg (2013) highlight that researchers should be willing to work with deviant ideas and not only reproduce established vocabularies of their often narrow academic (sub)fields. Instead, the goal should be to produce alternative understandings of the subject matter that also problematise the assumptions of existing studies, and *not* to produce research that can be so easily situated within existing literature, to question background assumptions rather than to map the whole of existing literature to fill a neatly spotted or constructed gap in it. Therefore, research should be conducted in ways that are genuinely open and engaging with complex and messy issues.[31] What makes this somewhat taxing is that one also has to engage with other disciplines and research traditions, areas of literature with different vocabularies, internal logic and metatheoretical bearings.

---

31 As such, more eclectic approaches also oppose the paradigm-bound gap filling and encourage more open-ended problem formulation to acknowledge "the complexity and multidimensionality of social phenomena." Problems of the eclectic approach that does not privilege pre-given paradigmatic or meta-theoretical assumptions are considered in the conclusions chapter of this thesis. (Analytical eclecticism in the study of world politics, see Sil and Katzenstein 2010, 19, 205).

Furthermore, this kind of research is more difficult to evaluate. One returns to the implications of these points later on in this thesis.

Sometimes when reading Administrative Science research reports one gets the impression that research questions are based solely on quotidian remarks, stemming from the perceived desires of the management, sometimes without questioning the ideological background assumptions. Furthermore, researchers sometimes seem to lack the courage to go outside of the charted territory and stick to familiar things. This is not one of those studies, and precisely because of its pathfinder or explorative nature it was decided not to limit the research process too strictly with regard to research questions. As sociologist Johan Apslund (1971) once noted, it seems one cannot easily separate the construction process of questions and answers of something which initially remains a mystery for us. In this process the researcher also has to pose questions about one's own reflexive practices (Alvesson, Hardy and Harley 2008).

Thus, although this research takes place in the institutional framework of Administrative Science and works with the IHRM frame, *the objective of the study is to understand social reality of people in the international project environments of the public administration by adopting, conceptualising and developing IHRM frame to interpret this domain of social reality* that currently remains somewhat in the margins when it comes to academic research. This requires understanding IHRM in different spatial and temporal contexts, and sometimes between them. Furthermore, although this was not the original goal nor a specific research task, following research strategy that advocates reflexive pragmatism this thesis also evolved and ended up as a mini-commentary of what CMS literature as a heterogeneous frame of reference was saying and not saying about the research topic at hand. For me reading CMS literature also contained a personal desire to get in terms with the anti-foundationalist ideas that had puzzled me since the days I have been studying social sciences.[32]

---

32 Anti-foundationalist in a modest sense that questions foundationalist dualisms about epistemology, where it is assumed that reality is supposed to have an intrinsic nature. This means abandoning the idea that our beliefs stand in natural relations to the so-called reality because of their assumed content, and that it would therefore be possible to find something stable that could serve as a permanent criterion for judging social life.

Structure of the thesis

Fortunately for a conservative reader and maybe somewhat unfortunately for the development of science, in the genre of Administrative Science research reports usually follow a fairly standard structure where introduction is followed by the theory, which is then followed by methods section, followed by empirical part, before finally proceeding to conclusions. This research report is no exception. However, following the linguistic turn and requirements of reflection outlined before, one tries to write in ways that utilise different vocabularies and occasionally shift perspectives, to employ irony and metaphors when reflection gains critical elements that seek to destabilise.

This thesis also contains a journey where the reflexive researcher initially seeks to test the concepts of IHRM to understand people in the international project environments of the public administration. This story also follows the hermeneutical movement outlined above and includes elements of a *Bildungsroman*. A settler metaphor can help to illustrate the issue. Imagine a lone settler arriving in the wilderness of Lapland, full of entrepreneurial spirit and enthusiasm. Maybe he has heard about the richness of the land, about the rumours of fortunes made during the gold rush. On existing maps he can only see a nebulous area of virgin forests, but our settler also sees animals, plants, hills and brooks. He unpacks his existing knowledge, prepares for the harsh winter, and starts to plan how to build a house for himself. When he begins to hunt and travel more he realises that the land is not uninhabited after all. Our settler has neighbours with some information, and people with various motives trek in the frontier regions. Once he encounters native reindeer herders he realises that the colonial encounter is not always rosy nor one-sided. Slowly our settler starts to understand the forces shaping the experiences of people under the northern sky. When he opens his eyes he can see how the fragmented late modernity arrives to Lapland with full force.

However, this metaphor is not to be taken literally to indicate that there would be some out there reality with its foundational ideas just waiting to be found, nor is the idea to simply stamp alternative positions. Rather, the purpose of metaphors like this is to provide an evocative concept to facilitate reflection that can help to illustrate the research task and the

position of the researcher. From a somewhat pragmatist perspective this inquiry can be seen as a formative process to learn ways to use social reality that is studied. To expand on the settler metaphor, as the time goes by our settler begins to understand that his sphere of life itself is being influenced by the wider transformations shaping the whole context. Everything he hears or sees does not really tally with his existing knowledge, and some aspects remain a complete mystery. In short, he has to interpret things to develop new understanding, to unlearn some of his previous ideas, or at least question their applicability in the context where they were not developed, and accept that they are far from being unproblematic.

This metaphorical story can be seen to symbolise the course of events as they occur, but to keep the research report on track it also requires a plot or "a construction of a narrative that has been selected in order to tell this story" (Rottenburg 2009, 205; difference between story and plot, or *fabula* and *sjužet* like they were called in Russian Formalism, see Eco 1995, 33–35). In this narrative the journey begins by presenting relevant theoretical discussions of projectification and HRMization from both "mainstream" and more critical perspectives. As such, projectification is part of general temporisation of society, and lately project management with its technical roots has begun to consider the people component and the wider societal framework. HRM is seen as a management ideology that incorporates some elements of humanisation of work to improve economic productivity. After this an international element is introduced and mainstream IHRM ideology is being analysed.

The thesis then moves outside the mainstream IHRM and mobilises alternative theoretical vocabularies. At this point serious doubts begin to emerge, and further destabilising arguments are being considered in the form of postcolonial theory. After considering the role of management practice areas IHRM is now considered from the perspective of the public administration. Thesis now moves to methods section that is followed by brief metatheoretical considerations. Only after this can the dialogue between theory and empirical materials commence to construct an IHRM frame suitable for the public sector project environments. Finally, as a conclusion the reflexive movement is brought to a temporary conclusion and different elements are synthesised to summarise a new understanding of people, international projects, and public sector by interpreting the IHRM frame

that was generated. For pragmatic reasons not all theoretical discussions explored can be developed in the empirical part of the thesis, and some compromises have to be made regarding the metatheroetical position. The effect of these compromises is reflected in the conclusions section. But before that let us proceed to theoretical discussion, which in this thesis must be seen as a partly independent text covering also paths related to the topic that are not pursued in empirical part of this research.

2 IHRM IN PUBLIC SECTOR PROJECT CONTEXT

This section of the thesis introduces the theoretical background of the research that is related to management of human beings in international project environments of the public administration. The main theoretical currents that are summarised first are connected to the processes that can be labelled as HRMization and projectification of vocabularies. These discourses often provide the basic vocabularies to understand people management in project environments, but also block alternative conceptualisations. The underlying purpose of this chapter, is also to slowly widen the interpretative repertoire in order to encourage frame-breaking experiences (Alvesson and Kärreman 2011, 48–49). This is done by first including the critical perspectives, then by examining the international element in HRM, and finally by expanding the scope outside the traditional focus of mainstream management research. As concluding remarks of the theoretical discussion that follows the relationship between public administration as such and IHRM is also briefly analysed. It must be acknowledged here that all of these theoretical discussions are much broader and cannot be covered here, but the idea is to illustrate their relationships, main assumptions and provide a vocabulary that can be mobilised to interpret the social worlds under study.

On a more practical level one can ask how to get a holistic view of the IHRM frame without broad theoretical background to interpret the context where IHRM is operationalised and the vocabularies utilised in it. As philosopher Richard Rorty reminds us, universalist vocabularies do not and will not exist simply because "there is no way to step outside the various vocabularies we have employed and find a meta-vocabulary which somehow takes account of *all possible* vocabularies, all possible ways of judging and feeling" (Rorty 1989, xvi, italics original). Furthermore, coherent meanings are prone to break when taken out of their interpretative communities. Intellectual progress must be seen as a process of literalisation of selected metaphors, the process where the development is a mere "context between an entrenched vocabulary which has become a nuisance and a half-formed new vocabulary which vaguely promises great things"

(ibid., 9). Real achievements occur "when somebody realises that two or more of our vocabularies are interfering with each other, and proceeds to invent a new vocabulary to replace the both (…) it is not a discovery how old vocabularies fit together" (ibid., 12). This is what can be called as breakdown in our understanding – a mystery waiting someone to solve it or at least showing a way forward.

Reader should be patient, as the theoretical discussions discussed here are more numerous than in most contemporary IHRM research, but because of the pathfinder nature of this study the vocabulary to understand the phenomenon often simply does not exist. This thesis develops a narrative of how one can build an understanding of the topic, and the story of how we get there is at least as important as the end result, as one cannot jettison the ladders before climbing them. According to sociologist Johan Asplund (1971) there are two main elements in social science research: to create breakdowns or mysteries in our understanding of theoretical interest, and the recovery of this understanding or solving the mystery.[33] Like Alvesson and Kärreman (2011) point out, even when the constructed mystery is not solved, it can nevertheless be presented as a contribution, pointing breakdowns that require our attention. I will focus on creating and partly solving the mysteries related to the IHRM frame in the public sector project environments, later on in this thesis, but next a word about relevant theoretical concepts.

2.1 HRMization and projectification

This chapter presents an overview of the HRMization and projectification from both mainstream and CMS perspectives. I do not intend to summarise these fields yet again, but to point out how the account of mainstream views usually views management, HRM and projectification as part of the solution, while CMS literature usually takes for granted that they are part

---

33 Asplund´s arguments, an many other seminal texts in sociology, must be understood quite broadly, as for him it is possible that "lösningen eller betydelsen skingrar inte ett redan förefintligt mysterium, utan lösningen eller betydelsen bestämmer eller upprättar själva mysteriet" and therefore "[p]roblemet och lösningen, frågan och svaret, ges så att säga samtidigt, i en och samma komplexa skapelseakt" (Asplund 1971, 48; italics original). The point seems to be that construction and resolution of the mystery are interconnected.

of the problem. Thus, the purpose is to briefly examine what has been, and not been said, about these issues in the context of the changing public sector. I will do this before moving to IHRM and beyond, in the proceeding chapters. There is also a practical implication: HRM and project management, as fields of study, have developed relatively independently, resulting in vocabularies containing values and concepts that are hardly compatible at all. And when these vocabularies get mixed up, while trying to make sense of project environments of international governance, some form of confusion is almost inevitable. The traditional solution to this problem of conflicting interpretations is to ignore the bothersome parts and continue business as usual, in an attempt to find a unified and objectivist vision of how things are.

Reflexive pragmatism employed in this research does not follow this route. Pragmatist philosopher William James (2008 [1907]) once suggested that perhaps even conflicting beliefs can be compartmentalised, making things complicated only when practitioners in social co-operation need to agree on what is to be done. This is where reflection steps in, but unfortunately it requires that vocabularies must be played against each other and one has to step outside the limits of our little sandbox. After all, the whole idea of reflection is to break up every now and then to allow new perspectives to change the language game, when focus becomes too narrow (cf. Alvesson and Sköldberg 2009, 13, 270). Next the vocabularies of both HRMization and projectification are approached from this perspective.

2.1.1 HRMization

In the keystone of thought of the Frankfurt School from the 1940s, Adorno and Horkheimer (1979) claim that the only solutions to escaping the problems of labour are offered in the Sirens episode in an ancient epic poem of Odysseus. When the singing of the sirens lured unwary sailors to the rocks, Odysseus' solution was to plug the ears of his crew with wax and tie himself to the mast; resembling a situation where the servant performs the work under pressure and the proprietor renounces the participation to work and to its management. "No authority has yet been able to escape

paying this price" (ibid., 35).[34] However, it was HRM, in especially more "high-commitment" variants, that tried to offer a third way, where work is done because of meaningfulness, and management is there to make it happen. Contrary to Weberian idea of rationalisation, enchantment is in the heart of HRM when employment is more individualised (cf. Korczynski 2007, 104).

Humans are complex, needy beings, and the fulfilment of our needs (however defined) affect whether we flourish or suffer (Sayer 2007, 23–24). Work environment is no exception. Thus, it is the individual who might, in Aristotelian sense, seek some sort of personal fulfilment from work, and HRM should manage this in a reciprocal way to utilise human resourcefulness. What HRM promised was supposed to be a win-win. Economists argued that needs are fundamentally connected to the concept of human capital, which is at the heart of HRM concept. Sen (1999) and Nussbaum (2000) have pointed out that needs are not only connected to the resources, but permit access to the ways of living (they use awkward word "functionings" in somewhat broader context). Therefore human capital is represented in ways, that are related to the needs, that are the social basis of our self-respect and non-humiliation. Through participation in social life, individuals fulfil their need to have some (illusion?) of control in their work (and) life. Focus on people's needs, something that is intrinsically meaningful for them, also tries to address the problem, that HRM too often *only* assumes that work is motivating as long as it is productive and increases the status of employees (cf. Alvesson and Willmott 2012, 94). As it turns out next, mainstream HRM interprets the motives and possibilities of HRMization differently than more critical orientations.

---

34 Honneth (2007, 59) considers that the use of this rhetorical device highlights that various social practices of the culture of capitalism are not natural and unquestionable. Indeed, he claims that "elementary raw violence (…) lies at the basis of these practices" (ibid.). Habermas (1987b, 108─110) interprets the interpretation of Adorno and Horkheimer of the same Sirens episode in ways that sidelines the sociology of work aspects and sees it foremost an illustration of the Janus-face of the Enlightenment as "domination over an objectified external nature and repressed internal nature." Unlike much of the intellectual Left Bank, Habermas sees that the real problem is too little rather than too much of Enlightenment.

Origins of mainstream HRM

According to mainstream accounts in *The Oxford Handbook of Human Resource Management* "the academic management discipline of HRM" is defined as "the management of work and people towards desired ends" is "a fundamental activity in any organisation where human beings are employed" that "happens in some form or another" (Boxall, Purcell and Wright 2007, 1–4). After complaining that "[j]udging by the literature HRM refuses to be any one thing" (ibid., 2), an artificial but serviceable distinction between three major categories of HRM is made: micro, macro and international HRM, where IHRM is defined using the middle-ground definition including HRM of companies operating in the international arena and internationalisation processes (ibid., 2–4). What unites these categories is the urge to manage people issues, making HRM an umbrella term for research and practice alike.

HRM is partly old wine in new bottles related to all the new and old things got to do with personnel administration and people management married with the elements of (among other things) human relations school and organisational behaviour thinking, together with uncountable amounts of febrile management fashions that come and go. It has to be noted that when HRM is "viewed as generic activity involving the management of other people's labor in production" the history of HRM is long (see for example Kaufman 2007). However, there are also those who stress that HRM is a completely new "paradigm" for people management expanding the scope of personnel administration far beyond the traditional functions like payroll and job welfare, making all managers responsible of HRM to ensure sustainable competitiveness (see for example Morton, Newall and Sparkes 2011, 2–3).

For example Drucker (1954) had used the term "human resources" to emphasise that humans are not merely cost factors for organisations, but workers whose effectiveness can be improved. The growing importance of personnel function started in Finland and elsewhere in the Western world during the 1970s (Sädevirta 2004, see also Vakkala 2012, chapter 2.1). From human resource perspective traditional personnel management had not succeeded in this, and what was hoped for, was a love child from the marriage of human relations school and scientific management.

Raymond Miles (see for example 1975) made an argument that con-

trasted and compared human relations school of personnel management and leadership model between "human resources" management model. The latter included power redistribution in organisational management and placed human capital in its epicentre, the former contained acceptance of hierarchy as well some employee engagement and openness in communication. Miles (ibid.) then proposed his "Human Resources Model" where management's prime task was to create an environment where untapped resources of employees could be totally utilised. In short, focusing on improving organisational decision-making together with the employees should aim towards improved performance that was about to bring flourishing work places and job satisfaction. Various attempts to link performance to the management of human resources has remained a key theme in mainstream HRM (see for example Paauwe 2004).

HRM was often theorised along two lines: "soft" (Harvard style) *human resource* management and "hard" more quantitative human *resource management*, but contemporary HRM includes elements of both.[35] When it comes to so-called knowledge workers in so-called high commitment work settings, the practices and rhetorics of soft HRM are considered more appropriate, together with its cousin "developmental humanism" in HRM, or its later American-born incarnation High Commitment Management (HCM). (See for example Kaufman 2007 for a survey of the field from mainstream perspective; cf. also Sädevirta 2004.) All in all, HRM was about to offer an alternative approach to management of people by matching the needs of individual worker to the strategic goals and needs of the organisation. (Example of quality mainstream HRM textbook, see Torrington, Hall and Taylor 2005.)

The traditional title of public personnel administration was in many cases largely replaced by HRM or disappeared without direct replacement.[36]

---

35 Definitions vary, but "hard" HRM is more concerned with direct costs and sees HRM in contingent light as strategically oriented people management to be aligned with business goals. It is favoured by the so-called Michigan school HRM in the USA (see Fombrun, Tichy and Devanna 1984). As mentioned, "soft" HRM connected to the Harvard school HRM endorses the mutuality of people management.

36 In Finland term "henkilöstöhallinto" (personnel administration) usually refers to more administrative tasks, while terms "henkilöstövoimavarojen johtaminen" and "henkilöstöresurssien johtaminen" both mean HRM, but the latter is more popular in business context and the former has a somewhat softer connotation. "Henkilöstövoimavarojen/resurssien kehittäminen" or human resource development is often related to learning activities and is often considered to be part of HRM.

The breakthrough of the HRM concept in the Finnish public sector is related to the spread of mostly private sector inspired ideas of strategic management and human relations or organisational behaviour schools to the public sector. Combining these views has caused a stir, as somewhat instrumental focus of strategic management in the public sector sometimes contradicts with developmental humanist views of traditional work welfare aspirations that are also now viewed to be part of HRM. Even before the financial crisis, many practitioners were tackling with initiatives like Finnish Government public sector productivity program that posed challenges for HR function because of the need to improve processes and to do more with less, often with requirements to cut or outsource personnel (see for example Kivelä 2010).

As a summary of the developments in Finland based on extensive Cranet survey material in large private and public sector organisations indicates, there is a clear convergence between private and public sector HRM in Finland. In the early 1990s main HRM challenges in the public sector were organisational flexibly and efficiency together with the introduction of performance-based pay systems. In the mid 1990s leaner organisations started to invest in HR development, followed by the desire towards better HR planning and management. This translated into recruitment and job welfare efforts in the first years of the new millennium, and later efforts to tackle looming demographic trends. However, even diversity management is a relatively new thing for Finnish organisations (Sippola 2007). (Schmidt and Vanhala 2010.)

According to Finnish HR barometer 2010 (where approximately half of the respondents represented public sector organisations) the key trends identified where a growing importance of people management (what did you expect?), the need to adjust to the continuous change (whatever that might mean), and the changing role of work with greater demands of flexibility. The most acute single issue for Finnish HR professionals was employee well-being, which embodies the traditional focus of Finnish HRM. When it comes to internationalisation, it is worthwhile to note that only those in a higher managerial position perceived that the demands of internationalisation were the key issue; including issues like international demand for talent, the lack of international managerial experience and strategic integration of international HRM. Furthermore, within the private

sector internationalisation was ranked among the top priorities, whereas in the public sector it was not. (Viitala, Suutari and Järlström 2011.)

Comparative HRM research has observed that compared to the dominant Anglo-American HRM literature, in Northern Europe the interplay between individuals and the organisational context is more important with potentially more collectivist elements (Brewster and Larsen 2000). In the Finnish public sector HRM is generally connected to the solutions that are in line with NPM, but in dispersed Finnish public sector HRM practices are implemented in very different ways and by different actors (Vakkala 2012, 73). Then again trends to organise work, such as projectification, are connected to the so-called HR transformation, where new ideas have been launched which restructure the way we work, effactually making HRM a testbed for new management thought (cf. Bredin and Söderlund 2011, 2).

As a *précis* one could summarise that from the mainstream perspective it has been deemed that management element was missing in traditional personnel administration, which instigated the rise of business-ethos inspired HRM also in the public sector. The idea was to see employees positively as resources that could be properly managed to help the organisations achieving their goals. What this means in practice, and what kind of problems it might contain, has sparked a rich debate that constitutes a bulk of HRM literature. At one point it seemed that the institutional view was gaining in popularity among general purpose HRM researchers (institutional HRM, see Paauwe 2004), but generally speaking ”[t]he issues of duality, paradox, ambiguity, and balance dominate” in HRM research (Boselie, Brewster and Paauwe 2009). These themes are discussed later on in this thesis.

HRMization and critical perspectives

From a more critical perspective the mutation and replacement of people management with something called HRM discourse (or at least a babble) is ultimately connected to the changing role of work in our society; not just how work is performed but what kind of power relations and societal context surrounds and shapes the ways work is organised. As such, homogenised HRM (however defined) from more critical perspective is regarded as "the preferred international discourse to frame employment management issues" (Delbridge and Keenoy 2010). More critical orientations to

HRM have also taken social constructivism (or even critical realism) more seriously and accepted that the HRM itself can be polemically regarded as "not as a concrete, coherent entity but as a series of mutually implicated phenomena which is/are in the *process of becoming*" (see Keenoy 1999; italics original). However, critical perspectives have been on the whole marginalised in HRM research (Keegan and Boselie 2006), and there has been a lack of interaction between critical HRM studies and mainstream HRM research (Boselie, Brewster and Paauwe 2009). It is probable that more critical scholars perceive the vocabulary and background assumptions of mainstream HRM alien for them. (Conceptualisations of HRM from a more critical perspective, see Collings and Wood 2009.)

As such, from a more critical perspective HRM can be seen as a managerial solution to labour unrest. Furthermore, from culturalist perspective "HRM may be more powerfully understood as a device that provides shared meanings (…) thus being instrumental in sustaining the normative order" (Alvesson and Kärreman 2007). Critical scholars have been accusing that HRM is "often weakly articulated and its content is frequently focused upon administration and techniques that are becoming increasingly pervasive as the boundaries between work and life and inside/outside the organization are becoming blurred" (Alvesson and Willmott 2012, 116). This continues the criticism against managerial attempts in humanisation of work, attempts that arguably never questioned that (from business economy standpoint) "irrational" workers must be managed (Alvesson 1987, chapter 6).

In short, critics claim that the managerial demands of productivity have corrupted the potentially humanising elements of HRM, leading to rapacious institutionalised knowledge where employee motivation is measured simply in terms of their performance, effectually making HRM simply "a managerialized version of more pluralistic conceptions of employees and workplaces" (Alvesson and Willmott 2012, 94, 117). The critique against managerial agenda of HRM research is mainly directed against attempts to find the best way to improve employee performance through HR practices (Delbridge and Keenoy 2010). The motives of the human relations school itself have been questioned, claiming that starting from the early   twentieth century they mostly offered conservative business leaders a management ideology that enabled them to deny workers' active participation in workplace decision-making *(*Bruce and Nyland 2011).

Whether this was the case critical orientations nevertheless point out that the ideological premises behind HRM are highly context dependant and controversial, arguing that "the more it is investigated the less convincing it becomes (…) the more we know about it, the more it disappears from view" (Keenoy 1999).

From the critical perspective HRM research often echoes the themes of CMS mentioned previously. Delbridge and Keenoy (2010) propose that CMS informed HRM research should focus on three main themes: stress the socio-political context of social action, engage on a wide-ranging de-naturalising critique of management discourse, and include the alternative voices excluded by the mainstream HRM. What critical orientations warn is that disentangling HRM from the societal context is problematic, as the ways "how work is currently organized and managed cannot be done without relating HRM to broader patterns of culture, power and inequality" (Janssens and Steyaert 2009, 146).

The aforementioned "broader patterns" critical HRM is referring to are often viewed to be related to the capitalist system of production in an era of globalisation that are accompanied by the spread of neoliberal management doctrines. Critical orientations argue that mainstream HRM takes the ideology of market individualism for granted and is centred on the psychology of the employee (Delbridge and Keenoy 2010). Furthermore, more critical HRM scholars are usually rather antipathetic to psychological approaches in personnel management without bothering to engage with their ideas that are accused of portraying pseudoscientific procedures as objective and universal (Collings and Wood 2009, 12–13).

Early on, critical orientations highlighted the more darker aspects of HRM in places where high commitment and knowledge work are unknown concepts, and stressed the labour management dimension of HRM. According to Karen Legge (2005, 40) HRM is fundamentally connected to the needs to cope and consent with and control the workforce. In addition, HRM activities (and research) create knowledge about personnel, which can then be used to support chosen institutional practices – whatever they might be. For example, in network environments too much control can soon backfire, and achieving control over network environment can be downright too expensive. However, control aspect will remain one of the perennial HRM functions, and not least because it is assumed that

somebody in the management has to make sure people do not perform in ways that are utterly counterproductive from HRM perspective.

When it comes to origins of HRM research, more critical orientations present a genealogy where after being born in the USA, the managerial HRM discourse then invaded the whole Global North and subsequently became the dominant people management discourse at least in the larger private sector organisations and most business schools. In this process HRM incorporated large part of previous debates which were somehow related to managing people in organisations or human behaviour in work, including but not limited to taking influences or incorporating fields such as employment relations, organisational behaviour, or economics, sociology and psychology of work, or even labour law. (For a survey of the field from CMS perspective, see Keenoy 2009.)

Thus from a more critical perspective binary distinctions like hard and soft HRM are two sides of the same coin and fall under the same HRM discourse. To put it differently, they are "simply two points on a continuum from high to low instrumentalism" (Jackson 2002, 3; cf. Legge 2005), although the hard versus soft debate also highlighted managerial strategies that exploit the division of labour (see for example Korczynski 2002). All in all, the critics of HRM connect the rise of the HRM discourse to the spread of the individualised employment systems that have transformed organisation forms and careers from bureaucratic and stable towards flexible networks and contingent employment fuelled by the trend of what can be called a culture of new capitalism (Sennet 1998) or liquid modernity (Bauman 2011), where capital usually outmanoeuvres labour in mobility. Financial austerity has not changed the fact that general trend caused by institutional isomorphism points towards more flexible, international, responsive and leaner organisations (see for example Legge 2005, 7–8).

There are also attempts among HRM researchers to flirt with Foucault (see for example Newton 1994 and especially Townley 1994; cf. also Barratt 2003; Du Gay, Salaman and Rees 1996). These studies have (re-)conceptualised HRM as a discourse or a set of practices constructing dominant knowledge systems about employment relationships, pointing out that harmless looking administrative operations of HRM have an important role in ordering of subjectivities. As such, HRM codify management techniques and practices for the exercise of social control within localised contexts.

For Foucault himself the concept of human capital signalled a shift in the relationship between capital and labour towards turning workers into entrepreneurs who were to be self-governed by various classification devices (McKinlay, Carter and Pezet 2012). In their Foucauldian ethnographical study Covaleski et al. (1998) argued that organisations transform professionals into (self-)disciplined members, but the discourse of professional autonomy tends to act as a counterweight to organisational conformity. Therefore, HRM can be conceptualised as an identity-aligning project. In short, HRM risks becoming a mere technocratic instrument of manipulation (see Rose 1990), where H of HRM is often missing in both theory and practice (see for example edited volume of Bolton and Houlihan 2007).

To restate, critical orientation towards HRM believes that it is mainly the management aspect in HRM that is problematic, and contrary to common managerialist ideology management does not bring clarity and order to chaos because management is essentially seen as a problematic myth. However, the most influential critique against HRM has not originated from within CMS movement, but from scholars informed by sociological, political and ethical aspects of working and managing. For example, there have been warnings that referring to people as resources is dehumanising (see for example Mintzberg 1999). Furthermore, comparative HRM perspective that has revealed the ethnocentrism of mainstream HRM that only claims to hold universalist perspective (see for example edited volume by Brewster and Mayrhofer 2012). In HRM research, the more critical branch of HRM scholarship is often connected to the tradition of industrial relations research drawing from Industrial Sociology that "sought to understand work and employment in terms of social group formation and dynamics, the role of institutions, and the interface between human and technology" (Collings and Wood 2009, 12; sociological personnel management studies, see for example Watson 1977; Legge 1978).

From sociology of work perspective HRM phenomenon it not just a managerialist fashion; it can be conceptualised as a tool to describe labour management firmly connected to the principles of bureaucracy and developments in capitalist employment relationship. According to Tony Watson (2010) critical HRM research should be grounded not on the so-called disciplines of management (including CMS orientations), but directly on mainstream social science. According to his pragmatist perspective

work in HRM is bureaucratised, labour is treated in a capitalist way as a commodity subject to economic exchange, and ideal HRM practitioners are appropriately qualified office holders. To come in terms with HRM, Watson (2010, 919) offers a generic HRM definition where:

> HRM is the managerial utilisation of the efforts, knowledge, capabilities and committed behaviours which people contribute to an authoritatively co-ordinated human enterprise as part of an employment exchange (or more temporary contractual arrangement) to carry out work tasks in a way which enables the enterprise to continue into the future.

"Authoritatively co-ordinated human enterprise" refers to Weberian ideas of *Herrschaft* and the three types of legitimate authority. Unfortunately these rather hefty critical approaches to HRM are known by a relatively small number of academics, usually those who question the notion that HRM researchers should be "servants of power." Watson supports the basic pragmatist idea that all theories are to some degree instrumental, and to study a particular sphere of social activity such as HR practices in the spirit of pragmatic pluralism requires "drawing upon concepts, insights and ideas from various disciplines or perspectives to build a conceptual framework suitable for that area of research" (ibid.). What is proposed within critical HRM is a reflexive engagement between HRM research and other related disciplines (see also Delbridge and Keenoy 2010; Janssens and Steyaert 2009), while taking to account the cultural and organisational context in a more pluralistic way (cf. Boselie, Brewster and Paauwe 2009).

2.1.2 Projectification

Term project has multiple meanings and emphases in different contexts. Generally speaking projects are temporary organisations allocated with resources to provide change by integrating unique solutions in uncertain environments. According to Köstner's (2009, 4) minimalistic definition projects are risky, unique and limited. Packendorff (1995) summarises that "the usual conception of the project is nonetheless that it is a given, plannable and unique task, limited in time, complex in its implementation and subject to evaluation." Arguably, a perceived wholesale projectifica-

tion of work and society has been taking place (see for example Rantala and Sulkunen 2006), or at least work is often conducted in arrangements labelled as projects. Next the basic premises of projectification are briefly exemplified from both normative project management and more critical project research perspectives.

Normative project management accounts

As such, themes related to administration of projects have engrossed people for quite some time. Mainstream project management literature is mainly prescriptive and seeks to find ways to model and manage projects, that is, some finite endeavour with (more or less) agreed specifications that has to be accomplished on time and budged. Normative project management literature of this character never fail to mention historical projects that changed history before moving to examine the so-called best practices or critical success factors of project management (see for example edited volume be Cleland and Gareis 2006). Suffice to say, the noun "project" apparently comes from Medieval Latin "*projectum"*, combining prefix *pro-* (meaning denoting something forward) and verb *jacere* (to throw). On a slightly anachronistic example, Roman citizen Sextus Julius Frontinus was appointed to the post of the water commissioner of Rome in 97, where he was in charge of many complex public sector aqueduct projects. In Frontinus' (1925) seminal work *De Aquis* he paints a picture of a devoted public servant confronted with themes like poor administration, use of contractors, corruption and defects, political influence and inadequate legislation; all the things which made economic use of public funds difficult.

Also Machiavelli (1883, Book I, chapter XXXI) studied and criticised the mistakes made in what could now be labelled as reward management practices of public sector projects in the Roman Republic over two millennia ago. As we can see, undertakings limited in time and scope in various forms that can be described as projects have existed long before project management literature and vocabulary that emerged during the Cold War, mostly after the 1950s when system theory was adopted as a theoretical foundation. Governments and industry in the West also desired to control complex and expensive projects by introducing new project standards that later became popular answer also outside the aerospace, construction

and weapons industry where they were initially implemented. Project management became a field of theory in between technology and business administration where researchers and practitioners meet, containing management techniques to direct and co-ordinate projects (Packendorff 1995). (History of project management, see for example Kerzner 2006.)

Traditional project vocabulary has emphasised the technical language of managing projects, and the jargon of project management has been the language of engineers and managers. Often project professionals themselves employ the language of traditional project management literature simply because that is the only vocabulary they speak which is suited for project environments. Classic project literature epitomised in PMBOK[37] guide focuses on giving project managers tools and guidance for effective, rational and normative management of clearly defined projects, where the people dimension has traditionally involved designing work packages to assign different tasks to different people by identifying controllable action sequences.

As Kodama (2007) has noted, project organisation is not only used for temporary functions or sealed in single organisation, but to execute specific and official tasks, sometimes in wide networks incorporating various shareholders. Projects are not limited to private sector where the marketing view states that the purpose of a project firm is to make money by utilising customer relationships and managing project portfolios (cf. Tikkanen and Aspara 2008), but projects themselves have often been espoused in also other areas of organising as an "alternative to ineffective, rigid, boring bureaucracies, as a haven of goal-focused work, creativity and newness" (Cicmil at al. 2009). The sheer flexibility promised by project orientation was a popular selling point in contemporary society where the bureaucratic public sector was facing its traditional limitations (those who need *aide-mémeoire,* see Lindblom 1959).

---

37 The Project Management Body of Knowledge or PMBOK is a registered trademark of the Project Management Institute (PMI) being published since 1987. The fourth edition was published in 2009. The book focuses on internal process view of project management and is structured around nine knowledge areas: integration, scope, time, cost, quality, human resources, communication, risk, and procurement. It also discusses the following process groups: initiating, planning, execution, monitoring and control, and close-out. Other standards codifying the practices of project management also exist in various countries and some of them appear much more sophisticated than PMBOK, so sophisticated that one wonders how many apply them in the field.

Lately the focus of project management literature has changed not only from technical towards the people dimension or the human side involving managerial and motivational aspects (see Lock 2007), but also from managing single projects towards managing project portfolios. To be exact, there are various schools of project management with various standards. In project management studies those who emphasise the role of people are often connected to the behaviour school (Turner et al. 2010). The shift in focus from technical to people is not accidental. In the industrial age project management was traditionally viewed as a task of engineers who often favoured integrated project management styles.

It also became evident that projects do not always follow rational project life cycle models with neat stages engineers were proposing. Instead, people working in projects viewed that projects could follow more cynical cycles: wild enthusiasm followed by disillusionment, total confusion, search for the guilty, punishment of the innocent and promotion of non-participants (Taggert and Silbey 1986). For project managers like Irwin (2008) it is not the "science" of project management that causes most problems, it is the need for constant communication, negotiation and political influence that he feels needs to be managed. For example, in the public sector projects things get complicated because one must often satisfy a significantly larger community of project stakeholders (Wirick 2009). In short, normative project management assumes that there are "real" causes of project failure or success that have to be revealed to find a managerial remedy (see for example Cooke-Davies 2002).

Often traditional project management advocates clearly defined goals, certain openness and lack of clarity in the beginning of the project, as this arguably helps to generate optimism for a successful project launch. However, it is precisely because of this that projects often suffer a mid-life crisis; some want to redefine and renegotiate the unclear parameters as the factual state and contractual target state are too far away from each other. This can make the whole project look unpredictable and financially incalculable, which is bad from an accounting perspective. It could be that the only way to solve the aporia is to secretly redefine the project, but to continue the contractual rhetorics (of social and cultural neutrality) on the official level. (Rottenburg 2009, 167.)

However, unlike the critical perspectives one turns to next, mainstream project management literature on the whole does not question the basic framework of project management, but try to correct it by various means. There is no shortage of diagnoses and prescriptions when it comes to improving project performance. These might include not only the usual suspects like better project planning or training, improved software based tools, but also clearer and more strategic project management to deliver innovations (Virtanen 2009), more effective policy implementation, accountability and transparency (Crawford and Helm 2009), better team leadership by breaking down work into smaller, and presumably more "manageable" parts (Cobb 2012), or utilisation of more sophisticated, flexible and fine-grained HRM practices (Söderlund and Bredin 2006), and generally learning from past mistakes to develop innovations and insight (Söderlund 2005).

Making projects critical

Projectification of society has arguably changed the way work is organised, but more critical views state that the ideology of techno-rational project management has undesired side-effects. They state that the problem is that rational tools of project management backed with mechanistic *Weltanschauung* to ensure project success have started to cause a critical backlash and the orthodoxy of project management has been placed under scrutiny. The traditional assumptions related to economic rationality where project managers are assumed to be rational problem solvers working in sequential way have also been questioned (Muriithi and Crawford 2003).

Project management community has slowly started to recognise that individuals have a wider role as "competent social and political actors in complex project-labelled arrangements" (Cicmil and Hodgson 2006, 111). For example a group of Newcastle-based management scholars have pointed out how projects are characterised by discontinuities (Ivory et al. 2006). Drawing mainly from sencemaking and symbolic interactionism traditions among with their insights from participating in long-term engineering projects they point out how there are often conflicting sencemaking attempts by various groups that challenge conventional assumptions about the project and its context. If these sencemaking discourses are brought

into communication to evolve the most satisfactory solution, the result is often contested, emergent and negotiated.

Overall, more critical approaches to study project management have highlighted that project management is an economic, social and political phenomenon. Lundin and Steinthórsson (2003) have utilised a river basin metaphor when studying temporary organisations to emphasise that when studying projects, researcher should consider activities across traditional levels and boundaries. Sceptical against the one-size-fits-all approaches, the contingency perspective maintains that project management must be adopted to contingent circumstances that are culture-bound. For example Milosevic (1999) considers that the silent language of project management mirrors the values of the Cold War era Anglo-American world. Critics point out that fashions in Western management studies literature (issues like management of team culture, learning process or knowledge) have with some delay found their way into project management literature (Cicmil and Hodgson 2006, 9). Then again international project management research indicates that it is problematic to place project management methodology into a context with a different value base (Köstner 2008). Thus, Engwall (2003) conceptualises projects as contextually embedded open systems.

The research pointing out the overall ambiguities of project management for the people involved is not a completely new thing (see for example Wilemon and Cicero 1970). When it comes to the public sector Rantala et al. (2006) have criticised the whole project orientation, complaining that increasingly popular and often inadequately funded temporary organisations (i.e. projects) blur the difference between "the core work" of (permanent) public sector institutions and temporary organisation forms. Furthermore, the ideas of the so-called governance model do not currently seem to offer a solid foundation to how to manage fussy network projects (cf. McMillan 2008, 203).

Meanwhile, research on temporal organisations has focused on the temporary nature of project organisations and the socially constructed microsociological processes involved, for example warning that the complexity of project organisation interaction amongcompeting authorities and resulting uncertainty in project environments can be a problem for the individuals involved (see for example Sahlin Andersson and Söderholm 2002; cf. Cicmil et al. 2009). In the worst case, this can lead to what is

known as project overload (cf. Zika-Victorsson, Sundström and Engwall 2006). What has been sometimes called the Scandinavian School in project research has challenged the mechanistic instrumentalism of mainstream project management, but arguably still retains the functionalist viewpoint (Hodgson and Cicmil 2006, 10–11).

However, more critical perspectives have also questioned the foundations of project management as such, urging a rethink of project management (Winter et al. 2006). These critics point out that it is the examples of large and radical history-making endeavours supported by the ideologue of Fordist mass production how the contemporary project management often justifies its existence (see Cicmil et al. 2009), also legitimising the discursive construction of project management by connecting projectification to the post-bureaucratic discourse by emphasising flexibility, change and the restructuring of organisations (Paton, Hodgson and Cicmil 2010).

As such, projectification offered ways to control time, space and mindsets in ways that were not possible in traditional bureaucratic way of organising (Lindgren and Packendorff 2006). This would make project management a theory of control (Thomas 2000, 29; cf. also Hodgson 2004). Critical accounts have also interpreted that the overall purpose of project management might be legitimation, and the role of normative project management techniques would be to provide an objective looking project façade that symbolises control, efficiency, rationalism and power (Thomas 2000; see also Sapolsky 1972). Furthermore, it has been implied that the rationale of project management is connected to the subtle disciplining of professional workers in the post-industrial and post-bureaucratic organisations (professionalisation of project management from a critical perspective, see Hodgson 2002).

More recently there has also been a research initiative connected to the CMS movement intended to make projects critical by uniting a wide range of critical perspectives related to project management, project based organising and projectification of society (see edited volume by Cicmil and Hodgson 2006). The intellectual mission of these researchers has been to focus on "power and domination in project settings, ethics and moral responsibility within projects, tensions between standardisation and creativity in project organisations, the limits to projectification and the dysfunctions of project rationality" (Cicmil et al. 2009).

The heroic image of project management as something fundamentally more vivifying than mundane "ordinary work" has also been challenged. Employing a Foucauldian metaphor of projects as "unresisted mental prisons for people", Lindgren and Packendorff (2006) claim that project work involves stress, loneliness and superficial relationships, and that in the worst case, project life becomes "a prison much harder to envision and escape than those of traditional bureaucratic structures".[38] It could be that the short-termism of projects together with the associated lack of devotion and overemphasis on mobility and social skills can in themselves cause insecurity and make personal fulfilment difficult for individuals involved, as things get so fragmented that living a good and balanced life becomes increasingly difficult (cf. Sennett 1998). Critics warn that projectification itself leads to constant shallow or partial learning, where individuals constantly feel insecure and unable to trust their own knowledge (participant-observation accounts, see for example O'Mahoney 2007).

In short, the deconstructive intention of the critical project research has been to open windows to the façade of project management (Cicmil et al. 2009), which is in line with the denaturalising tendencies of the CMS mentioned previously. To answer the anti-perfomative call of CMS, critical project research should also focus on studying the "actuality'" of project-based working and management with various methods and reflect the underpinning conceptual and philosophical considerations of project research instead of fine-tuning traditional project management practices and techniques (Cicmil et al. 2006). Like in the CMS movement in general, the importance of epistemology, ontology, and representation have been highlighted by more critical project researchers, and rather unsurprisingly ethnographic studies and action research are proposed as favoured methods, if empirical research is to be conducted (ibid.).

For example the research by Thomas (see for example Thomas 2000 and 2006; Buckle and Thomas 2003) utilises feminist and Foucauldian perspectives, Weickian sensemaking theories post-positivist critique against management theory to deconstruct the origins of the understandings people had on project management. Crevani and Shinozaki Lennerfors (2009)

---

38 Gabriel (2005) has suggested that Weber's iron cage (originally *stahlartes gehause)* metaphor suited to visualise the bureaucratic structures of modernity should be replaced with a glass cage metaphor.

have also criticised the universality and a general framework of project management ethics. Drawing on MacIntyre's (1985) notion of what is labelled as rational or ethical only makes sense within a particular community of tradition, they point out that in Swedish public sector project environments assumed control is a central issue, but also that the related identity construction assumes a gendered character.

In addition, and contrary to most HRM research, it is worth noting that perspectives of Actor-Network Theory (ANT) have been more widely fostered in more critical project research (see Sage, Dainty and Brookes 2011 and 2013; Pollack, Costello and Sankaran 2013; note also Rottenburg 2009). For example, research of Aubry et al. (2007) was informed by ANT to study the actors in project office, Blackburn (2002) utilised perspectives from ANT framework to interpret the actions of project managers, while Linde and Linderoth (2006) utilised ANT to analyse how project goals are defined. It could be that the ontology of ANT can be helpful to conceptualise the project complexity (see Parkin 1996). Indeed, some of the developers of ANT have themselves been studying technological projects to investigate the ontological propositions and the role of non-human actors (see especially Latour 1996; cf. also Law 2002).[39] After realising how project results are politicised project management researchers have also started to take interest in their ontological positions (Gauthier and Ika, 2012). From the perspective of ANT that delves with ontological performativity it is acknowledged that success or failure of project management in projects "others and depends on that which is outside it: an absent hinterland of different performative realities" (Sage, Dainty and Brookes 2011).

To summarise the more critical views in project research one can conclude that although project-based work can sometimes be harmful (also) for the humans involved and managerial solutions might never be able to solve these issues, it might be that critical orientations see projectification in too defeatist a light. More enlightened practitioners might indeed grasp the inherent paradoxes of project management the critics are pointing

---

39 In *Aircraft Storie*s John Law (2002, 8) introduces an element of reflexivity to ANT and erodes the assumptions performed in *projectness*. He concludes that projects are maybe the standard narrative trope of the late modernity and goes on to suspect that projects are performances of cultural bias in favour of continuity, smoothness and coherence, our capability to imagine singularity. Still, Law goes on to propose, project distributions seem to be sustained also in (because of?) narrative incoherence.

out, such as the inherent difficulty to flexibly contextualise standardised project techniques in a unique project setting, and accept the problems of project work as part of the deal. Critical orientations take this to mean that the disciplinary apparatus of project management with an ideology based on rationalist-normative conceptualisations of project performance is so strong that it also produces subjects (cf. Hodgson 2005), implying that these people have started to identify themselves with their small prison cells called projects (Lindgren and Packendorff 2006). Should it be like that? At least critical project research provides some emancipatory intent. These insights of critical project research together with some ideas related to temporality and boundaries in project environments are pursued later on in this thesis. Let the reflection of these contextually embedded cultural constructions continue.

2.1.3 Missing grist and other spots of bother

This chapter has drawn attention to the various vocabularies that can be later used to understand the changing context of public sector project IHRM. Some of these vocabularies mix like oil and water as they are connected to completely different discourses with different background assumptions, meaning that these views do not discuss with each other as much as they could. There appears to be more in common with critical HRM and critical project research than between the mainstream and the critical perspective. From the more critical perspective it is always problematic if the logic of management is taken as a given. For example from his fairly managerialist perspective Temmes (2006) represented a contextual history of the project management in the Finnish administration, and concluded that the main problem is the quality of preparatory activities where the knowledge is often "limited and fragmented", including the lacking capacities for policy analysis, co-ordination and responsibility at the government level. One could also ask how capable functionalist research has been to provide broader integrative approach. However, perhaps critical perspectives are deemed to remain in the margins if they are only categorically dismissing HRM and project orientation as subjugating myths, effectually dismissing the potential benefits of softer variants that might potentially be less manipulative and managerialist.

All in all, there also seems to be missing grist that connects HRM to project management, although attempts have been made to bring people view to project management after observing that "people perform every process [in project management], and it is the people who ultimately determine the adequacy (…) [t]hus the "people" side of the success factors is woven into their very fabric" (Cooke-Davies 2002). In their research sponsored by the Project Management Institute project HRM scholars Turner, Huemann and Keegan (2008) somewhat unsurprisingly suggest that the management support role dominates over employee support role despite the dynamic work environment in the project work that "imposes considerable pressures on employees." Paradoxically, certain people also continue to work in project environments because they seem to enjoy it, as the temporary nature of project work is perceived to give "greater variety and more interest" (ibid.).

Some of the themes associated with the problematic human side of projects can be found from the literature written decades ago. For example Paul Gaddis (1959) wrote a seminal article from project management perspective portraying a business-minded archetype of the emerging cadre of project managers, looking the issues related to the nature of project management work, preferred personality traits and project training. Furthermore, Gaddis warns about "projectitis", that is over-focusing on a single project and seeing it as centre of the universe He warned that in state of projectitis "the human resources of the project (the most important resources in advanced-technology industry) will be reduced in efficiency and productivity." Gaddis also noted that "[t]he temporal aspect of a project manager's task may strain his (sic!) capacities in dealing with people." In the same vein, Reeser (1969) started his augury by estimating that because project "might well be the organizational form of the future", the unique human problems involving "insecurity about future employment, career retardation, and personal development" might be permanently associated with project organisations.

HRM also has a traditional employee support role or caring for the well-being of employees and one would have assumed that problems of projectification would have generated a rich variety of HRM responses. This is not entirely the case and half a century later after these themes appeared in project research pioneering Nordic project HRM scholars Bredin and

Söderlund (2011, 66) could still conclude that HRM and project-based organisations remain "two different and distinct area of inquiry." However, this does not mean that project themes have remained completely ignored by HRM.

For example it is acknowledged that awareness of culture is important for project management professionals (Henrie and Sousa-Poza 2005; Tukiainen and Nummelin 2003), and that building ad hoc project management teams or optimising human resources planning is by no means an insignificant factor in project environments (see for example Burke and Barron 2007; Wirick 2009), and the nature of project work poses some HRM challenges for example in situations where project management teams involves people with diverse and unique skill sets who often do not know each other, only work together over a limited amount of time and do not expect to work together again (Koskinen and Pihlanto 2008). One should also allow opportunities for project-to-organisation type learning (Brady and Davies 2004). In short, the fluidity of project organisation is advertised to offer flexibility, but the implications this has to the knowledge base remain relatively unexplored (Tempest 2009).

Some attempts to formulate normative project HRM models have also been made. After conducting a review of main project management, general management and HRM journals about HRM in the project-oriented company Huemann, Keegan and Turner (2007) concluded that "[t]he HRM function and HRM practices in flat and flexible project-oriented companies have generally been neglected." There have also been attempts to projectificate HRM by analysing how project-based organisations operationalise HRM (see for example Bredin and Söderlund 2011; Bredin 2008; Huemann, Keegan and Turner 2007; Söderlund 2005). When it comes to HRM implications of projectification, Bredin (2008) has identified the following trends in HRM: knowledge intensity and competence development, individualisation and employability, and decentralisation of HR responsibilities. One returns to the important contribution made by Bredin and Söderlun (2011) later on in this thesis, because their proposed project HR quadriad framework is more suited for the Nordic context.

It must also be noted that Huemann, Keegan and Turner (2007) have modified the Michigan model of HRM for project environments, showing appraisal, reward and development on the project contributing to ap-

praisal, development and reward in the home organisation. Despite their mainstream affiliation, they also argue "that research on HRM in project-oriented companies must take the perspective of the individual employee as well as the organisation" to explore the impact of the temporary nature of the work processes and the dynamic nature of the work environment. Same authors also point out that project-oriented organisation should adopt specific HRM practices and processes to support employee well-being and ethical treatment in project-oriented structure (Turner, Huemann and Keegan 2008).

Then what happens when the context of HRM changes to international public sector projects environments? Not only projectification but also internationalisation has also affected public sector work practices (Tuomikorpi 2005), but unfortunately public sector HRM does not usually cover international element (Smale and Suutari 2011; Pynes 2009; see also Berman et al. 2010). From IHRM perspective Welch, Welch and Fenwick (2009) assume that international projects are becoming more popular and seek to explain this from direct foreign investment perspective (i.e. firms invest overseas and IHRM accompanies this). This then has various HR implications in the various stages of project life cycle (bidding, delivery and post-completion) of an individual project. Still, the HR dimension of international project operations remains relatively under-researched (see for example Welch, Welch and Tahvanainen 2008). Thus, next it is time to examine the nature of international HRM, a body of work focusing on international business that is relatively unspoiled by CMS. One turns to that next.

2.2 Autopsy of IHRM

As a metaphor the beast called IHRM can be conceptualised as a socio-cultural artefact containing background assumptions or what can be called IHRMisms, things which both define the nature of IHRM, but also blur our interpretations (cf. Keenoy 1999). Next these IHRMism are investigated by deconstructing and shaping the mainstream IHRM frame in a symbolic autopsy. Pathologists usually perform a post mortem examination for a death patient to discover the cause of death or to diagnose a disease. Researchers also do it to understand something about anatomy. Autopsies

have had a profound effect in the history of science to find out how organisms are structured and how they function. Clearly, this natural science inspired idea of conducting autopsies has its limits when it comes to social sciences. However, the metaphor of an autopsy is adopted, because there is a reason to suspect that the overall health of mainstream IHRM, sort of ideal type of positivist textbook IHRM, is not so good that it would survive a direct transfer to international public sector project environment.

IHRM has emerged as a sub-discipline of human resource management and publicly available IHRM knowledge can often be found in business school settings and associated publications. This knowledge also provides a key component in this research, but it is not unproblematic. Supporters of institutionalism (such as Meyer and Rowan 1977) might even warn us by claiming that some aspects of IHRM are not much more than rationalised myths developed to cope with ambiguity, or at least IHRM is a much more ambiguous concept than mainstream research implies. The autopsy contains three phases: studying the shape of IHRM, examining its evolution, and drawing conclusions of the limitations of the mainstream IHRM. As such, this is meant as a general overview of my reading of mainstream IHRM and not a textbook approach covering all the aspects of it.

2.2.1 Shaping the beast: Underlying assumptions of IHRM

Let the autopsy begin. Records indicate that usually three main, partly overlapping discussions have been identified in international HRM research: individuals working abroad, HRM in companies operating across the borders, and the effects of local or cultural differences with regard to HRM (Brewster and Mayrhofer 2012, 4–5; Dowling 1999). IHRM can be regarded as an example of hybrid disciplines developed after the 1970s. It emerged as a functionalist attempt to theorise the international dimension of managing people from the perspective of independent management disciplines. This internationalisation was mainly conceptualised from the perspective of business school based cross-cultural management and international business research. Like Torrington, Hall and Taylor (2005, 695) state in their textbook definition: "International HRM is a particular type of decentralisation and expansion of the HR role," arguing that IHRM is a little more that domestic HRM with some complexities. The follow-

ing differences are often mentioned when the international dimension is added to HRM:

- IHRM is more complex than purely domestic HRM
- IHRM usually involves more diversity and ambiguity
- IHRM is often more in-depth when it comes to involvement in employees lives

These differences between purely domestic and international HRM are assumed to be related to the special demands of international work. One can notice that there are four letters in the acronym IHRM, but as it turns out some of them are more equal than others.

I

First letter stands for International, and it generally means that IHRM should have an international dimension. Some argue that IHRM is so distinctly special that it should be left for dedicated specialists. More sceptical view rarely seen in print is that there is not that much difference between international and domestic HRM these days; international HRM is just targeted for an international audience, be it employees in an international firm or organisation, or international(ly oriented) students and researchers of any business school. The deeper, but in no way trivial question left unanswered is, what is international in the first place when state-centred definitions are becoming increasingly problematic in an era of globalisation. As Moisio (2012, 38–39) reminds us, international and global can be found in many of the processes and practices inside the internationalising nation state itself, not only in relations between them like the state-centred view assumed – and somewhat paradoxically the administration of the nation state is used in reforms aiming to overcome the national character of the operations.

H

Second letter stands for Human, which means IHRM has to do with human activity, namely work. Most seem to agree is that H in IHRM means that humans must be treated differently than any other resources. In practice the

human dimension in IHRM is often somewhat instrumental: manage the individuals well in an international context and your organisation will be effective. Furthermore, the way IHRM conceptualises the human element highlights the role of conscious and self-fulfilling individual working in and for organisations. The universality of this view has been questioned. For example Geertz (1983, 59) views a humanist idea of coherent subjectivity as an example of Western ethnocentrism.[40]

R

Third letter refers to Resources, indicating that humans must be seen and managed as human resources or human capital. Calling human beings a resource has its drawbacks and like mentioned previously and some oppose the idea as demeaning, but as we shall see later on the fundamental idea behind it is that administrational activity is connected to various productive resources humans might hold, resources that management should nurture to improve the effectiveness of an organisation. Adopting the term resource also has to do with to the urge to elevate people issues in administration from a somewhat second rate position by utilising the language of economics or accounting to point out that especially more expensive specialist employees with specific skills are an investment one should develop to make them productive. At the heart of HRM thinking is the truism that humans are organisation´s most important resource. Later on, one looks how these resources are conceptualised in the field of IHRM.

M

The fourth and final letter in the acronym stands for Management and involves activities or research about management of work in an international context. Usually, the idea is that the active management of human resources produces certain desired outcomes when in Weberian terms mediating between the instrumental and material, or in Marxist terms

---

40 Like always, things are not so clear-cut. In *Available Light* Geertz (2000) draws a more nuanced story of his intellectual passage as practicing anthropologist during half a century following the publications of the later Wittgenstein.

extracting the surplus value of labour by enacting and obscuring their commodity status.[41] This hints that IHRM is connected with the idea of managerialism or managerial intent to define and solve work-related problems in an international context. The possible problems of excessive managerialism are not addressed here in detail, nor are the clear gender connotations of man-agement.

As such, Kostera (2007, 287) argues that the time of managerialism is in resentful retreat in our so-called entrepreneurship and experience economy, and following Braverman (1974) characterises that once "managerialism thrived for power and accumulated more and more of it", subjecting even managers to the "routines of rationalization, specialization, and standardization of their work." IHRM has certainly been a product of this era, but whether managerialism is indeed slowly fading away or just mutating into new forms is an open question. There is also a related acronym where the M in IHRM is replaced with D or Development, but the concept of IHRD is closely related and later mostly incorporated by IHRM.[42]

Even this short look of the capital letters I,H,R and M hints that IHRM contains many in-build ambiguities. It must also be remembered that IHRM has always been characterised by the constant redefinition of the field. This research has adopted the broader definition of IHRM (Stahl and Björkman 2006, 1), but attenuated definitions contain the traditional core of the IHRM. These narrower definitions of IHRM are concerned with issues related to the international assignment cycle, including pre-assignment and on-assignment activities, career management and end of assignment options, usually focusing on Western managers in a strictly private sector or even only in MNE environments. The middle-ground definitions of IHRM can also include various internationalisation pro-

---

41 From more critical perspective, one could claim that there is an inside-build hidden agenda in all HRM where the management (or the mysterious market forces) persuade the employees to collude in their own exploitation, because it suits the purposes of profit-maximising (b)orderless global neoliberal capitalism. While the bleak houses of IHRM where this happens exist, stating that HRM was invented and spread internationally on a sole purpose to slave the labour force is somewhat simplistic.

42 IHRD can be defined as "a broad term that concerns processes that address the formulation and practice of HRD systems, practices and policies at the global societal and organizational level. It can concern itself with how governments and international organizations develop and nurture international managers and how they develop global HRD systems; it can incorporate comparative analyses of HRD approaches across nations and how societies develop national HRD policies." (Metcalfe and Rees 2005.)

cesses affecting HRM function. For example IHRM textbook by Briscoe, Schuler and Claus (2009, 20) advertises to "cover almost everything that is currently known on the field", but IHRM itself is defined as "the study and application of all human resource management activities as they impact the process of managing human resources in enterprises in the global environment."

Various IHRM models or frameworks have been developed by scholars to conceptualise the role of HR in organisations operating internally. Especially North American IHRM research has been closely following the development in strategy literature, where the key challenge used to be balancing various identified exogenous and endogenous factors. They also seem to assume a quite unitary frame of reference in strategic management of human resources whilst European HRM is often at least aware of possible pluralist implications. An example of North American mainstream IHRM is illustrated in Schuler´s edited IHRM model (based on the earlier SIHRM framework), which combined institutional, resource-based, transactional, and some open system elements. Their edited model includes strategic MNE components (namely SHRM systems, IHRM systems, cross-border alliances), exogenous factors (legal environment, managing MNEs, global, regional and local perspectives) and endogenous factors (global competitive advantage, global realities). These in turn influence IHRM issues, functions, policies and practices (like managing a global workforce, global leadership development and global careers), which have some link to MNE effectiveness (including monetary criteria and satisfying multiple stakeholders). The challenge of this type of research is deemed to "determine the ways for co-ordinating and controlling through people that are most effective." (See Schuler and Tarique 2007; cf. also Schuler, Dowling and De Cieri 1993.)[43]

Sparrow and Brewster (2006) have tried to overcome the limitations of IHRM (they mention overemphasis on expatriate management and international business strategy literature) by moving from international

---

43 Other typologies also exist. For example in IHRM research handbook edited by Stahl and Björkman (2006) written for "[their] colleagues, doctoral students and others interested", current IHRM research is divided into five themes: the role of IHRM; global staffing, performance management and leadership development; international assignments; teams, alliances, mergers and acquisitions; and theoretical perspectives.

management perspective towards global HRM, which goes beyond comparing the difference of people management practices in various countries. They argue that IHRM has to focus on all HR in organisations, adjust to the solutions new IT offers, and stay affordable. Therefore the model shaping the conduct of global HRM is rather complex: it includes organisational drivers (efficiency orientation, global provision, information exchange, core business process, localisation of decision making), which affect HR enablers (HR affordability, central HR philosophy, E-enabled HR knowledge transfer), which then again interact with HR processes (evaluation and contracting of HR, talent management, employee branding, international assignments & expa[triate]s, managing international workforce), which somehow results in organisational outcomes in the form of organisational capability.

In many cases IHRM research has arrived in Europe through United Kingdom before reaching the rest of Western Europe. One of the leading scholars when it comes comparing HRM in Europe and USA is Chris Brewster (2007) who notes that because of different antecedents the concept of HRM is different in Europe than in North America. Therefore the most European scholars mention that some elements like the role of social partners or employee engagement have to be added before North American models work in European context. However, most of these IHRM models are implicitly assuming that HR models developed based on research in traditional Western MNEs automatically can be applied everywhere. More self-conscious researchers in Europe contest some of the ideas in North American HRM research, including the levels of analysis, the aims of the study, and research paradigm. On practical level European HRM often recognises, but does not necessarily appreciate, the multilevel environment where one has to operate in Europe.

However, even most mainstream IHRM models have often been neglected by the practitioners as something too academical (Editors' Forum 2007), but one could say that some variant of resource-based thinking seems to be popular among them, over half a century after the ground-breaking research made by economist Edith Penrose (1995) in the late 1950s. According to her administrative organisation (for example a firm) is a collection of productive resources, including heterogenous human resources like the knowledge, experience and perceptions of the management team (see

also Boxall and Purcell 2011, 97–98). For Penrose, especially managerial resources with experience played a vital part in acquiring and organising human and other resources to supply goods and services to the market, and allowing the firm to grow.

In her later years Penrose (1995, xx) also envisioned that the spread of network organisation calls for theory development to analyse these issues. After disillusioned by McCarthyism Penrose moved abroad and studied international business, notably oil companies. Penrose (1971) saw an international firm as an intricate network of limited companies whose direction and ownership are closely interlocked and that operate in many countries of the world, forming an international pool of managerial and technological expertise. She noted that these international firms tradition-ally employed foreign personnel especially in managerial positions although they might have as well trained nationals for the job, but because of their role as promoting local economic growth they had also started to employ and train skilled local labour. This in turn had caused them the problems of "indigenisation" or integration, mainly due to operations in different cultural context.

Underlying assumptions illustrated: IHRM and management across cultures

Culture has an important role when conceptualising IHRM, and the role one gives to culture defines the character of IHRM. Indeed, it has been the management of culture that has always been an important issue in HRM. Approaching organisational culture literature from a critical perspective, Willmott (1993) linked its popularity to "the transition from Fordism to a more flexible strategy of accumulation in which the governance of the employee's soul becomes a more central element", pointing out the potentially false promise and manipulative intent of seeing monocultural organisation as an instrument of gaining competitive advantage in HRM. However, in IHRM culture does not usually mean just the corporate culture but the influence of national culture, something that different countries presumably "have" (role of culture in management studies, see Brewis and Jack 2009; conceptualisations of culture in the rhetoric of HRM, see Batteau 2013).

As such, IHRM is always practised and researched from some value-laden stance that contains shared background assumptions, making it highly problematic to presume that the assumptions of IHRM are universal. Some of these assumptions are connected to our culture, whilst some assumptions are related to the ways IHRM researchers conceptualise culture in their studies. Organisations where IHRM is most enthusiastically practised are often in the forefront of globalisation, and it is said that organisational culture is also related to wider national, local or global cultures, or a complex combination of various interacting subcultures. Popular IHRM mantra encourages them to "think global, act local", to adapt and represent their own culture, adopt foreign cultural influences, and process the so-called global culture. Furthermore, their capability to handle cultural issues is seen as vital for their success or failure (cf. also Harisalo 2008, 275). However, like Common (2011) cynically observes, cultural differences might be "overplayed" or just "regarded as a new dimension to marketing consulting services." To sum up, cultural differences (however defined) also help to keep the IHRM business alive.

In mainstream IHRM culture is often conceptualised in ways where culture presumably exists in a measurable and quantifiable way following the structural-functionalism tradition in anthropology that hinges on biological metaphors. It has then been studied what might happen when different business cultures meet or when an expatriate moves to a foreign country. This culturalism is expressed in the famous onion metaphor for understanding culture, where various layers form subcultures that should be taken into account. To think of the limitations of this view, just think how to define your own national culture and organisational culture of your workplace in a precise way, and then ponder how the former might influence the latter. Thus, for example Heijes (2011) criticises Hofstede´s culture concept by maintaining that it faulty assumes cohesiveness and causality, and maintains that "cross-cultural perception and co-operation within organizations cannot rely on a universal value-based approach", but instead has to take the power dynamics into account.

Originally, IHRM became interested in culture because of international assignments. As it turns out, adaptation to or ability to work in a foreign culture is individual. Therefore, simplistic and often repeated models like the famous Oberg's (1960) U-curve model describing the expatriate adjust-

ment process, where an initial honeymoon stage is followed by disillusionment and frustration caused by an absence of familiar cultural symbols (culture shock in popular parlance), before adaptation and mastery.[44] When individuals return, they can experience a so-called reverse cultural shock because the culture they once left has changed. IHRM implication is that both individuals and organisations are exposed to foreign cultures, which changes them, give them possibilities to view their cultural practices as an outsider, as well as place them in position where their actions change (other) cultures. All this assumes that cultures can be managed by regarding that the effects of culture are deterministic and connected to some deeper "facts" of human nature that are assumed to be different in different parts of the world. IHRM could then be involved in cherry-picking of the so-called global best practices. (Problems with expatriate adjustment and the U-curve model, see for example Thomas and Lazarova 2014, chapter 9.)

To give an example of this, in IHRM policy documents and other such manifestations of official IHRM ideals the role of culture is conceptualised as a possible problem area, outlining the cultural differences that might cause a stir. For example, CIPD[45] (2011) factsheet about the role of culture in IHRM notes that despite globalisation "there are ways in which people can be offended, and business propositions damaged, if there is not an understanding of the culture of the country in which the activities are being conducted." After this, the cultural dimensions in question are pinpointed. The same CIPD factsheet concludes that "to operate effectively [employees working internationally] must also examine their own cultural constructs and understand how these will impact on their judgements and their perceptions of the behaviour of others from different cultural backgrounds."

This cross-cultural approach to IHRM argues that "an understanding of the way people are seen, and see themselves, in organizations, is a fundamental to effective people management across different cultures" (Jackson 2002, 7). This translates that the focus of IHRM is turned towards the (perceived) diversity of individuals in internationally operating organi-

---

44 Oberg, the man behind the idea of cultural shock was himself raised in a sort of Finnish national romantic utopian community on a wild Canadian island, and his experiences as an immigrant in that environment might have something to do with how he later formulated his ideas.

45 CIPD or Chartered Institute for Personnel and Development is UK based professional body for HR practitioners.

sations, diversity that is assumed to be caused by their different ethnical or national backgrounds. This leaves IHRM to develop HR practices in MNEs, performance management across cultures, international employee development and activities related to international knowledge management. In these topics IHRM has found itself a business-case to develop more internationally competitive organisations by studying how different people management practices can be implemented in different cultural settings. *Bête noire* is that too often IHRM is reduced to be just another management problem, assuming that the solution is always more efficient management in the forms of increased cultural sensitivity and HRM system that is better suited for cross-cultural environment.

The problem with culture and IHRM is not only how to define or conceptualise culture, but to choose a suitable level of analysis, and figure out how different levels of culture interact. When one moves to examine cultural factors influencing IHRM on an individual level, broadly speaking there have been two main approaches in IHRM literature (Gahan and Abeysekera 2009). First, a substantial body of IHRM research has focused on how national culture shapes work values, to study what Hofstede called the programming of the mind. Second, psychological view focuses on individual-level construction in different cultural milieus. There is a trend in IHRM research to integrate these approaches. The former view has accumulated criticism because quantifying national culture with a couple of key variables is rather stereotypical. Furthermore, individuals live within multiple cultural realms which can influence how they work and behave. One of the IHRM challenges is to understand the distinction of lives in the community, and lives in the enterprise, so to speak work and home lives (Jackson 2002, 10). There seem to be a considerable variation in this not only between national cultures, but between organisations, and even professions or other groups who happen to form a subculture.

As anthropologist Anthony Cohen (1985, 69) once phrased it, "people began aware of their culture when they stand at its boundaries: when they encounter other cultures, or when they become aware of other ways of doing things, or merely of contradictions to their own culture." The Morgan´s (1988) famous surfer metaphor seems appropriate to repeat here: the role of culture in IHRM might be more like that of a surfer riding a wave. A good surfer understands the winds and the currents, knows how to read

the signals, can paddle and balance, but cannot even hope to repress the ocean.[46] According to Deleuze (1992, 5) the surfing metaphor has replaced other sports because in our contemporary society our manner of living is "undulatory, in orbit, in a continuous network."

In addition, there is the ethical dimension. Is IHRM oriented towards people as an end in themselves, or as means to an end? Jackson (2002, 4) notes that in individualistic cultures (where IHRM is born) individuals are expected to look after themselves, which "would indicate a more instrumental view of people." According to autonomist Marxist critique the growing importance of immaterial labour or harnessing the whole bios in value production makes labour and its management even more problematic because management should also influence our subjectivities and non-working lives to create added value (Fleming 2013; Hanlon 2007). For example international assignments can be so encompassing that one cannot always make such a clear distinction between office hours and free time.

Drawing from Habermas and Weber, Allen Batteau (2001, 731) suggests that "[a]ll areas of life (…) are becoming more `organized´, that is, subject to the dictates of regimes of instrumental rationality."[47] The consequences of this organising are found in "the cultures of command and authority, adaptation and resistance, alienation and inclusion," which in organisational life may vary in their strength and their content. Batteau (2001, 726) makes the distinction that organisations *embrace* national and regional cultures, but to a degree *engender* the cultures of rationality and command to exist, as they are essential elements of organisational culture, "a framework of meaning, a system of reference that can generate both shared understandings and the working misunderstandings that enable social life to go on." As such, the behavioural aspects of organisational culture often overplayed in IHRM literature can be seen more like the elements of organisational boundary mechanisms that are emblematic of their identity and create the cultures of inclusion that unites its members. (see Batteau 2001.)

---

46 Although only the surfer metaphor is repeated here, Morgan's (1988; 1997) research on metaphors promotes the use of multiple paradigms as a way of reflecting on knowledge production.

47 As such, the suspicion that Reason is itself merely another kind of superstition has haunted science for centuries and has incited various discussions about rationality in many disciplines (the historic role of rationality, see Gellner 1992). The debate concerning the merits and defects of rationality may not be settled anytime soon.

In the end it could be excessively optimistic to assume that IHRM can emancipate itself from the "regimes of instrumental rationality", as its mere existence might depend on them. However, one can think again how to define culture in IHRM, what role IHRM has in attempts to organising it, and consider how to react to cultural diversity. For example De Cieri (2007, 514–516) mentions three views to approach cultural diversity in IHRM: those supporting dysfunctional diversity view, those who see that diversity naturally enhance effectiveness, and those with more pragmatic or integrated view who think that both cultural diversity and lack of it can cause problems if not carefully handled. This is connected with the basic observation that interaction of diverse cultures often results in fraction, exploitation and resistance (see for example Levy 2000). However, one could try to pursue towards the concept of "deep diversity" (cf. Kymlicka 1995), taking the old bad practises and structural causes of inequality into account while being open to a cultural critique, dialogue and change. One returns to the conceptualisations of culture in empirical part of this thesis.

2.2.2 Evolution of IHRM: Quest to global SHRM

After examining the role of culture in IHRM it is important to apprehend the context where IHRM has been developed to evaluate its strengths and weaknesses, or to use consultancy speak, its comfort zone. Therefore before moving forward it is time to summarise the illustrated history of IHRM, that is human resource management in the international environment. Naturally in such an exercise one also constructs a plot when connecting meaningful events around an interpretative theme. To begin with, the history of anthropology is full of examples where science has been used to help in the administration of foreign cultures. Although the notion of "national character" has been here for centuries, it was during the Second World War when Anglo-American empirical techniques to study culture and personality were developed to aid in political decision-making (Rose 1990, 38). It then took a while before research was further developed and adopted its vocabulary to suit the needs of Western internationally operating enterprises, and later also IHRM issues in other forms of international business (like strategic networks and cross-border alliance), while slowly

moving outside the Atlantic region to acknowledge the changing economic landscape. What we now know as IHRM is the result of this development.

Often the cradle of IHRM is traced to the publications of Perlmutter. In his seminal 1965 article published in French Perlmutter makes some rather heroic background assumptions which have defined IHRM ever since. Perlmutter´s analysis moves on macro level and notes that in a world that is changing rapidly *modern men* need to find their place in relation to the nation-state and its institutions. It soon becomes clear that IHRM is the business of these modern men who have in fact created new *private* international enterprises (*entreprises industrielles ou commerciales mondiales*) and have to make demanding management decisions in order to run them. When making these decisions Perlmutter proposes three approaches of how to organise international operations.

First approach Perlmutter proposed was ethnocentric or home country-oriented, where overseas operations are managed to protect competitiveness in the home market. Communication is top down and strategic decisions are made at headquarters. According to Perlmutter this suits for men who identify towards a group that is right for them, but still want to communicate with other nations and cultures. Second and more pluralist concept Perlmutter proposes is polycentric or host country-oriented approach, where independent subsidiaries take more responsibility adapting to meet local needs. In his third geocentric or world oriented approach operations are "global", and values point towards the unity of the whole humanity (that is humanity which is engaged in international business). Later a fourth category called regiocentric (name speaks for itself) was added to the list. Perlmutter (1965) concluded his text in an enthusiastic note that all this was to about to open very new and vast horizons for social science researchers.

In the last decades following Perlmutter´s work the field of IHRM has emerged and grown as an independent niche sub-discipline of HRM. Earlier work studied mainly international staffing decisions and then personnel management in international context analysing different personnel groups like parent-country nationals (PCNs), third-country-nationals (TCNs) and locals (HCNs) in international organisations. Globalisation and the triumph of multinational enterprise also led to examine how different MNEs should be organised (i.e. should their IHRM approach be

ethnocentric, multi-domestic or even geocentric and globally eclectic, or something in-between). However, despite this increasing enthusiasm of IHRM that followed, André Laurent (1986) famously noted a couple of decades ago that the field of IHRM was still in its infancy. What most scholars forget is to explain the reasons for that statement: Laurent argued that international HRM processes are so complex and poorly understood that the best adjective to limn IHRM is superficiality. For Laurent the key to grow up from the infancy stage was improved understanding. Paradoxically, IHRM was for long the least studied aspect of international business, while the research that did exist had been focusing on US MNEs, and done by North American researchers adopting North American perspective (Ondrack 1985).

One line of inquiry that helped overcoming these limitations was comparative HRM, which continues the tradition of international industrial relations research. It has examined how divergence and convergence between different countries has influenced the development of HRM. There have also been some attempts to use the industrial relations perspective to criticise the unitarist underpinnings of mainstream perspective where it is often assumed that tensions and uncertainty in international work can be overcome with "good management" (industrial relations approach to IHRM, see Collings 2008; the weaknesses of unitarist HRM conceptions, see Marchington and Grugulis 2000). Furthermore, the global quest for more strategic IHRM precipitated a debate of the universal nature of people management practices. Some assume that the notion of the so-called best practices generates isomorphism, some argue rather convincingly that because of diversity there can never be a one-size-fits-all approach to IHRM. The comparative HRM soon pointed out the limits of HRM theorising derived solely from the North American context and demonstrated that what was advertised as a universal model of HRM was often a North American approach marketed as "best practice" (introduction to comparative HRM research, see edited volume of Brewster and Mayrhofer 2012).

What we know as globalisation transforms societies where leadership is practised in countless ways (see Held et all. 1999), and to rely on the successful internationalisation experiences of North American corporate top brass in IHRM research is rather narrow-minded. As if the internationalisation process of organisational HRM is itself a linear and natural

process that happens in similar ways all around the world (see Kobrin 1994). For example the once famous Adler and Ghadar's internationalisation model of HRM in organisations (cited in for example Jackson 2002, 48–49) includes four steps how HRM becomes international: domestic, international, multinational and global HRM.

However, according to Scullion and Paauwe (2004, 68–70) the model itself is based of Vernon's product life cycle theory, implying that the model only works on organisations that choose and are able to enter the global markets with their products. The rationale of public sector organisations to internationalise their HRM is often a whole lot different. Furthermore, IHRM has usually failed to engage with important social and structural questions related to the globalisation of international business such as the potentially destructive effects on national employment and identity, assuming "that liberal understanding will lead to improved utilization of human resources, congruent with organizational strategic objectives" (De Cieri, Wolfram Cox and Fenwick 2007).

Overall there has also been a tendency towards a research about global HRM (Brewster and Suutari 2005). Apparently international is not fancy enough anymore so everything has to be global: global operations, global careers, global HRM. With all the fuss about "global talent management", the idea seemed to be how to manage local and global human resource planning so that organisations have people with desired competency and motivation and can tackle possible shortage or surplus situations, and avoid having people in the wrong place or costing too much (cf. Schuler, Jackson and Tarique 2011). To manage employees globally to achieve the diffusion of knowledge and skills on a global level can be a fine goal. However, one has to be somewhat sceptical if this requires, as the advocates say it will, "an international human resource development strategy that forms an integral part of corporate culture and that helps to create a global mindset in its key employees" (Branine 2011, 22), effectually limiting the scope of IHRM to the management of cosmopolitan elites.[48]

To summarise, since the 1990s mainstream IHRM has been focusing on what they call global HRM issues related to the strategic activities of

---

48 Cosmopolitan in a sense that implies an already united cosmos, usually under the auspices of "the West."

multinational enterprises. From critical perspective Peltonen (2006) hints that this narrow focus is part of differentiation of IHRM from other fields. One should remember that it took years for mainstream researchers to notice that European workforce management is different in comparison with US HRM because of "constraining forces" such as national culture, government interventions, legislation and requirements to work with social partners such as trade unions (Lazarova, Morley and Tyson 2008). Then again one can ask how this apparent aspiration to be global and strategic affects ways international work is managed.

Underlying assumptions of IHRM illustrated: International assignments as a core IHRM function

Let me present one small vignette to illustrate the developments in IHRM. When IHRM begun to develop in the 1970s it was recognised that "relatively little attention has been focused on the movement of managers between countries, and even less attention to the management of this transfer" (Edström and Galbraith 1977). In IHRM research that followed the focus has often been on the most visible aspects of international assignments: expatriates working in Western multinationals. It has been accused that IHRM research has had problems with overcoming the barriers related to this traditional image (Meyskens et al. 2009), although expatriation is no longer the main focus for many IHRM researchers and practitioners (Schuler and Jackson 2005).

As such, international assignment issues cover anything from frequent business trips to long-term stay overseas. What IHRM research tried to do was to view the whole cycle of international assignment in MNEs (including the later stages), effectively trying to minimise risks involved. In the 1980s Tung (1982) made comparative studies of expatriates in MNEs based in Japan, the USA and Europe, implying that expatriate failure is linked to the problems of adjustments that could be corrected through better selection and training (cf. also Jackson 2002, 89–90). Overall, IHRM literature suggests that common problems met during international assignment cycle might be related to repatriation and family issues, among with all the possible cultural issues encountered. This can result in more negative experiences with international assignments (see for

example Briscoe, Randall and Claus 2009). Later in this thesis the quest to be strategic is analysed in more detail, but it is worthwhile to notice that with the popularity of strategic IHRM it was noted that expatriation was often not connected to the company's international business strategy (Brewster and Scullion 1997).

Collings, Scullion and Dowling (2009) provide a good summary of how mainstream IHRM conceptualised international assignments (see also Scullion and Collings 2006). They do not speak of international assignments from assignee´s perspective, but approach the issue from the perspective of HR departments in large MNEs, and call it global staffing. It is defined to comprise "the critical issues faced by multinational corporations with regard to the employment of home, host and third country nationals to fill key positions in their headquarters and subsidiary operations" (ibid). The importance of "global staffing" for IHRM is explained as follows:

> This interest is stimulated to a large degree by the fact that an appropriate mix of parent country nationals (PCNs), host country nationals (employees from the subsidiary location) (HCNs) and third country national (employees from a country other than the home or host country but operating in the host) (TCNs) can impact significantly on an MNE's ability to achieve learning, innovation and corporate integration. (ibid.)

In other words it is considered granted that individuals are first divided into different employee groups based on their country of origin, and their "optimal mix" is seen as fundamental to accomplish the strategic goals of MNEs. Indeed, international assignments may have many goals and achieve different outcomes. The basic typology is between long and short, and learning and demand driven assignments, where *managerial* demand driven assignments are said to foster *personal innovation*, while in *control* driven assignments it is the *foreign subordinates* who are expected to change their behaviour (Collings and Scullion 2006, 144). Whatever the case, home organisation support has an important role in facilitating and encouraging sharing of social capital upon repatriation (Reiche 2011).

Expatriation and repatriation of international assignees (usually PCNs) are still among the key areas of interest in IHRM. Like expatriate researchers Selmer and Suutari (2011) acknowledge, the rulers of empires have utilised

expatriate "managers" since historic times and the trend of using expatriates is not decreasing, but the more widespread use of alternative forms of international assignments and work forms such as international (virtual) teams have recently received more attention. Although the themes covered in international assignment literature have diversified, it somewhat surprising that relatively little is known about individual motives for selecting international assignments or the various perceptions of expatriates regarding the long-term implications of international assignments for example on their careers (Stahl and Chua 2006), institutional resources needed to support new career forms (Zeitz, Blau and Fertig 2009), not to mention the training of the host-country work force (Brewster and Suutari 2005), or international expatriate assignments outside Western multinationals. Furthermore, IHRM research has been struggling to conceptualise the return of investment from international assignments, because the benefits of international assignments are often related to intellectual human capital that is difficult to quantify (Welch, Steen and Tahvanainen 2009). (Emerging themes in international assignment research, see Collings, Scullion and Dowling 2009; more detailed discussion about various approaches to international staffing, see edited volume by Scullion and Collings 2006.)

Existing functionalist international assignment research has usually approached the topic from a relatively narrow perspective: research has been designed to explain the effects of international assignments in some quantified variables. Traditional views about expatriate behaviour have focused either on expatriate coping processes in order to minimise adjustment and transfer problems, or on management development possibilities of international assignments from SHRM perspective (Peltonen 1998, 5, 15). Level of this analysis has usually been private sector organisation, and those studied have been predominantly educated western men working in MNEs. From critical perspective, one can also note that mainstream views about an international career often used to separate external and internal views about the career, among with maintaining the dualism held between object and subject, and assuming that careers should maintain coherence and order (ibid., 6). However, modernist IHRM research has also struggled with the contradictions between the pursuit of internationalisation and normality (ibid., 49–50).

Quest for strategic IHRM

International assignments are important for IHRM and they have been represented as important career steps. However, international career steps cannot be isolated from other activities and thus there has been a desire in IHRM to integrate different IHRM practices to make IHRM more strategic. Overall, strategic HRM has attempted to draw attention to the added value of HRM itself by emphasising how HRM must be linked to strategy or made strategic to improve organisational performance by focusing on "the influence of HR systems across multiple levels and types of performance metrics" (Lepak and Shaw 2008; evolution and main themes in strategic HRM, see Lengnick-Hall et al. 2009). Especially in European research approaches to strategic IHRM are more stakeholder-oriented and seek to acknowledge the institutional context (Paauwe and Boon 2009). However, although strategic HRM research has been legitimised by claims it has on organisational performance, sometimes being strategic means that the assumed goals of employer organisation prevail over the needs of individuals, sidelining the original promise of HRM: mutual reciprocality between employer and employees (Bolton and Houlihan 2007, 2–3).

All the above also applies to IHRM, which mainly "explores the various strategic choices" in multinational management and international staffing that are focused on improving organisational performance and gaining competitive advantage in international business, including considerations about how standardised these approaches can be or how much the local norms of industrial relations affect them (cf. Collings, Scullion and Curran 2009, 297–298). It is the very SIHRM competence itself that should be turned into a valuable human resource. The place where IHRM is to be practised and studied is assumed to be MNE and usually nothing but NME. For many it is the link between strategy and personnel that make HRM itself special compared with traditional personnel management, and on international level this means an integrated approach to manage people internationally (Björkman and Stahl 2006, 3–4).

Camps and Luna-Arocas (2009) mention that there has been a shift in HRM research from older micro-focus towards "strategic" macro-level, which promises to "demonstrate the importance of human resource practices for organizational performance" with the help of strategy literature

that focuses on internal resources and competencies to allow organisations to adopt specific HR practices to support their differentiated strategy. To maintain the success of their unique competitive strategies, organisations typically require "greater depth and breadth of skills and a higher level of commitment from employees" (ibid.). (Approaches to strategic HRM, see Martín-Alcázar, Romero-Fernández and Sánchez-Gardey 2005.) In SIHRM various integrative frameworks have been offered to integrate the IHRM processes into the overall strategic planning (see for example Schuler and Tarique 2007; the limits of integrative approaches, see Brewster and Suutari 2005). All in all, empirical research studying SIHRM seems to imply that firms pursue different mixes of HRM elements or the so-called organisational drivers and human resource strategy enablers that are said to improve the performance of international operations (Brewster, Sparrow and Harris 2005).

As such, SIHRM is not isolated from IHRD that included international learning and cross-cultural development activities, as it is assumed that developing human resources strategically ultimately leads to increased performance. The pedagogical background assumptions of this thinking usually follow the logic of basic Western learning models. For example in Kolb's (1984) learning cycle knowledge is build in two ways which reinforce each other: through tuition one moves from observations to making generalisations and forming explicit knowledge, and after testing the ideas one builds a tacit knowledge base and might eventually understand something. In Bandura's (1977) model of social learning one must first notice the behaviour, encode it, possibly imitate it and decide how much attention they deserve. Learning models like this tend to emphasise the idealised Anglo-Saxon concept of an independent learner (Jackson 2002, 133). However, like James G. March (1991) once concluded, organisational learning is always a trade-off between the low-risk exploitation of existing knowledge and high-risk exploration of new knowledge. This can create demands for individual workers to be ambidextrous employees who have to face conflicting demands (Holmqvist and Spicer 2013). Thus, it could be that practising IHRD might be more complex than usually advertised in SIHRM books, making the assumed link between strategic learning and performance somewhat questionable.

The logic goes as follows: a bundle of IHRM practices is applied,

something unknown happens, and only this can then be measured and evaluated. Like Boselie (2009) concludes, "[t]he emphasis is on testing the added value of human resource practices using simple input-output models." As critical realists politely remind us, HRM research has a bad habit of treating the workplace as a "black box", where inputs are translated into outputs with no explanation of what goes on in between (Fleetwood and Hesketh 2008). This makes applying IHRM in a given context more like trial and error type endeavour. Furthermore, the reductionistic way of breaking the whole, such as the elements of human competence, into parts has a tendency to ignore the intuitive understanding of the intricately connected complex social phenomena. (Jackson 2002, 72). These black boxes are not only found in the areas IHRM research have been ignoring, such as in the public sector, but tell something about the internal logic of IHRM research.

In short, an assumption emerges that existing mainstream IHRM theory is somehow inadequate and lacks conceptual underpinning (De Cieri, Cox and Fenwick 2007). To improve the situation various fresh theoretical perspectives have been proposed, including economic, social network or social capital and organisational support views, among with critical theoretical perspectives (see later part of Stahl and Björkman's 2006 edited volume for a collection of varied perspectives). In mainstream IHRM research the idea of conducting research has been to test abstract generalisations empirically to find general laws, meaning that IHRM is fond of statistical methods, and it is geared for tracking the so-called best practices to quantify them. One returns to this issue in the metatheory chapter.

2.2.3 Conclusions after the autopsy and limitations of the frame of reference

The bestrew of IHRM vocabulary has been impressive after it was born in the United States of America and started to conquer different cultures and organisations. The purpose of this chapter has been to explore the developments and black boxes of IHRM research to explore the limitations of the frame of reference. As such, the point has not been to explore everything that has been said and done in IHRM, but to point out that it is based on a rather narrow set of assumptions. These views assume that

the natural environment for IHRM is the firm-level internationalisation of Western international business, where the IHRM assist in gaining comparative advantage by focusing on people issues. It is assumed that this internationalisation often takes the form of foreign direct investment (FDI) usually made by Western MNEs (see De Cieri, Wolfram Cox and Fenwick 2007; Tung 2007).

To be fair IHRM has grown rapidly during the past decades or so, and not only has a degree of research in the field increased, but so too has the scope of topics. Still mainstream IHRM research has started to behave like all international organisations are MNEs, or even idealising the complexities of the cross-border operations they are facing (cf. Farndale et al. 2010). Other successful ways to operate across boundaries, such as family business units, overseas networks or organised international criminality have been largely neglected by IHRM (Parker 1998). Furthermore, IHRM vocabulary has been adopted by various other actors, such as governments. In this thesis one explores in what ways IHRM might be relevant outside the shelter provided by MNEs, such as in the public sector context.

In limited public sector IHRM research that exists, for example Fenner and Selmer (2008) summarise that the results of public sector expatriate management research seem to indicate that overall efficiency of individuals together with role clarity and discretion helped psychological adjustment, while role overload had a little effect, and perhaps surprisingly both prior experience and preparatory training might play smaller than expected role in successful international assignments. Common (2011) lists some of the reasons why HRM techniques developed in the private sector might not be applied in the public sector and mentions not just the usual suspects (politics, central control), but also the lack of competence in different cultural, organisational and environment conditions, and the anecdotal evidence of overemphasis on (measurable) short-term results. Overall, Common (ibid.) argues that "the dominant discourse of HRM, as derived from its North American/West European context, lacks universal applicability."

From the perspective of comparative HRM, Brewster (2006, 68–70) has reached somewhat similar conclusions about the narrowness of IHRM after examining what he calls the universalist model of IHRM, and points out that the value of universalist model lies in its simplicity and coalescing research focus on shared goals in symbiosis with the industry. One of

the problems is the level of analysis. North American IHRM research is considered mainstream in IHRM and it usually remains at firm level, while European IRHM acknowledges that also different organisations can have IHRM policies (Brewster 2007). Then again IHRM research drawing form institutional theory tends to suggest that organisations in the same sector in a certain geographical region tend to favour similar HRM solutions because of coercive, mimetic and normative isomorphic external pressures (Paauwe and Boselie 2005). Delbridge, Hauptmeier and Sengupta (2011) want IHRM to contribute in "making sense of the wider socio-economic and institutional context" where practices are embedded (in their case varieties of capitalism). They argue IHRM research agenda should move beyond the enterprise, beyond managerialism, and beyond universalism.

Then again IHRM seems to include some inherent contradictions such as local responsiveness versus global integration, change versus stability, and specialism versus generalist, to name but a few. The paradox view to HRM does not see either/or choices, but dualities to be mollified or dynamically balanced towards the zone of constructive tension (paradox view to HRM, see Evans 1999). In IHRM there is an overarching issue of international talent paradox, where international "globally integrated and yet locally responsive" staff is a rare commodity despite the ever-increasing forces of globalisation (see for example Meyskens et al. 2009). However, from a more critical perspective it is somewhat questionable that the logic of global capitalism is first used to create tensions that IHRM then seeks to manage in profitable ways. Nevertheless, this logic is so well accustomed that the metaphoric device of "tough love" has been utilised in HRM to mediate these inherent contradictions (cited examples, see Legge 2005, 127–129). This can even be perceived as the essence of IHRM; as it is required to stay humane on a local level, but at the same time responding to the sometimes harsh demands of global capitalism, to "think global, act local."

2.3   Moving away from mainstream IHRM comfort zone

After examining what is IHRM mainstream in the first place, it is time to examine things from other, somewhat more critical, perspectives outside the mainstream. This is done because there is some evidence to suggest

that mainstream HRM research has barricaded itself inside its own tightly defined parameter where it can rely on taken-for-granted background assumptions, but when the context changes and one move to analyse IHRM in international public sector project environments these assumptions of the mainstream must be placed under reflexive scrutiny. According to the scientific ideal sketched by Czarniawska (2003, 433) there is what is called mainstream research, usually filling the stream with received ideas and codified descriptions, where "[t]he rules of representations are used literally, strictly and redundantly, to show the reality already in existence (…) confirming the premises known to the readers." In addition there are peripheries of research that include lively small streams, where the reality is under continuous construction and both readers and writers are interpreters who "look for new meanings, shift perspectives, employ irony and metaphors" (ibid.).

Furthermore, from critical perspective it is advocated that HRM should be seen as a "set of practices, embedded in a global economical, political and socio-cultural context" (Janssens and Steyaert 2009, 143; see also Watson 2010). In this chapter the idea is to do precisely that. Critics point out that while HRM discourse favours the increased autonomy of individual employees, it at the same time imposing the values of continuous competition and self-development (Alvesson and Willmott 2002; Fleming and Sturdy 2009). The settler metaphor used in the beginning of this thesis was not selected by accident; as HRM itself is very much connected to the American dream and the frontier mentality it embodies, sometimes containing almost mythical and heroic believe and optimistic desire for the potential of human growth based on individual achievement in working life, and celebrating the creative powers of (Western) individuals at work. These values can be seen to reflect the spirit of a "rugged, entrepreneurial individualism" in HRM, plying to "obscure the less than pleasant reality" (Guest 1990). After all it is the individual who remains after the projects have ended, organisations merged or axed, and the management changed. Furthermore, HRM was born in the same country where the melting pot ideology prevails and it has been connected with the political desire of the country's dominantly white Anglo-Saxon (male) elite to suit their purposes (Kallen 1915).

To move forward one has to step away from our comfort zone and challenge the taken-for-granted. This means challenging the delineation

between micro and macro perspectives in mainstream HRM research where they are commonly regarded as two distinct areas of inquiry (Boxall, Purcell and Wright 2007, 1–4). Following this logic it becomes problematic to navigate the ways from the micro-level of analysis that focuses on individuals and a set of HRM practices to the macro-level that focuses on more aggregate political and socio-cultural context of HRM. A pragmatist solution to this would be to consider the whole question somewhat meaningless, as association (or interaction itself) is what characterises or constructs social entities (see Dewey 1988 [1927]; cf. also Tarde 1962 [1903]; note Latour 2012). Nevertheless, the divine between micro and macro views affect how IHRM is represented and thus the relationship between micro and macro levels is further reflected in the final chapter of this thesis. But next a word about the role of reflexive research strategy that is guiding this research.

Reflexive research strategy revisited

Reflexivity is mentioned at this point because the vocabularies mobilised outside the IHRM comfort zone are chosen to support reflexive research strategy. One has to be reflective when working with theoretical language, consider how it orders the ways of thinking and take account possible alternative vocabularies, the alternative routes of interpretation (cf. Rorty 1989). Because reflexive research is about pattern and fragmentation seeking (cf. Alvesson and Kärreman 2011, chapter 3), various vocabularies can be mobilised to construct and deconstruct interpretations and facilitate reflection, to illustrate and challenge our ways of thinking. Next I try to further defamiliarise myself from familiar frameworks and invoke alternative vocabularies and metaphors to facilitate interpretation and dialectical interrogation of my own position. Multifaceted phenomenon like IHRM in public sector project environments simply cannot be approached with an unambiguous and accessible theoretical frame of reference, as it is unlikely to capture the complexities involved and can even have totalising effects on our understanding.

When it comes to the types of reflexivity employed, Janssens and Steyaert (2009) argue that most reflective practices on HRM so far have consisted of D-reflexivity that is "deconstructing and declaiming orthodox HRM understanding", while R-reflexivity is in urgent demand to develop

HRM. Alvesson (2011a, 108–110) speaks of R-reflexivity where R refers to reconstruction, reframing, reclaiming, re-presentation and rethinking, but most of all provide research with "alternative descriptions, interpretations, results, vocabularies, voices and points of departure." It is being employed to show what is being left out or marginalised by the dominant mainstream. Reflexivity of this type would compare social worlds with others to de-naturalise or even dislocate taken-for-granted assumptions (see Geertz 1983, 16, 77).

Therefore, the structure of the chapter is as follows: Firstly, one moves towards postcolonial theory to consider alternative and critical ways of understand IHRM. Postcolonial theory is adopted because it offers possibilities for R(econstructive)-reflexivity, allowing to illustrate the political-ideological embeddedness of IHRM.[49] Although revealing the cultural identity of IHRM, the problem is that all this tells us relatively little about the praxis of IHRM in public administration. Thus, secondly vocabulary stemming from anthropology is being mobilised to examine IHRM needs of people are in detail especially the considering requirements of project environments. Drawing from a limited pool of Nordic project HRM research and social anthropology studying temporal workers, the chapter introduces the concept of liminality, as it is also recently used to exemplify the position of individuals in project environments. Finally, the possible focal points of IHRM development are identified by examining the IHRM practice areas or the ways HRM researchers and practitioners define and structure the content of perceived IHRM activities. The core IHRM vocabulary of these practices is then supplemented and used to develop theoretical insights later on.

---

49   One could also analyse IHRM theory from a feminist viewpoint; mooting marginalised issues in relation to the IHRM practices (ways to challenge the gendered status quo in management research, see Calás and Smircich 1993). Although not pursued here, feminist theory might help to produce valuable interpretations of the ways HRM practices and discourses shape or strengthen particular and potentially discriminating identities and subjectivities. It might even be refreshing to see feminist empirical research studying how the masculine practices in the public sector order the self-management of bodies in international work, challenging the mainstream canon of international management and administration research than can be considered patriarchal.

2.3.1 IHRM and postcolonial echoes

Now it is time to change vocabularies again and to engage with postcolonial theory that has been introduced in critical management studies to reveal colonialist histories and neo-colonial practices related to international management and management theory (for a good introduction, see Gavin et al. 2011; see also Westwood 2006). Postcolonial theory also promises to link the predominantly Eurocentric discourses and constructions to the wider cultural and political processes. The idea is not only to point out the constructed differences between the West and non-West or the postcolonial motives that are constructed in discourses and practices, but also attempt to study the implications they have on power structures and the ways certain practices and identity constructions are being legitimised (Peltonen and Vaara 2012).[50]

In IHRM literature itself it has for long been accepted that certain approaches to IHRM are more colonialist than others, namely the ethnocentric approach in Perlmutter's typology that places considerable pressure to handle the international assignments of expatriate managers (Ondrack 1985). Practitioners have also remarked that attention should be paid to minimise the potential negative reverberations of IHRM policies that are viewed ethnocentric (cf. Wes and Chizu 2007). Furthermore, in recent years social sciences and CMS have been increasingly influenced by an increasing awareness of Eurocentric assumptions or perspectival nature of knowledge (the so-called Western bias) and an emphasis on the aspects of colonialism that have been previously unaccounted for.

These investigations are connected by the shared interest in anti-hegemonic inclination and share the ethical concerns of the critical tradition. After postcolonial reading of the key texts and efforts of organisational theorists outside the Anglo-American academia to "write back" for the mainstream it has also become apparent that modern organisational theory has "tended to objectify the colonized nations, and the subjects of imperialism", and

---

50   Here neo-Marxist and transnational materialist or feminist accounts of imperialism and neo-colonialism are not included in the definition of postcolonial analysis that usually focuses more on the cultural or textual critique.

even CMS has been (quite rightly) accused of being "a tad Eurocentric" (Mir and Mir 2012).[51]

After years of living and working in Lapland I have slowly sensitised myself to see things through a postcolonial lens. Still, for many in IHRM and administration research this is most certainly not the case. Like the leading (and one of the few existing) critical Finnish IHRM researcher Tuomo Peltonen (2006, 527–528) notes, very little has ever been written in IHRM about power, domination and ideology. Temmes (2008) mentions that the most interesting theoretical problem of the Finnish Administrative Science is to connect the longer-term transformations in the society to the changes in the public administration. Next a postcolonial narrative to interpret the development of IHRM than can assist in this is briefly offered.

Definitions of postcolonialism or postcolonial critique vary, but it is generally agreed that (various forms of usually Western) colonialism has not (completely) ended, but mutated into new forms of governance suited for the postcolonial era. In colonialism foreign lands and people (referred as "the Rest", "the Other", the Orient, and the like) were viewed as different and usually inferior, placed under political control and exploited. Some make the distinction between the postcolonial research agenda and neocolonial practices, where neocolonialism means a new form of colonialism in the forms of contemporary globalisation, usually linked to homogenising cultural imperialism. Usually, it is the political centre using political power to colonise the periphery with various imperial or neocolonial projects. In the fields of science various disciplines have traditionally assisted these colonial projects by creating or valuing Eurocentric or Orientalist knowledge systems (Prasad 2003). As such, postcolonial analysis also has its problems. For example Miller (2001) points out that postcolonial critique often seems to assume that (only) the West is considered as authentically bad, and that it is only the Western influence or the side effects of capitalism and colonialism that spoil the somehow "naturally" good societies. Some have also warned that postcolonial analysis privileges the Other (see for example Fleetwood 2005). But what has all this got to do with IHRM?

---

51   According to postcolonial theory, people who have some issues with the mainstream ideas have to make a choice between the following options: They can either choose to "write back" for the mainstream, remain silent, or try to remain isolated.

Constructions of postcolonial relationships

When interpreted from postcolonial perspective, the development of IHRM can be connected with much longer historical processes spanning for centuries. Approximately five hundred years ago a few European powers divided almost the entire rest of the world into their empires, and to rule those empires they had to practice long-distance control in the forms of colonial administration. When colonial empires collapsed after the Second World War the dynamics of European colonisation could not be nullified overnight. Weakened Europe also had to adopt primarily the American means of long-distance control connected to the techniques favoured by neoliberal capitalism. This coincides with the birth of IHRM as a specific term that, unlike some IHRM researchers who tend to nurture their pet discipline claim, is not a completely unique phenomenon in the history of humankind. Maybe the metonymic logic of substituting old labels every now and then – international personnel administration was replaced by IHRM and so on – has resulted in a sort of unwarranted lack of historical perspective in IHRM.

As Saïd (1978) famously remarked, the whole rationale of cultural imperialism was to transform foreigners into something more European so that they could be governed. Postcolonial theory claims that projects and practices connected with this empire-building have not ended, just adapted to new forms. From the perspective of postcolonial analysis IHRM itself can be connected to both the promotion of neo-colonial (bioeconomic) regime where new economic assets are identified and actively promoted, as well as assisting subtle postcolonial forms of governance often on an individual level.

A short example to illustrate the practices during the heydays of European colonialism might be useful here. In the historical texts of the colonial moment those authors who wanted to develop colonial administration also considered people administration issues. This was also the time when premodern administration was in the process of being supplemented by the practices of modern bureaucracy that was deemed to be impersonal and universal (see for example Hughes 2012, chapter 3). Without delving too much, a textbook example is in the writings of (in)famous French colonialist Marshall Lyautey (1854–1934), who developed theories about

how to use colonial power (including his somewhat dubiously named doctrine called "peaceful penetration"). In his thinking staffing decisions, training of individuals and other personnel issues played a paramount role in the governance of overseas territories. His overall conclusions of how to conduct administration in the French colonies were rather pessimistic when it came to the practicability of specific administrative models. Marshall Lyautey fervently cast aspirations on those "universalists" who were seeking general administrative "method" to be used in colonial rule everywhere. He addresses those who look for a single method for colonial administration:

> Mais, bonnes gens, mes amis, vous n'y comprenez rien, vous n'y avez jamais rien compris ! Il n'y a pas de méthode, il n'y a pas de cliché Gallieni, il y en a dix, il y en a vingt, ou plutôt si, il y a une méthode, qui a nom souplesse, élasticité, conformité aux lieux, aux temps, aux circonstances. (...) Et la conclusion générale, c'est qu'à Paris comme à Hanoi, nous sommes encore loin de la seule méthode d'action pratique, celle qui consiste, une fois trouvé le « right man for the right place », à lui dire : « Mon bon Monsieur, vous êtes le right man, nous avons pleine confiance, voici le but, vous avez carte blanche, ce que vous ferez sera bien fait, ce que vous proposerez sera accepté, les moyens nécessaires vous seront donnés, allez et f....ez-vous des formules. » [52] (Lyautey 1920, 129–130.)

From IHRM perspective one could say, *nur mit ein bisschen anderen Worten*, that various best practices or methods for international (colonial) administration can be developed, but practicing this administration was still very much context dependent. At least that was the message leading French colonial administrators tried to communicate to Île-de-France,

---

52 Author´s informal translation from French to English:
But, good gentlemen, my friends, you do not understand anything about that, you have never understood, there is no method, there is no cliché Gallieni (Marshall Gallieni was Lyautey´s mentor, translator´s remark), there are ten of them, or rather, there is only one method and it is called flexibility, elasticity, adaptation to time, place and circumstances. [...] And the final conclusion, which applies in Paris as in Hanoi, and we are still far away from this one practical method, that is to find the "right man for the right place", and say for him: "My good monsieur, you are the right man, you have the confidence, the goal, I give you *carte blanche*, what you have proposed has been accepted, we have given you the necessary resources, go and show us your solution."

stating that when it comes to colonial administration, one should not get fixated with theories, but to follow (Bismarckian) administrative etiquette: find the right man for the right place, then give him free hands, resources, and courage to get the job done.[53]

As such, postcolonially inclined management researchers have illustrated the colonial institutional origins of the management field. Especially Bill Cooke (see for example 2004) has written about Western people management practices in development administration and management settings in societies that are deemed underdeveloped, indicating that management practices have a role as "global and institutional change agents." Many of these themes have been discussed in Foucauldian genealogies that, although sometimes accused of being reductionist, question the values of the dominant discourse (Bardon and Josserand 2010). For example when studying the developments in military organisations Foucault (2010) observed that the purpose of disciplinary power is to assure and regulate the procedures by which individuals carry out labour. Therefore, it can even be understood that it is the human body itself that the disciplinary power must adjust itself to and learn to modify (pace Reid 2006). European colonial powers then developed, tested and utilised these practices in colonial administration. When the world entered from colonial to the postcolonial era, there was again a need for more delicate forms of governance practices. Interpreted this way, the purpose of IHRM is to assist in developing subtle ways to control and manage work, aiming to use the bodies of individual professionals in governance.

This alternative genealogy of IHRM is presented to increase historicity by pointing out that people and their administration have played a role in the governance of Empires and colonial powers much before contemporary times, and to point out that there is a relationship between IHRM and foreign policy strategies, as IHRM has also been developed to serve the needs of those who have used their political power in the governance of the Other. Like Bhabha (2004, 136) warns, Western nationalistic discourse has a habit of normalising its own colonial expansion and expatiation by

---

53 Other colonial administrators encountered similar problems overseas. For example, there is a rather rueful spymaster´s remark in Kipling´s Kim that at the same time labels natives as irrational and mocks those Westerners who think that knowledge of foreign cultures explain how people behave. Kipling writes that "[t]he more one knows about the natives the less can one say what they will or won´t do."

masking it under "civil progress." One certainly begins to gloss over whether or not IHRM can be understood (to quote Saïd 1978, 95) "as a kind of Western projection onto and will to govern over the Orient", so to speak brother in arms in "an unstoppable European expansion in search of markets, resources, and colonies." Saïd further forewarns that the Other can become a property of the dominant discourse, where it is surveyed almost panoptically from the above describing (quantitative) trends or attitudes; and thus denying the non-Europeans the ability to see the human experience itself and therefore their own individuality.

It has been argued that the HRM itself is a junior partner of globalisation or neoliberal political programmes (see Keenoy 2009). A rare IHRM textbook that touches the theme is written by Terence Jackson (2002, 223), who briefly notes that management in the postcolonial societies remain under-researched, and furthermore that the "[h]egemonic tendencies [of the dominant IHRM] have allowed little voice to be given to the so-called developing countries of the world." It can further be argued that IHRM even embraces orientalist tones when utilising Eurocentric management techniques to govern the Orient. This is echoed in the critical reading of development discourse has been a major tendency in postcolonial analysis (see edited volume by Sachs 1997).

As such, postcolonial theory and subaltern studies can offer insights about how management discourses are connected to the postcolonial modes of international governance where we as geocultural formation define who we are in relation to the rest of the world (cf. Wæver and Tickner 2009). One example of that is the Twinning administration studied here. In the official discourse produced by the European Commission and officials of the member states the benefits of Twinning activities are often said to increase international competence and the project skills base, build international networks, allows to develop own practices, and offer possibilities for marketing and testing new procedures, among other things. Thus, from a postcolonial perspective Twinning can also be seen as an overseas laboratory for EUropean and Finnish public sector to export, test and develop administration.

In tactful international relations liturgy it is considered that "despite the emphasis on the dangerous and threatening others to be kept outside, geo-strategies of the colonial frontier are also evident in EU discourse (...)

where a more positive view of the possibilities of transforming the outside (and potentially even incorporating it) remain evident" (Browning and Joenniemi 2008, 532). As such, actors may hold (bona fide?) colonial attitudes in the Twinning environment, where the co-operation might require the Other conditional mimesis to the governance systems found in EU countries that are deemed better because of their Western origin. This logic itself implicitly legitimises postcolonial forms of governance and link management practices to spatially rooted geocultural formations from where management is being practised and researched.

Critical political geography research notes that it is the individual public policy professionals working for the EU who continuously produce, spatialise and transform the (geo)political category of EUrope (Kuus 2011). On a global scale, these people are themselves a relatively privileged group of Westerners who are producing their world views in their work. However, following Bhabha (2004, xiii) they could also be seen as characters who are so to speak "vernacular cosmopolitans of a kind, moving in-between cultural traditions, and revealing hybrid forms of life." These insights are developed later on in this thesis, but it is worth pointing out that postcolonialism is not a one-sided process, as there are also various forms of resistance against colonising processes, various forms of hybridity.

Acknowledging the hybridity of IHRM and international administration

In traditional postcolonial text there is a clear the dichotomy between Western practices and the Other, but postcolonial authors like Bhabha (2004), Prasad (2003) and naturally the *œuvre* of Edward Saïd, reminds us that power relations affect both colonisers and colonised (cf. also Peltonen 2006). For Saïd the focus was in the discourses of colonisation, while Bhabha (2004) analysed the complex and negotiated interplay involved in postcolonial constructions, arguing that the colonial relationship is "essentially unstable, mobile and conflictual; structured by forms of multiple and contradictory beliefs" where "[t]he Other has always had strategies of resistance, of denial, of re-appropriation of mirroring, of imitation and hybridity, of return and of repositioning" in order to remain different (see also Rhodes and Westwood 2007, 62; Westwood 2001, 274). The Other

is not fixed among all "colonisers", but representations of cultural differences are negotiated and performed in *liminal space of hybridity*, where the theories and ideas from the West get hybridised in the translation process (Bhabha 2004). In practice the result of postcolonial engagements is often complex forms of hybridisation and (re)appropriation. (Jack and Westwood 2009.) This relational view also affects how culture can be conceptualised.

According to Rhodes and Westwood (2007, 62–63) what Bhabha can offer for international and cross-cultural management studies is to acknowledge that colonial discourse is not monolithic or "that the colonized is merely captive of that discourse", and that based on this one simply "cannot assume a stable identity in the Other that [one] could find, know and then write." Bhabha (2004) was warning that the practices of conditionally can create possibilities for a new colonial power, for example by recreating dual economies as the effects of globalisation (cf. Bhabha 2004).[54] As such, one should keep in mind that cultural differences also contain an element of incommensurability. After reflecting the texts of aforementioned postcolonial writers a somewhat different view of IHRM emerges: It could be that IHRM practices performed outside the gaze of mainstream IHRM research are much more hybrid constructions and based on much longer tradition than the mainstream IHRM has implied. As such, IHRM discourses itself reflect the global transformations in the relationships of labour and capital, "a complex assemblage of techniques, practices and strategies" (Mueller and Carter 2005).

From postcolonial perspective the current canon of administration or management literature does not capture the cultural hybridity in its borderline conditions where the discourses of administration are being hybridised and creolised, sometimes mutating into partly a chimeric *métissage,* partly an attempt of resistance of the semi-periphery to include their own experiences about mirroring, re-appropriation and interaction with "the Rest." This also means that complex networks of power relations affect the dynamics of international governance. In this environment public sector expatriates are more than mere vehicles transporting administration practices, as it

---

54 In such a dual economy often characterised by the pockets of wealth, conditional practices where one is either with us or against us either require the restoration of an original cultural identity or neutralisation of differences in the name of universality (Bhabha 2004, xvi–xvii).

is the exposure to the postcolonial environments and interplay with the Other that changes international project professionals themselves, making them inherently different from those working in purely domestic settings.

To summarise, the postcolonial lens to interpret IHRM reveals an image that is far from simplistic. There are those who claim that the dominant discourse such as "mainstream IHRM" always just tries to assimilate everyone to the dominant business world style ideology without questioning the problems of the system where global colonialism is based on the historical structures of the capitalism (pace Banerjee and Linstead 2001). However, like Nkomo (2011) confesses, both the revealed colonial images in management and the proposed counter-images too "often reflect the excesses of cultural relativism." Rather than dismissing all Eurocentric IHRM, one can acknowledge the limitations raised by the postcolonial view and at least aim to make IHRM somewhat more *self-conscious*. Like Johnsen and Gudmand-Høyer (2010) phrase it after reading Lacan, there is a desire for critical HRM research that "explores the consequences of confronting the inhuman core of humanity itself instead of maintaining the humanity of the human by exposing the inhumanity of HRM."

2.3.2 HRM and people in project environments

To recap, so far postcolonial analysis has helped to reveal the hybridity of IHRM and its historical and geographical embeddedness. However, postcolonial analysis is often concerned with so broad themes that it does not always help to understand the lived experiences of individuals working in international environments, or in liminal space of hybridity itself. Like Foucauldian research reminds us, HRM techniques also have a role in actively constituting individuals as objects that can be managed and controlled (Townley 1994, 83). It is argued that understanding the IHMR needs on individual level is important, because common attributes usually connected to network management, like power, knowledge and trustworthiness are often person-specific (De Cieri and Dowling 2006, 24). HRM has been accused of marginalising the individual worker and some imply that HRM might be a wolf in sheep´s clothing, partly because the terms associated with the so-called harder variants of HRM sometimes bode ill for the workers who constitute those human resources (see for example

Guest 2008). However, these individuals can also reflect their own position because they are what March and Simon (1958, 29, 210) once called "adaptive, reasoning beings."[55]

Psychologically oriented HRM research has acknowledged the active role of individual, but often neglected the wider contextual framework shaping the work setting, or aimed at (rather instrumentally) bring individual knowledge for organisational use (Syväjärvi et al., 2007), or worse, slipped towards theoretical reductionism (Alvesson and Sköldberg 2009, 37). It has been pointing out that the problems one has with psychological contracts between employer and employee are causing problems for individual workers (see for example Vakkala 2012; more about the problems of the concept, see Conway and Briner 2005). The main distinction in HRM literature is between transactional clearly defined contracts and relational, implicit and more informal forms of psychological contracts (Guest 2008, 133–134). When it comes to the impact of context, Krone (2007, 220) makes a remark that in project environments there are indeed many psychological contracts, meaning that individuals "have to facilitate for the option to balance one self between the needs of contracting forces (…) which will go most likely beyond their work setting."

From a rather different direction, global labour process theory (GLPT) inspired research has recently also begun to ask how employees experience new organisational forms and management techniques in an international context in an attempt to expand the study of labour processes to the value chains in international economy (for a short summary, see Peltonen and Vaara 2012). This is after the whole research tradition was accused of missing the subject. Following Braverman's (1974) original structuralist deskilling hypothesis, labour process theory sees employment relationships as a means of power and exploitation to elicit efficacious labour from the employees (cf. also Adler 2007). However, Braverman's ideas were soon found somewhat simplistic, not least because disregarding various people aspects like emotional labour (see Hochschild 2003, 10). When employers try to solve the Marxist problems of transformation and appropriation by

---

55 On a more philosophical level one could ask what status one gives for individual subject (see for example Gergen 2009, chapter 4). Maybe, like Rorty (1999, xviii) following Dewey (2012 [1929]) suggests, it is counterproductive to make the distinction between what is inside us and what is outside us, as focusing on that duality is not very pragmatic.

exerting control over employees, the process also creates harmful resistance. This in turn is seen to require more sophisticated management tools such as giving autonomy to individual employees to increase their loyalty, and development of various other subtler and "softer" people management practices. For Braverman (1974, 146) HRM was barely a "mythology."

Furthermore, institutional labour process theorising was prone not to be very culturally sensitive and unable to take the social values of individuals into account. In the meantime various processes of globalisation arguably affected the ways employment relationship had to be conceptualised and the interpretative/linguistic/narrative turn was taking place in the social sciences. As a response GLPT is still suggesting that capitalist people management techniques have problems delivering autonomy and self-fulfilment for the employees, but GLPT has recently moved in a more interpretative direction studying the role of subjectivity in reproducing social structures (Peltonen and Vaara 2012). The aim would be to consider the lived experiences of individuals whilst not forgetting the wider politico-societal context shaping the working life of individuals (cf., Hassard, McCann and Morris 2007). One could begin by theorising how individuals experience international projectification of work, and in this the ideas of interpretative anthropology start to show their utility. To take the often stifled voices of individuals into account when building grounded understandings of the human impact of temporary work, project research has begun to adopt the vocabulary of anthropology. One key concept is the idea of *liminality*.

The challenge of international liminals

Term liminality originates from the field of social anthropology, where it refers to the threshold stage. Social liminality can be seen in terms of subcultures that are distanced from the mainstream, such as peripatetic (those who walk around) workers who join community for a while before moving on. Then again cultural liminality originally referred to the rites of passage between different stages of life, often in tripartite structure involving separation, liminality and reincorporation. In anthropology liminality has been used as a social metaphor of passage, and it is argued that it is potentially always dangerous because individual´s status remains

undefined. (Winthrop 1991.) According to project researcher Lindkvist (2005) projects are knowledge collectives of diversely skilled professionals with a minimum amount of shared knowledge and a common clearly defined problem to solve. In these knowledge collectives project professionals as individuals learn and accumulate experience in their efforts at solving specific problems. At the same time, individuals are required to cope with the associated demands of flexibility and mobility. In short, project work is a working arrangement resembling liminal condition (Bredin and Söderlund 2011).

Drawing from the work of anthropologist Victor Turner (1979) it seems that individuals can craft liminal moments, and that they often exist in the margins and the interfaces. For individual´s perspective liminality can be experienced as "plural, fragmentary and often experimental." For Turner liminality is a cultural apparatus where the familiar and unfamiliar symbolic realms of human life exist simultaneously. Liminal spaces are also privileged because of their characteristic increases reflexivity, meaning that individuals in liminal spaces have an increased possibility to think of their situation or normative social structures because their normal role and status structures are altered. This in turn tends to stimulate the exploration of new possibilities, but also strong feelings (which might not always be perceived that positive).

Another anthropological term closely related to liminality is the concept of "cultural island." According to Kurt Lewin (1947) it is characterised by a purposeful isolation of a group from the larger cultural setting to buffer members from interference by that larger setting. During their separation from a larger setting of the organisation individuals undergo a transition process where they can unlearn and relearn a set of norms. Now, it does not require a great deal of imagination to metaphorically envisage international projects as "cultural islands" and "liminal spaces."

As social anthropologist Christina Garsten (1999; 2008) who has studied temporary workers explains, in project environments the position of liminality means a situation where the project worker is continuously betwixt organisations or moving between projects. These people working in projects might become more affiliated with the project sphere than some permanent position within fixed organisational settings. In other words, project professionals can turn into project vagabonds used to permanent

liminal conditions, and detached from work where the sense of liminality does not exist. If successful, these project workers can self-manage their phases of transition, including the possibilities to play with work and identity, or cope with the negative features of weakening power and reducing access to organisational resources. They become what Garsten calls "*liminal personae*" or simply "liminals."

After participant observations on an organisation situated on the Germany-Poland border, ethnologist Richard Rottenburg (2000) has extended the role of liminality to people "doing business in an auspicious liminal space" in transformation, "where inherent frames of orientation are remade." In these liminal conditions making classifications was difficult, only "considered valid by their users because, as long as they provide the necessary framework for dealing with life situations, they work." Rotenburg called this a state of aporia, which was hybrid and exiting for some, incomprehensible alterity for some. Classifications in this limbo worked when the space made itself permanent, and when aporia prevailed one could choose to exit and even re-enter the temporal liminal state.

Czarniawska and Mazza (2003) conclude that also many employees in contemporary work life, such as consultants, can experience similar liminal limbo. Beech (2010) has proposed a composite understanding about liminality taking account both social anthropological and management research considerations, where the dialogical and identity construction dimensions in the liminal state of in-between-ness are highlighted. This view of identity work can include experimentation with the liminal constructs and projects of identity, reflective considerations of the views of others, and questioning or recognising own positions. This is part of the social construction of identity in project environments where an identity is projected onto the liminal position.

This is also connected to the transforming nature of both international work and international assignment. In these liminal international project spaces people may become neither insiders nor outsiders in the traditional organisational sense, but in between or in transition, making the HR and knowledge flows rather complex. As an extreme case, the popular metaphor of seeing individual workers as nomads is misleading, because nomadic tribes usually move with their community and have a strong sense of belonging to their environment (Bennis and Slater 1968), something individual

project workers sometimes lack.[56] Based on empirical evidence the so-called global nomads mentioned in IHRM literature commonly seek refuge in cosmopolitan expatriate communities, and can develop a certain allegiance to their group of peers at international level, but they still have to adopt new environments and norms during their new international projects, and form new relationships sometimes from the scratch as they move in (work) life that has become a continuum of international assignments.

It was also implied by anthropological research that the relaxation of rules and openness for novelties in liminal spaces fosters innovation, which might explain why the term is gaining momentum as management literature buzzword. People in these work arrangements are also self-reflecting the pros and cons of their liminal experiences, as liminality itself allows and forces individuals to this sort of identity work. The management implication is that the gains from project assignment might be more unexpected than the rigid HR planning assumes. Czarniawska and Mazza (2003) suggest that the liminal experiences increase the repertoire of representations available, but the problem is that individuals cannot reflect on their condition, as the organisational rites do not allow for this.

Without introducing the rites, one might end up in a gloomy situation depicted by Sennett (1998), where achieving moral identity becomes difficult. Then again the introduction of rites that help to contain the harmful effects liminality can result in routinised liminality. Turner (1974) implied that this quasi-liminal character of cultural performances that take place in complex societies could be labelled as "liminoid group effects" that take place continuously. The point to be made is that the traditional perceptions and structures of work are often dominated by the patterns supporting the relatively fixed positions of regular employment, not liminality that is found in international project environments.

---

56 Deleuze and Guattari (1987) propose a more philosophical definition of nomads as someone who have made *nomos* their home and arrayed themselves in an open-ended space. They also seem to hint that nation states usually try to vanquish international nomadism or institutionalise it to serve as their war machines (broadly defined), often by utilising imperial functionaries, mercenaries or ambulant workers. According to the same authors, these people are often territorialised by granting them land (usually colonial) and their services are determined by fiscal regimes.

HRM in project environments

Next one turns attention to the context of work in project environments and looks how HRM produces meanings about the role of individuals and management in that context. From the Nordic context of HRM practice and the research tradition of social constructivism some generic HRM implications of projectfication can be drawn. However, project environments are complex: the relational nature of psychological contracts means that there is a whole web of psychological contracts, as there are various stakeholders, blurred roles between involvees and employees, and projects spanning organisational and sociocultural boundaries. As Whitley (2006) notes, project organisations "often rely on outsiders for completing individual tasks, but retain a core group of employees for initiating, organizing, and conducting separate projects." The role of distinct HRM function would seem to be related to ensuring environment where project professionals can be involved in their personal development, and ensuring that this suits the needs of permanent organisations to generate HR flows and performance (cf. Bredin and Söderlund 2011, 157–159). Welch and Welch (2012) have highlighted that role enactment of HR managers in international projects is context-specific and questioned the divide between strategic and operational roles, while also pointing out the emotional dimension of HR work.

Bredin and Söderlund (2011, 32–33) identify six main features of projectification of work and their HRM implications. First, goal-orientation of projects makes the evaluation of individual workers and performance appraisal tricky, and investments in employee welfare important. Secondly, team-orientation and knowledge-intensity increase the requirements to continuously develop competence. Thirdly, the temporary nature of projects changes HRM and is not only limited to the importance of managing the flow of human resources in terms of recruitment, staffing and end-of-assignment duties. Fourthly, projects are often interdisciplinary and cross-functional, leading to the problems of affiliation, control (if that is perceived as a problem), and knowledge development. Fifthly, project environments are often tensional, because what is good for the permanent system might not be it for temporary projects. Sixthly, multi-employment nature of project environments means that the scope of HRM is expanded

to manage very different kinds of people involved in projects. These HRM effects of projectification are mostly managerial implications, but the collective nature of HRM in project environments means that the focus of HRM has to be broadened as more people than dedicated managers can be responsible for HRM.

Furthermore, based on their extensive empirical study Bredin and Söderlund (2011, 154–157) have identified four strategies the project professionals themselves have developed to cope with temporality and liminality: reputation reliance, role carving, relaxation, and redefinition. Reputation reliance is related to the perceived reputation of project professionals when they enter new context, and closely connected with the HRM practice areas concerning the flow and development management. Role carving is related to the strategies where project professionals carve the role for themselves, to increase role clarity which is deemed to affect performance management. Relaxation strategy implies that individuals decide not the get excessively involved, which does not really resonate with the high-performance and high-commitment rhetoric of mainstream HRM. Redefinition strategy for coping with liminality is to actively reformulate the perceived project problems to suit one´s purposes; to define the project goals in a way that project worker´s or team´s performance can spark in productively.

Projectification of HRM also brings us to another key theme in HRM: the emergence of boundaryless careers where the idea is that individuals themselves are expected to actively and consciously construct their careers and self-manage their work in international context (boundaryless careers, see Zeitz, Blau and Fertig 2009). This might have deeper implications for IHRM than one might assume, as when individual "owns" her or his career, it changes the psychological contract and the ways it can be managed (cf. Jokinen, Brewster and Suutari 2008). It is already acknowledged that it might be fruitful to approach careers in project environments from the perspective that highlights the continuous process of earning, the successful completion of projects, and building project reputation (Bredin and Söderlund 2011, 59). It also means that apart from larger transformations and changes in technology, the locus of HRM is moving away from a purely organisational level.

For example the idea of boundaryless careers promises a more flexible view of careers beyond organisational boundaries, thus providing a more

embracing view of what constitutes a career. IHRM research sees the concept of boundaryless careers problematic, pointing out that the role of institutional resources supporting such careers is often neglected, the concept is applicable only to the minority who can build their individual career capital and have the human capital to leverage their skills (Inkson et al. 2012; Pringle and Mallon 2003; Zeitz, Blau and Fertig 2009). Furthermore, the role of international staffing to facilitate knowledge diffusion is well recognised in IHRM literature, but the capabilities of creating social capital in a sustainable way are often ignored (Collings, Scullion and Dowling 2009). Then again discriminating career mechanisms have not exactly disappeared but might be becoming subtler and more difficult to spot, meaning that the new career rhetoric and maintenance of career boundaries seem to coexist, and empirical research indicates that employees are still offering or at least triggering new career opportunities for individuals (Dany 2003; Cappellen and Janssens 2010).

From a more critical perspective Hassard, McCann and Morris (2007; see also McCann, Morris and Hassard 2008) have studied the subjective interpretations of the actors at the employee level in MNEs, suspecting that there has been convergence towards the Anglo-American model of individualised employment and flatter hierarchies in line with the post-bureaucratic ideal. They note that people reported experiencing increasing workloads and more stress on fragmented project environments. This was seen to indicate that global capitalism is intensifying labour processes or at least that the projectification of work can be destabilising for the employees as they experience increased role demands, work intensification, and reduced job security. Arguably HRM has been at least partly producing this negative impact of projectification. However, so far international project HRM has been approached in quite general way. Next one tries to identify and problematise specific HRM practices that constitute HRM, as these are used in theorising later on in this thesis.

2.3.3 Theory meets practice areas: Focal points of IHRM development

From Foucauldian perspective Townley (1994, 4) once asked what constitutes the unity of HRM and then answered that the perceived unity of

HRM discourse serves a way of ordering in a functionalist organisational mechanism. As such, generic topics considered important in HRM and that form traditional HRM practice areas can be problematic because they promote the universalist view where it is assumed that HRM is similar around the world. Furthermore, applying certain labels can have homogenising side effects on the construction of roles or entities, or assuming common interests or values (cf. Greenwood and Anderson 2009). Tayeb (1995) has suggested that it is the sociocultural context that offers a repertoire of management practices and styles to choose from, but their implementation is culture specific. For example the Finnish public sector has not adopted any specific IHRM model, but instead often made ad hoc adjustments to existing HRM practices based on ways the role of HRM or personnel administration is understood.

Like Jarzabkowski (2005, 157) reminds us that when individuals participate in frameworks of meaning to understand things, the framing activities involved also legitimise what sort of activity is not legitimate in a given context. To expand, critics might want to stress that the "meta-ideological nature of management studies" is evident when one labels things to create artificial borders and sets of rules used to limit and self-discipline; functioning "as a praxis to uphold a set of preconceived, often moral notions regarding management, organization and the economic, and does so in a way that makes it believe its understandings of the world represent objective knowledge-production" (Rehn 2008). When De Cieri, Fenwick and Hutchings (2005) claim that the biggest difference between IHRM academics and practitioners is that the former group usually attempts to realign IHRM focusing on research issues like cross-cultural management or comparative HRM, while the latter group hopes to develop the functional elements of IHRM, they fail to mention that these functional elements nevertheless determine how IHRM is conceptualised in the practices of organisational life that one seeks to study.

As such, when IHRM is conceptualised as a cultural frame, practice areas are not mere technical instruments of personnel management, but more like cultural artefacts or symbolic constructions produced by specific ideology. Like anthropologist Anthony Cohen (1985, 101) observed, when it comes to symbolic constructions "[s]imple ´historical´ labels are made to describe complex and often ideological messages." For Cohen members

of the community occupy their own worlds of meaning, which have to be understood by conceptualising what it feels to belong to a culture. In reflexive research one should exercise a certain degree of defamiliarisation towards these social constructions (see Alvesson and Kärreman 2011, 44). This means avoiding seeing labels as purely natural, frozen or rational reductions, and trying to approach them as something purely arbitrary and exotic. Therefore existing assumptions about IHRM can allow a focal point in problematisation (cf. Alvesson and Sandberg 2011.)

In short, this interpretative view implies that ideas of shared management practices such as, *faute de mieux,* IHRM contain ideas in symbolic forms that make it possible to attach meanings to the phenomena that take place around us: we interpret and symbols as mental constructs make it possible to make meaning (cf. Cohen 1985). As such, in the worlds of IHRM there are interpretative communities or cultural frames constituted by shared vocabularies or symbols. For Cohen (ibid., 21) these symbols are effective precisely because they are imprecise. Following Czarniawska (2009) it could be that the power of popular management ideas is that their symbols are imprecise enough to allow an inscription to yet another context in the process translation. Too tight a definition and the concepts lose their general appeal. Next HRM practice areas are examined from this perspective.

Fabricating HRM practice areas

As such, in both the well-known developmental humanist or "soft" HRM models of the Harvard school and the utilitarian-instrumentalist or "hard" HRM model of the Michigan school include remarkably similar practice areas. Like Brewster and Larsen (2000) point out, the names and lists of HRM practice areas show only small variation, the difference comes from how HRM is itself conceived and operationalised. The core concepts of strategic HRM were encapsulated by Fombrun, Tichy and Devanna (1984, 41), who identified "generic functions performed by human resource managers in all organisations" and took these to analyse the strategic level. These were strategic selection, performance, appraisal and development. Harvard school fourfold-typology of HRM policy areas by Beer et al. (1984) includes employee influence, human resource flow (into, through

and out of organisation), rewards systems and work systems.[57] Placing all HRM and workplace relations under four policy areas can leave some of numerous HR functions outside the classification (Sädevirta 2004, 122). Furthermore, it is important to point out that these models are predominantly positivist with realist ontology. For example whist accepting that personnel function comprises a series of seemingly disjointed activities, Beer et al. (1984, 16) claim that their model explains the "broad causal mapping of the determinants and consequences of HRM policies" (see also Legge 2005, 337).

This basic fourfold typology is adopted and modified to project environments by Bredin and Söderlund (2011) to conceptualise HRM practice areas in Nordic project organisations. Where Beer et al. (1984, 154) define the work system as their fourth HRM policy area as the "combination of job tasks, technology, skills, management style, personnel policy and practices (…) determining how work is organized and managed, how employees will experience work, and how they will perform", the classification of Bredin and Söderlund (2011) incorporates the work setting of project context. They have changed the tittle of rewards policy to more fashionable performance management, kept flows, replaced employee influence with involvement, and as a sign that HRD is now part of HRM, added development into their conceptualisation.

For Bredin and Söderlund (2011) management of flows refers to the flows of human resources in and out of organisational boundaries and projects, and internal flows such as mobility or job rotation within projects. Management of performance concerns the design of the work settings to allow perceived high performance, including appraisal, feedback and reward systems to enhance work performance. Involvement as a HRM practice basically means that individuals are expected to be involved in decision-making affecting their work conditions. Naturally European legislation requires this and the Finnish public sector has long traditions in enabling the "democratic" work place involvement of employees. Finally, the last practice area of project HRM is development, such as competence

---

57 The organisation researcher behind the Harvard School HRM referred here is Michael Beer. It must be pointed out that he is not the same person as Stafford Beer, who studied management of cybernetics and adaptive organisations. Sadly, there has not been much interaction between their studies.

and career development. Sometimes in the Finnish public sector it seems that "soft" HRM issues like development activities are not fully integrated into the other practice areas, but clearly this varies. Although these are rather abstract for core HRM practice areas, the idea is to configure these four main dimensions of project HRM to deliver a specific bundle of HRM practices.

When it comes to purely domestic HRM, for example Syväjärvi (2005, 85–86) summarised the following core HRM functions in the Finnish public sector: planning, organising, evaluation, development, negotiation, compensation, health & safety, and systems (cf. the main HRM models from US and UK sources, see Legge 2005 chapter 3.). IHRM, on the other hand, is a somewhat different beast and like we have seen there are many ways to classify it. For example in Finland Smale and Suutari (2011) have identified four "core perspectives" of IHRM the respondents of a Finnish HRM barometer of 2010 adopted when describing the challenges of internationalisation: talent management perspective, leadership development perspective, diversity management perspective, and integration perspective. However, there is not much evidence that the aforementioned HRM models have been implemented consistently, but they can be understood "as a cultural constructions comprising a series of metaphors redefining the meaning of work and the way individual employee relate to their employees", therefore forming part of the commodification process where appropriate employee identities and belief systems are constructed (Legge 2005, 122–124). As such, the HRM practice areas also provide material for the cultural frames of IHRM that are used in interpretative sencemaking activities.

In this research after a preliminary analysis of the interviews and getting some comments from the field I decided to adopt the fourfold model of Bredin and Söderlund (2011) as a framework for critical dialogue, because their model has sought to bring together the Nordic style of collectivist HRM and social constructivist project research. Like Lindgren and Packendorff (2009) point out, in project environments the nature of leadership is often shared (or "joint") and project members share people management responsibilities. Accepting the basic assumptions of social constructivism shifts the attention to the relational processes of co-construction as the bases of collectivist leadership styles. The fourfold typology of Bredin and

Söderlund (2011) is later modified accordingly when the contextualised IHRM frame is being constructed in the proceeding chapters. To sum up, one has to understand the context to understand the IHRM frame. This is why attention is turned to public sector context.

2.4   Concluding remarks of theoretical discussion

This theoretical discussion has mobilised multiple vocabularies to examine IHRM in public sector project context. Although the context of IHRM in this thesis is the Finnish public sector and its operations abroad, the effects of public administration context have not yet been thoroughly reflected. When considering IHRM in the public sector, one has to look how public administration is being conceptualised in public administration theory, and then examine how IHRM fits into this picture. Compared with the private sector context public management is said to include more bureaucracy, a stronger desire to promote public welfare, a different decision making system that is connected to the political system, and vaguer goals because of policy ambiguity (Boyne 2002; Ring and Perry 1985; Virtanen and Stenvall 2010, 35–39). The state has also been associated with legalistic or even paternal and often more collectivised and standardised style of HRM (Boyne, Poole and Jenkins 1999). That said, how one understands public administration can have quite profound implications; Richard Sennett (1974) once made a bold claim that the key to understand Western civilisation is to understand the distinction between private and public.[58]

To generalise, the grand narrative of public administration in Western countries can be summarised as follows: ideal public administration used to follow the logic of neutral bureaucracy, which was partially followed by some sort of NPM ideology, which was then updated and transformed by governance styles arguably suited for the age of networks (see for example Osborne 2006 and 2010; cf. Virtanen and Stenvall 2010; see also Pollitt and Bouckaert 2011 for neo-Weberian elements in public management reforms). That said, one should be vary of what du Gay (2003) calls "epochal thinking" that not only oversimplifies things but even legitimates

---

58 According to Sennett a key element of Weber´s bureaucracy, Protestant work ethic, has also been mostly replaced by narcissism in contemporary Western societies.

managerial attempts to colonise the lives of employees. Like Astley (1985) has wryly pointed out, these different theories also "reflect the kind of interests and problems that investigators have been trained and schooled in" (ibid.). Scholars studying the field can either choose to adopt the grand narrative for their purposes, dismiss it or parts of it, or to adopt it as an indicative storyline to analyse the representation practices and their consequences. In this thesis I have attempted to do the latter, summarising the developments of IHRM (or international personnel administration as it was once called) and its relationship to public administration. It should not be forgotten that international element of administration is nothing new, although the research studying it has been characterised to be in "an embryonic, pre-paradigm state of development" (Kim 1999, 239).

Furthermore, public sector reforms often intermingle, or like Peters (2011, 30) elegantly summarises: "the layers of reforms, and reinterpretations of previous reform, create internal complexities that may make managing in the public sector an ever more difficult task." Research from institutionalist perspective reminds us that the content of the concepts of public administration are sometimes quite hollow or impossible to define; often the ways actors conceptualise them reveals more about the use of power in legitimising various institutionalising solutions (Pollitt and Hupe 2011). However, like Hood (2005, 8) cynically observes, the "mysteries of essence and the corresponding theological issues begin to emerge" when one goes beyond the "utilitarian and innocent-seeming catch-all formulations" and tries to figure out the relationship between the concepts used in public administration (see Pollitt and Hupe 2011; cf. also Simon 1946).

For example in this research, a certain frame dispute occurs when IHRM frame is brought to the public administration frame, but the characteristics of this frame dispute depend on, among other things, on how public administration is being represented (cf. Greener 2013). Following Richard Rorty (1989) one can consider that the way forward is not to force these vocabularies together, but to utilise them to establish a new public sector IHRM vocabulary. As a word of warning an alliance of IHRM and public administration might contain the elements of a fatal love affair; desirable feelings might arise, but things can end up in disenchantment. From critical perspective Alvesson and Sveningsson (2003) suggest that unlike bad management, the situation where management produces ambiguity

in work life is not always remediable. With these issues in mind is it now time to summarise the relationship between IHRM and main ways to conceptualise public administration in the West before examining things from the perspective of governmentality.

Traditional public administration

Traditional public administration theory is connected to the rise and long-anticipated fall of hierarchic and impersonal public sector bureaucratic organisations (post-bureaucratic view, see Budd 2007). The dominance of the rule of law and guidelines (norms) were in place to guarantee the hegemony of professionals in public sector delivery, and government wanted to be viewed as a model employer where employment was stable and continuous (Osborne 2010). When serving bureaucratic requirements, personnel administration is associated with the compliance-based systems of control to ensure efficiency in centralised and mechanistic organisations, where personnel administration is mainly concerned with creating detailed job descriptions, implementing payment systems, maintaining stable career and promotions structures, and participating in the procedural regulation of industrial relations (Johnson 2009, 22).

However, despite the long history of traditional public administration model, it usually regarded the international dimension as an anomaly. This was maybe understandable in an age when only public servants with international experience were diplomats, officers and customs officials. It is not that traditional public administration organisations have never operated internationally, but most organisations in question had very ethnocentric or home country-oriented approach to overseas operations. For example, in quaint Foreign Office with a strong home base and workforce consisting mostly of parent-country nationals, foreigners were hired as gardeners and chauffeurs. International personnel administration intended to make sure the right people were posted to the right post, paid their salary and international allowances. Occasionally, they were involved in cleaning the mess, in case some scandal or *force majeure* made it impossible for some individuals to be posted overseas and continue their work. It seemed as if international people management only became evident when problems arose.

Furthermore, traditional international public personnel administration often had certain colonial undertones. For example traditionally (Finnish) diplomats have not spent too many years in a single post because of the ingrained risk of "going native", a term originally used by the colonial administrators to indicate moral weakness. It could be described as a condition where an expatriate identifies too strongly with the locals (see Chapman, Gajewska-De Mattos and Antoniou 2004, 294–295). The traditional international personnel administration is not optimally geared to utilise the "local knowledge" and participation in "native culture" of locally hired personnel, despite their growing demand which cannot be explained solely by the lower cost of these employees compared with government expatriates. As such, international personnel administration was public sector IHRM *avant la lettre*, and not without any merits. When personnel in an international organisation were fairly homogeneous, it could have been possible to standardise people administration procedures.

New Public Management

It was during the New Public Management (NPM) inspired reforms when HRM entered the public sector. In most OECD countries public sector reforms after the 1990s were based on (a loosely defined) neoliberal NPM ideology, although the motives for NPM inspired reforms in the Nordic countries have often been something other than implementation of purely neoliberal ideology (CMS inspired summary of NPM critique, see Evans, Hassard and Hyde 2013, chapter 3). However, many of these reforms have been "perverted by economic-political forces" (Sager 2005). The focus of NPM was the effectiveness of intra-organisational processes and management in service delivery, formed around the views of accounting, and focusing mainly on resource allocation based on the logic of the marketplace (Osborne 2010, 8–10). (Typology of NPM doctrines, see Hood 1991).

It has been argued that in public sector HRM these "new institutional arrangements show the gradual conversion from centralized HRM to a decentralization with strategic HRM" (Kim 2008). However, at the same time when NPM inspired public administration reforms in many countries have targeted the bureaucratic structures traditionally associated with the public sector to provide and encourage greater flexibility in the manage-

ment of human resources, personnel management reforms have often been lagging behind (Common 2011). Furthermore, it has been noted that skills shortages increasingly affect governments' capacity to conduct public policy, especially if the emphasis is on service-wide capabilities (Freyens 2010).

When it comes to the internationalisation of public administration, international institutions such as the EU and OECD have been advocating the adaptation of NPM not only in Western Europe, but also in countries involved in international co-operation with them. Hays and Plagens (2002) note that most HRM reforms in the age of globalisation have migrated from private to the public sectro, and globalisation processes might place public administrations in all countries on the same arena. Some have argued that in this situation the task of educating a new group of "globally minded [public sector] HR professionals is a sine qua non" (Kim, 1999). However, there has been very little evidence of public sector adopting private sector IHRM in any larger scale to develop international operations.

Furthermore, NPM has been accused of promoting overtly instrumental and managerialist practices for the public sector, offering nothing but outdated private-sector techniques in an increasingly plural world (cf. Osborne 2010). As it turns out, individuals working in the public sector also effectively fight NPM by utilising the tensions of different subject positions, enabling them to "assert, deny and rewrite the subject positions offered" (Thomas and Davies 2005). Outside the affluent societies of the Western world it has been noted that the "approaches to HRM are often incompatible with the indigenous value structures and customs that prevail" (Lavigna and Hays 2004). Thus it is no wonder that alternatives for NPM have also been sought.

Networked governance view of public administration

From the perspective of Administrative Science governance view can mean both networked way of administration from the perspective of public management (Osborne 2010), but also various governance theories of Political Science that often focus on the role of social actors in governing (Peters 2011). These various vocabularies of governance theorising are not easy to compartmentalise and can cause interference. Still, although governance as a term has been practically impossible to clearly define, it has proved

to be extremely successful among academics and public sector leadership (Pollitt and Hupe 2011).

From the perspective of public management traditional public administration has been influenced by NPM inspired reforms, but there is also a more fundamental shift taking place: one is arguably entering the age of pluralist network governance, where the emphasis is on negotiation of values, meanings and relationships in networks spanning the borders of single organisations (Osborne 2010). Governance also often takes place in transnational environment (Stone 2008). For example when non-profit organisations or private firms are used to deliver services, several public sector organisations in many countries co-operate to formulate policy goals (cf. Goldsmith and Eggers 2004).

This has also sparked criticism. It has been claimed that network governance undermines the role of state as provider of the ethical component to public management, namely the ethos of a bureaucratic office (du Gay 2007). Critics argue that governance view is suited to serve the (neoliberal) ideology of globalisation, itself limiting options for policy-making (Spicer and Fleming 2007), and seeing government "as only one institution among many in a free market society" (see Stivers 2009). It could be argued that in network governance international networks might be fragile because of weak network links or prone to undemocratic practices because of lack of transparency.

Stone (2008, 30) advocates that attention should be paid to the role of individual agents of policymaking in transnational policy networks who are required to understand the different decision-making milieu and have cross-cultural sensitivity, master different modes of communication in various policy venues, and use information technology heavily. Arguably the hybrid character of these people compared with "traditional bureaucrats" can make them "more difficult to control." Stone (ibid., 33–34) concludes that there is very little discussion "regarding the different qualities and capabilities" of the actors in the policy networks of international governance.

Governmentality as an underpinning view to analyse administration and management

From academic perspective governance view has certainly been influenced by the ideas of network governance in the age of globalisation, but also

by the emergence of governmentality theorising that comes back to the Weberian ideas of the ways individuals come to govern themselves. Thus, one can also approach governance from another perspective and ask why some things in contemporary societies are defined as problems that require interventions to the lives of individuals by the management or some other socially legitimate authority (see Miller and Rose 2008). Some also argue that the administration has been transforming, like Zygmunt Bauman (2011, 55) neatly summarises, to a governance epoch where direct domination has been replaced by non-engagement, and where the models of self-supervision are being used to keep the objects of domination on course. Conceptualised that way, governmentalist research can offer a framework to study how broad concepts are translated into the practices of governance.

The concept of governmentality was first used by philosopher Roland Barthes, then adopted by Foucault who embodied the conception power and knowledge in the term govermentality, "a neologism derived from a combination of 'government' and 'rationality'" (Tonwley 1994, 6). After his history of governance lectures in the late 1970s, where Foucault also introduced the concept of biopolitics (see Foucault 2010), govermentality theorising was further developed by London governmentalists clustered around Nikolas Rose (see 1990; cf. also Miller and Rose 2008). They concluded that "governmentality – as discourse and practice – cannot be restricted to the state" such as power cannot be located in a specific place (history of governmentality, see McKinlay, Carter and Pezet 2012; governmentality inspired interpretations of both HRM and the governance of public servants; cf. also Barratt 2003 and 2009).

It is the capitalist modernity than usually represents the most important "Other" in these considerations (cf. Ssorin-Chaikov 2012). It has been argued that after the epoch of direct colonialism various organisational technologies are utilised in governance for the benefit of the neoliberal "West" and that this also sparks modes of resistance, requiring organisation studies to broaden the unit of analysis to focus not just on the individual organisation, but translocal spaces in general (see Banerjee 2011). When theorising governmentality, Foucault expressed his well-known hostility to theorisations about the state, also rejecting the Marxist notions of labour as a concrete essence of life. Instead it should be studied how power is exercised over individuals in the changing practices of government where

power circulates in networks (Jessop 2006). Gramscians have even suggested that if biopolitical regulation fails traditional disciplinary power fills the (assumed) power vacuum (Davies 2011).

To summarise, these various theoretical ideas offer different and distinct and in some cases intermingled vocabularies to conceptualise public administration and the role IHRM might have in it. From traditional public administration view one would examine the role of international personnel administration in a bureaucracy. NPM view would underline the management element in IHRM. Governance view of public administration would problematise the role of IHRM in networked administration. Some of these different ways to conceptualise IHRM in public administration are summarised below:

IHRM in traditional public administration	IHRM in NPM style settings	IHRM in networked governance
Dominance of standardised norms and bureaucratic processes	Dominance of accounting logic and resource thinking	Dominance of network thinking and the logic of information society
Supports stable employment and permanent organisations in the public sector	Introduction of private sector management techniques and tools	Reliance on self-management and more collective management styles
International work rare and approach to international assignments ethnocentric	International work often limited to specific units or international organisations	Work spanning the borders of individual organisations and nation states
Personnel administration seen as administrative function unrelated to foreign policy	Managerial attempts to strategise international work but problems to measure its value	Problems to develop integrative approach to manage international work

Figure 2. Indicative ways to conceptualise IHRM in public administration

As such, all classifications offered here are indicative as there is both lack of wider empirical research and conceptual uncertainty surrounding these issues. However, each conceptualisation of IHRM in public administration offers different ways to translate IHRM into the practices of governance. This underpinning way of approaching governmentality must be seen as a perspective that links various management and administration themes and

practices that construct and shape contemporary governed human subjects so that they can be governed, asking what makes a nexus of disciplinary practices called IHRM acceptable in a given context. From this perspective "[t]he focus of study is techniques rather than institutions, practices rather than intention (...) how individuals and their activities become organized and translated" (Townley 1994, 18). It is said that HRM discourse has a role in constructing subjects as self-regulated entrepreneurs and consumers on a flexible and global labour market that allows governance at a distance (see for example Grey 1994; Fogde 2010). Because of the international dimension of administration in public sector IHRM, one should also turn attention to the transnational apparatuses of governmentality (uses of the term in this sense, see Ferguson and Gupta 2002). Some of the implications of this are explored later on, but before that one proceeds to the methods section of this thesis.

3   RESEARCH PROCESS AND METHODS

Paul Feyerabend (1975) once polemically claimed that "there is no method" in science by explicitly attacking the notion of "scientific method" or indeed any method that does not encourage variety. Instead he endorsed artistic creation as a means for discovering or even changing the features of the world and called for anarchist epistemology to guarantee the development of science.[59] As the years go by one surely begins to grasp that ultimately there might not be any best way of doing research. The point to be stressed here is that methods do not just describe, but also help to produce the reality that they seek to understand, and in so doing performatively co-create social realities. Thus, one can argue that methods in social sciences that try to describe ephemeral and elusive social realities with methods assemblage that does not capture their diffuse and messy nature in this production only make a bigger mess (Law 2004). In scientific texts there are always pressures to deny this complexity of the empirical material, representing nothing but a neat, ordered – and therefore usually misleading – picture (cf. Macdonald and Hellgren 2004, 273–274). As Nietzsche (1974, section 2) would have said, research should avoid divesting "existence of its *rich ambiguity*" (emphasis original).[60]

The purpose of this chapter is to illustrate the road and help the reader to get a *Fingerspitzengefühl* of the relevant issues considered to reach the goals of the research. The idea is to oppose the heritage of positivism and naïve empiricism that give unnecessarily important role for "collecting" (producing) excessive amounts of "data" (empirical material) piled up to

---

59 From his rather anti-positivist position Feyerabend regarded that the distinction between theoretical and observation was "purely psychological." As Dadaist as Feyerabend´s theses might sound, he was merely pointing out that it is often nearly impossible in science to argue against anything goes approach (see Gellner 1992, 110–111).

60 This is also why in this thesis boxes of text, bullet points and other devices of that sort that often contain an almost patronising inclination to simplify complex social reality are utilised as little as possible although they are sometimes useful.

get a big sample that can then be analysed using standardised methods.[61] Instead more reflexive mode of doing research is advocated, one where one should rely more on dialogue between theory and empirical material, acknowledging that they are sutured, deceive inseparable elements of the research process, both inspiring critique and insight for reflective interpretation.

One also has to address some main limitations that often afflict the method chapters in qualitative research, because qualitative research has been criticised for its lack of generalisability, objectivity, replicability and validity (see for example Zalan and Lewis 2004). Furthermore, qualitative research is in trouble if it tries to utilise standards originally developed for positivist, quantifiable natural science experiments (cf. also Grey and Sinclair 2006). Like mentioned, in this research reflexive methodology provides an undercurrent to tease out interpretations during the whole research process, while the most important goal of the empirical material produced by the interview method is to help the researcher to make "the theoretical reasoning more sensitive and empirically relevant" (Alvesson 2011a, 146). This is not because dreary empiricism would be too time consuming, as reflexive research strategy is not at all an effortless endeavour; it is an intellectual project and in qualitative research the cognitive processes are difficult to both capture and codify.

The structure of the chapter is as follows: First, the role of reflexivity in interpretation is explained. Secondly, use of methods is assessed focusing especially on the epistemological weaknesses of the interview method and transferability to the other contexts. Ethical issues are also alluded to, but the purpose is not to polish the image of the researcher; it is hoped that by openly acknowledging that research is always full of ethical compromises adds to the credibility of the research process. Thirdly, information of the production of empirical material is given, also explaining sampling deci-

---

61 Strictly speaking there is a difference between methodology and methods: Methodology can be connected with wider epistemological issues or "the science of finding out" (Zalan and Lewis 2004, 508), while methods can be seen as "a mode and a framework for engaging empirical material" (Alvesson and Deetz 2000, 4). The word method comes from the Greek word methods, meaning "the pursuit of knowledge", originally "pursuit, following after" or more literally "road with a purpose", from meta- "after" and hodos "a traveling, way." According to (the later) Heidegger (1960, 99) "[d]as Bleibende im Denken ist der Weg."

sions and the use of Twinning professionals as informants. A compendious statement of the additional methods used to catalyse the research process is also given. Finally, metatheoretical issues are examined not only to increase metatheoretical awareness, but also to make sure that metatheoretical positions are congruent with the research design. The limitations of the research are also considered in the end of the thesis.

3.1 Reflexive interpretation and research process

Let me clarify the role of interviews in reflexive research strategy first. Overall, there have been calls to represent the ambiguity of interviews in a written report (see for example postmodern critique of research interviewing, see Scheurich 1997, chapter 3). To achieve this it is suggested that one should move towards interview methods where the outcome is reflexive knowledge (Hertz 1997), and where one acknowledges that one is ultimately only studying representations (Denzin 2001, 833). As such, interviews do not allow the data collection of some external reality, because language cannot convincingly mirror reality, and thus all reflexive research can do is to generate vocabularies that help us in understanding (Gergen and Gergen 1991; see also Rorty 1980). This is because in interviews people "draw from cultural resources in order to produce a morally adequate accounts" (Alvesson 2011a, 19).

Therefore making a single "best" interpretation cannot be made based on empirical material, but many alternatives, some stronger and more interesting, allowing approaches from different angles. Central to methodological approach is using reflexivity as a "strategy for dealing with the consequences of the anti-foundational epistemological position that all knowledge is situated and contextual product of contingent representations", and thus seeing research as a process of opening up for multiple voices where knowledge is a product of co-production in active negations of meanings (Phillips et al. 2013, 8). Still, many contemporary organisational researchers have struggled with the question of how to actually conduct reflexive research (Rhodes 2009). Like Cunliffe (2003) notes, discussions about reflexivity often focuses on philosophical issues about the nature of "reality" and knowledge, effectively neglecting issues about the implica-

tions of reflexivity in research process where researchers have to make truth claims and construct meaning in reasonably transparent way.[62]

The process of reflexive interpretation

When one moves beyond the threshold of empirically oriented currents (which often means producing safe, trivial and data-close results), reflective interpretation steps in. Weick (1989, 524) has argued that the contribution of social science lies "in the suggestion of relationships and connections that had not previously been suspected, relationships that change actions and perspectives." This way of looking at empirical material means that its dialogic qualities are emphasised. As such, interviews are form of co-production (Silverman 2006), and reflexive researcher should reflect upon performative roles in this co-production of meanings (Denzin and Lincoln 2008). As mentioned previously, this research process has rested on abductive reasoning, containing iterative back-and-forth movement between elaborating vocabularies of theoretical discussions and producing interpretations based on empirical materials (cf. Van Maanen, Sødersen and Mitchell 2007).

The interpretation begins by following the logic of (theory oriented) content analysis, which is a suitable when data accessibility is a challenge (Holsti 1969, 15). Moreover, content analysis studies communication as a perception of socially produced reality, where the content emerges in the process where discourse relevant to the context is analysed (Krippendorff 2004, 19, 33). As such, the content was coded through setting categories and analysed to find themes, shared understandings and meanings. This was a starting point where the interviews were listened many times. In this research empirical material was divided to coding units related to the themes under interpretation. Content analysis is utilised here because it is a robust empirically rooted method, a method recognising that it is the researcher that ends up interpreting the results. This leaves interpretative researcher in sort of hermeneutical circle of recontextualising, reinterpreting

---

62 There is one CMS scholar, certain professor Alvesson, who has written quite extensively and much more than anyone else about a wide array of topics related to operationalising reflexivity in empirical research. That is why considering the issues he has raised seems appropriate although I do not always follow the same route.

and redefining until "satisfactory" interpretations are reached, resisting the particular sequence of "analytical" steps (Krippendorff 2004). This was only the beginning of reflexive interpretation.

In the framework of hermeneutical symbolic–interpretative organisational analysis the meanings also have to be placed to specific social framework (cf. also Harisalo 2009, 45). This reflective interpretation has also been informed by more critical research orientations to destabilise the taken-for-granted and considering alternative points of departure. For me hermeneutics consists a symbolic movement in the hermeneutical circles as part of the abductive testing and fulfilling of the pre-understanding and the relationships between the part and the whole (hermeneutical process, see Alvesson and Sköldberg 2008, 134). Rorty (1980) initially argued, quite convincingly I think, that hermeneutics is needed when one is dealing with incommensurable discourses, making hermeneutics a way of coping. Later Rorty (1991a, 102–103; italics original) concluded that the term hermeneutics is somewhat outdated as "*all* inquiry is interpretation" anyway, and all thought consist is recontextualising what lies to hand. However, following hermeneutical principles can make interpretation more systematic.
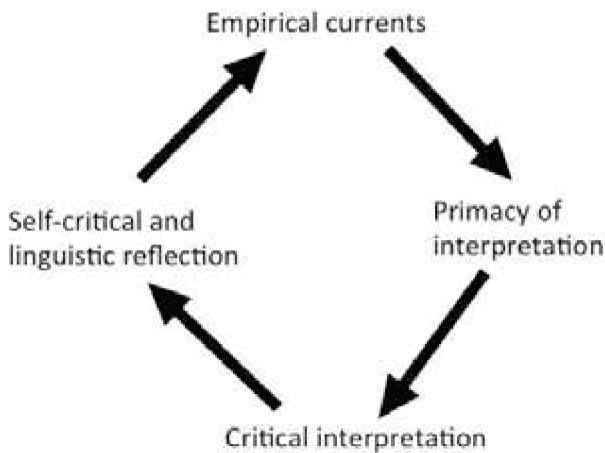

Figure 3. Symbolic hermeneutical movement and reflexive interpretation process simplified

3.2   Assessment of methods

One has to point out once again that reflexive research has to be evaluated based on its own standards. Alvesson and Sköldberg (2009, 304–305) suggest that instead of rigorous overemphasis on data-handling procedures, reflexive research should be evaluated on the basis on how it acknowledges the ambiguous nature of the social world, allows different ways of interpretation, and produces concepts and metaphors to help others to characterise this previously poorly understood social phenomenon. Czarniawska (2010) also maintains that the conclusions research provides should be evaluated in terms of what is interesting, novel, credible and respectful. This calls for contextual and holistic research, which points towards qualitative methods that are more sensitive to the context and useful when studying perceptions in socially constructed social reality (see for example Bryman and Bell 2007, chapter 16).

Quantitative mainstream IHRM research has already produced impressive statistical studies providing little information and even creating more confusion, often sidelining views that do not focus on IHRM in Western MNEs. Instead, European HRM scholars like Boselie, Brewster and Paauwe (2009), Paauwe (2009), Janssens and Steayaert (2009), and Bredin and Söderlund (2011) advocate the use of ”small-scale, contextual studies and a more inclusive, value-based understanding of employees, managers and other stakeholders” such as this research (some advantages and misconceptions regarding this approach, see Flyvbjerg 2004). When it comes to transferability of the interpretations based on the empirical materials produced in this research, I would be prudent when attempting to transfer the findings of this study directly outside the original North European context. However, what can be done is to utilise theoretical considerations of this research to spark further reflection.

Assessing the interview method

There are numerous technical problems in interview research, but from reflexive viewpoint the biggest problems are by far epistemological (see for example Alvesson 2011a). From social constructivist position one can approach interviews as local mere social encounters and accomplishments,

a situated role-playing and impression management where the participants construct linguistic empirical material (localism in interview situations, see Silverman 2006, chapter 4). Some have advocated the use of more phenomenological approach to study experiences, but my background is not in psychology and I am not so confident with the phenomenological theory of subject (psychological approaches to study experiences, see edited volume by Perttula and Latomaa 2005).[63]

Mainstream of qualitative interviewing still often follows some revised neo-positivist approach where interviews are used instrumentally. Even those interviewed sometimes seem to expect this and research participants are often tempted to adopt a particular role in interviews. What is known as the Hawthorne or experimenter effect means that the persons who attend the study also attempt to study the activities of the researcher and adjust what they say accordingly (see Van Maanen and Kolb 1985). Also, what is known as the Pygmalion effect refers to the situation where the perceived behaviour that is expected of another person is often the behaviour that is then obtained (Rosenthal 2004). The original Hawthorne programme led to recommendations about sympathetic interview techniques that are still today echoed in guidelines for HRM professionals to obtain the spontaneous convictions of workers in practices that can be seen to constitute individuals as governable subjects (Rose 1990, 71; Townley 1994, 112).

The localist critique has pointed out the simple observation that language constructs phenomena, which means that different interviews must be viewed in their local context, but also that different local contexts of talk are produced during the different parts of the interview. Indeed, from a localist position to research interviews one can argue that interviews provide an order how social world could be assembled (Baker 2001), a discourse showing particular views of constructed social reality (see edited volume by Grant, Keenoy and Oswick 1998). Furthermore, there is a danger that the interviewer as interrogator, sometimes together with those interviewed, subtly manipulates the social situation to legitimise the chosen stories and then uses the interview research to validate theories.

---

63 Instead, from governmentality perspective one should "examine, not subjects, but technologies of subjectivity" while still recognising that the idea of "human subject as individuated, choosing, with capacities of self-reflection and striving for autonomy, is a result of practices of subjectification" (Miller and Rose 2008, 7–8).

After assessing the known problems of interview research, a way forward proposed here is the utilisation of reflexive methodology, where empirical interview techniques are utilised to produce empirical material, which is then reflectively interpreted while considering the local context of the interviews and the position of the interviewer. This means that the approach adopted to interview research is interpretive interviewing, where the role of empirical material (some call this data) is to work as a dialogical artefact of interpretations especially when dealing with issues that are problematic in existing theory (see especially Alvesson and Kärreman 2007; cf. Alvesson 2011a and 2003; Alvesson and Deetz 2000). In the end, the researcher also has to master the basics of interviewing techniques (see for example Holstein and Gubrium 1995). Unfortunately the premise that perfect interview technique guarantees perfect research seems to be false, or at least perfect interview technique is highly situation specific. In a pioneer study like this more structured interviews might not have captured the complexity of the issue. However, relatively open interview situations are also problematic, and they are being criticised to be descriptive fishing expeditions.

I decided against highly structured interviews because, although their use arguably makes analysing the results easier, they seldom offer newfangled results (Alvesson 2011a, 52). When it comes to semistructured interviews in business research, Bryman and Bell (2007, 475, 500–501) conclude that the method has been popular among "feminist researchers", because is suitable for studying different meanings of subjective experiences and perceptions and can establish a high degree of reciprocity in a flexible way without diving into the "time-consuming and intensive" realms of ethnography. When interviewing, I tried to be a good listener and not to control the interview situation, as some argue that interviewer should move beyond control to somehow reach deeper experiences and honest accounts (Schalbe and Wolkomir 2002). However, people may feel authentic when they are only reproducing a cultural script (Silverman 1993, 96). All this means that research interviews cannot be elevated to higher ontological status.

Ethical issues

It has become a commonplace to write about methods in research reports and ethical considerations are an integral part of any qualitative research

(basic ethical dimensions in social research, see Diener and Grandall 1978). However, from a somewhat more critical perspective it can also be seen as a sign of whitewashing. Rhodes and Westwood (2007, 80) consider in Lévinasian sense that making international and cross-cultural management research truly ethical would require to abandon the quest "to render the cultural Other knowable such that s/he can be managed." As such, they see international management research that fails to accomplish this as an example of postcolonial knowledge system that is "used to categorise difference" in ways that "at best privileges knowledge over ethics and at worst destroys ethics with knowledge" (ibid., 82). Thus, in this research the main purpose of ethical considerations is to minimise the risk of the latter while considering the consequences of the former.

Naturally in this research ethical conduct means that empirical material is carefully handled to respect anonymity and maintain certain integrity during the research process. Unfortunately being ethical is much more complicated issue, although some think that their work is ethical simply because they perceive themselves as ethical and good people. This is an unfortunate and rather naïve misconception. In social sciences reflexive researcher interrogates texts and empirical material that are not only given, they are sought and found, and therefore open to manipulation or bias. Science and technology studies researchers claim that science is all about the manipulation of inscriptions and statements (Law 2004, 27). It is acknowledged that researcher has to use mild manipulation in social situations, especially in interviews where the interviewer uses her insight in social interaction with different people, sometimes reducing the people interviewed to mere objects if the complexities of producing social constructions are not considered (see Alvesson 2011a, 125, 148–149).

In HRM literature the dangers of instrumental conduct have also been raised (see for example the edited volume of Bolton and Houlihan 2007). To avoid these pitfalls calls for some sensitivity and understanding about the complexity on behalf of the researcher, and this has to go deeper than simply codifying "data." Therefore, to be reflexive one also has to acknowledge that research, at least in social sciences, is political and has certain aims research wants to promote. When it comes to the international aspect of the research topic, postcolonial theory warns that research methods are never innocent and that there are real dangers if the other is exoticised or

"extracted from the mundane local conditions elevated as marvellous and unique", or assuming that the nature of things at home is the natural one (see Westwood 2004, 61). In the end IHRM practitioner and especially researcher might be wise to consider that there might be cross-cultural issues that are better left unmanaged.

3.3   Producing empirical materials

The group targeted in interviews of this study is being examined next before moving on to give information about the interviews. As such, this is a research about the international aspect of public sector projects. It seems that that those in the Finnish public sector interested in international projects often accumulate their international experience, but the core group with international experience remains rather small and even cloistered portion of the workforce. Furthermore, there is a long on-going debate about how and by whom their work should be managed, or left unmanaged (see Greener 2012, chapter 6). Overall, the international experience of the people interviewed probably placed them in a better position to interpret Finnish public sector practices, because they had developed an outsider view during their international assignments that allows them to look at things from another angle. Next, relevant information on the interviewing process, the employment of supporting methods, and the group targeted in interviews is given.

Group targeted in interviews

In this research the sample targeted for interviews was limited to Finnish professionals who had experience of international work in Twinning projects.[64] In short, they are often reflective practitioners who as human actors are an important part of the distributed agencies of international

---

64 Twinning was not chosen accidentally, but practical issues such as access also played a decisive role. To assess the possibilities to study IHRM in the public sector project environments different government offices were contacted and help was provided from the Finnish Ministry of Finance Office for the Government as Employer, HAUS Finnish Institute of Public Management Ltd and the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland EU Enlargement and West Balkans Unit. None of these agencies mentioned financed this research, but were nevertheless willing to provide their input at the beginning of this research.

administration (reflective practitioners, see Schön 1983). Is this research Twinning is an example of public sector project environments through which one approaches the *problématique* of understanding IHRM frame. As such, Twinning can be seen as example of emerging forms of international network governance. When is comes to governance development in EU candidate countries, its design was shaped by membership requirements designed to make the common marked work and peer pressure among various shareholders of European governance (Verheijen 1999).

Twinning instrument was launched in 1998 to support institutional building in accession countries and to complement the previous TA (Technical Assistance) and TAIEX (Technical Assistance and Information Exchange) instruments. Since then Twinning projects have grown under the auspices of European Union's Directorate General for Enlargement, with aims to "facilitate an exchange of best practices and experiences while at the same time reflecting the Union's policy priorities," while encouraging partner countries in "the establishment of networks based on a partnership where nonetheless the beneficiary country is the driving force for change."[65] After recent rounds of Eastern EU enlargement the geographical focus of Twinning projects has shifted from Central and Eastern European countries (CEEs) to support also EU accession and neighbourhood policy goals in the Balkans, Maghreb region and Eastern borderlands. The rules of the Twinning program clearly state that the "human resources made available to BC [beneficiary country] partners must therefore be fully integrated with the MS [member state] administrations" (European Commission 2009, 61), but no further advise how this "integration" of HR should be done is given.

The busiest years of Twinning were just before the large EU Eastern enlargement from 2002 to 2004. Before 2010 there had been over one and a

---

65 Fundamental Principles of all Twinning Projects (European Commission 2012, 15):

- A Twinning project is NOT designed to provide only advice or other types of classical Technical Assistance. It is a project of administrative co-operation in a specific field that must yield MANDATORY RESULTS.
- A Twinning project is NOT one-way Technical Assistance from MS to BC. It is a close partnership in which the specific commitment of the beneficiary, who is also the driving force behind the changes targeted, is vital.
- A Twinning project does NOT aim at replicating a particular MS administrative system but rather strives to help introduce EU wide best practices in connection with EU legislation.

half thousand Twinning projects and Finland has been involved in around one-tenth of those. Those Twinning projects covered in this research mostly took place during the last decade. In Finland Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland Twinning team now acts a national contact point co-ordinating Twinning project networks. In a typical Twinning project with a budged less than €2 million project worker from a member State administration or other approved body works full time for up to two years in the corresponding organisation in the Beneficiary Country to help implement an agreed project with targeted objectives.

According to the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland statistics there had been total of 136 Twinning projects in 19 countries with Finnish participation between 1998 and 2010. Of these 56 had been in the Baltic countries and many but by no means all of the rest in Central and Eastern European countries. Sector of the Finnish Ministry of Finance had participated in 46 projects, sector of the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health in 19 projects, sector of the Ministry of Interior in 18 projects, sector of the Ministry of Environment in 14 projects, sector of the Ministry of Transport and Communications in 15 projects, and the sectors and agencies accumulating the rest. Overall, around two dozen organisations in the Finnish public sector had participated in Twinning projects.[66]

The core group targeted in interviews had worked as a Resident Twinning Adviser (RTA), a civil servant (or a public sector professional) from a member state administration mandated body, who has worked in the beneficiary country (the beneficiary of the Twinning project) on a full-time basis for at least one year. Although most people interviewed had been on long term international project assignment, sometimes for many years, I purposely did not limit the group of people interviewed to only ex-RTAs as some others also had long international project experience but had only worked as project managers and/or short-term experts in Twinning projects. Many had also worked in other roles in the Twinning environment such as project leader or a high-ranking official in the member state and beneficiary county respectively, who directs the implementation of

---

66 European Commission Directorate General Devco and ELarg websites provide a comprehensive Twinning statistics, see http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/where/neighbourhood/overview/twinning_en.htm and http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/taiex/dyn/taiex-events/library/detail_en.jsp?EventID=48413. Last checked 30.3.2014.

the Twinning project, or had worked as a manager of the public sector organisation engaged in Twinning activities, or in the national Twinning project office, or as public temporary employee in a Twinning project, or as the head of public sector agency or its international operations. When it comes to the administration of Twinning projects, it is worth noting that many of those interviewed also had some experiences of the administrative challenges in Twinning projects that they reflected. Of the organisations that took part in this research, especially National Institute for Health and Welfare and Finnish Institute of Public Management have been during the recent years also marketing their experience of project administration for public sector actors.

The purpose of this study was to study generic IHRM practices and experiences, not to make comparisons between different public sector organisations, different types of projects in different countries. Furthermore, to secure anonymity the detailed information of specific projects is not given, but indicative information that does not allow identifying specific projects can be seen in Figure 4. It must be noted that many people interviewed had participated in several Twinning projects in various roles, and many of those interviewed did not speak solely based on their own international assignment experience, but were encouraged to reflect the role of international projects in their home organisation. These Twinning projects took place in various countries, and the countries listed are those specifically mentioned by the people interviewed.

To be more precise Finnish specialists initially worked in the Central and Eastern European countries, most notably in the Baltic countries, Poland and Hungary, and later on in Croatia, and then in other EU neighbourhood countries. It can also be noted that old contacts from the administrations of the beneficiary countries of Finnish Twinning projects have later been working as partners with Finland in later Twinning projects. Lower pay level in Baltic countries such as Estonia has been a factor here. Some Twinning projects were joint projects with other EU member states; most notably Finland had partnerships with those countries that had stronger existing historical relationships with the beneficiary countries in question. This further increased multicultural element in many Twinning projects. To secure anonymity more specific information of these joint projects is not given.

Time frame	Sector of administration	Beneficiary country
1998–2002	General capacity building, traffic	Estonia, Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland
2003–2006	General capacity building, traffic, finance, health and social, statistics, revenue, justice	Estonia, Croatia, Latvia, Hungary, Romania, Slovenia, Slovakia, Turkey, Tunisia
2007–2011	General capacity building, finance, traffic, health and social, revenue, justice	Croatia, Turkey, Egypt, Serbia, Armenia, Jordan, Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

Figure 4.General information of the Twinning projects in question

As such, the choice to interview also some of those international project specialists without longer term personal Twinning related international assignment background had certain advantages, and not only because people in project environments are often collectively responsible for HRM (Bredin and Söderlund 2011). Firstly, the rules of Twinning require a personnel to hold a certain level of experience, and that experience could then be reflected in interviews. Most notably many had line management experience involving HRM responsibilities. Secondly, people with Twinning background are not limited to single organisation, but work in many specialist and management positions in various public sector organisations. Thirdly, because Twinning is not limited to Finland, there is a future possibility of doing a comparative study in other EU member state to examine European HRM. Furthermore, studying people outside a strictly defined key group can nevertheless offer more viewpoints and richer empirical material of the phenomena (Alvesson 2011a, 125–126). To recap, the group studied had experienced exposure to international governance during their career and had worked in EU project environments tackling international governance issues.

Information of interviews

Interviews comprise in-depth interviews with 22 project professionals talking mostly about international project work and governance, international assignments, HRM, and public management. Interviews were performed

in 2011 and 2012. After taking into account the limits of the interview method and surveying the group targeted one can conclude that enough relevant people were interviewed to allow an encompassing understanding about the IHRM in the context of Finnish Twinning activities that formed a basis for further critical reflection. Those coming from positivist perspective sometimes think that larger sample size automatically increases the generalisability or validity of the research, but it must be pointed out that it might be better to have an in-depth understanding about a smaller sample than a superficial hunch of a larger one (ensuring validity in qualitative international management research, see Andersen and Skaates 2004).

Although there is diversity among Finnish Twinning professionals in terms of field of speciality, professional background, and gender, the similarities where more striking: Twinning professional were educated in the Finnish school and university system, they were products of the same homogenous (predominantly white, Protestant and Finnish) national culture, usually had two decades or more work experience in the Finnish public sector which means most of them had experienced somewhat similar legal, financial, political and cultural constrains, shaping their professional development. Naturally, as is the case in the Finnish public sector (excluding only the highest positions) those interviewed were not predominantly male, but it was decided not to pursue gender issues more in this research.

Interviewees were approached with formal e-mail explaining the purpose of the study and asking permission for anonymous interview. Finnish national contact point for Twinning provided assistance in identifying possible interviewees. To establish contact with more people snowball sampling was also utilised (snowball sampling, see Morgan 2008). However, some people also refused or did not have time to be interviewed, and it is impossible to say if their attitude towards IHRM would have been different. The approach chosen for the interviews dictated that interviews were performed in relatively informal nature, various emerging themes were pursued during interviews and questions were not always placed in the same form and order.

A thematic guide guided all interviews (see appendix 1. for more information, some considerations regarding the interview guide, see Kvale 1996, chapter 7). In the first interviews themes mapping the context of Twinning projects and their management dominated, while people issues

were pursued more in later interviews. However, those interviewed always told about their own personal experiences, meaning that each interview was a unique social encounter. Individual interviews lasting around an hour were recorded using a digital audio recorder, and recordings were processed in digital forms, unless the interviewee asked to say something off the record to allow deniability. After the interviews contact details were exchanged to allow the interviewees to add something to their account. For confidentiality reasons only author´s private personal computer was used to store and handle these digital files and research report was written to secure anonymity (ethical issues in data handling, see Kuula 2006).

Interviews were slightly modified in the course of producing empirical material. The interviewing process started with a pilot interview with a high-profile experienced public sector professional. The task was to test themes, but I did not allow the pilot interview to bias the research process. After the pilot interview questions were slightly modified to probe people´s experiences of IHRM in project environments using a broad set of questions, which were further actively modified during the interviews to pursue interesting themes. Dozen interviews were conducted this way until produced empirical material was analysed using basic content analysis (cf. Krippendorff 2004). Considering these preliminary results the attention of last interviews turned more towards the themes identified, but still maintaining a broad approach to the set of phenomena studied and allowing the possibilities for the interviewed professionals to find their own way to tell their experiences. Overall, the interview process proved to be a good learning opportunity, but it was not the only source of information.

Employment of supporting methods

Modern science once sought to claim that (administration) science is pure, objective and factual. The qualities eliminated from science were often localised in the poetic or literature categories that should be kept away from analytic scientific text. Scientific work with too many metaphors, too figurative an expression, and argumentation relying on style should simply be avoided. However, the dimensions of human experience are multifaceted and creative forms can enhance our capacity of understanding by providing

us with symbols to conceptualise the research topic (Broussine 2008).[67] As such, there has been "an acute awareness that doing research must be expanded to include those artist-like processes that are already there, but filtered out of ordinary research writing" (Steir 1991, 4). Hermeneutical tradition acknowledged this ago time ago and often turned to poetry to assist interpretation. This was before the linguistic turn in social sciences and the crisis in representation that followed, accompanied by surplus deconstruction and endless vanity reflections about reflexivity.[68]

However, what did happen was that academic and literary genres and practices started to more forcefully interpenetrate. Czarniawska (2010) summarises the trend by observing that the reflexive character in genre-construction means that one still utilises textual devices that are considered scientific, but in addition research writing can include blurring of the various genres to encourage rejuvenation. It is what Clifford Geertz (1983; see also 2000, chapter 5) observed when writing about the problems of local knowledge in anthropology, noting that outside the mainstream genres began to blur and hybridisation continues. Furthermore, taking social constructivism seriously has expanded the methodical toolkit available to inquire the construction of meanings from multiple perspectives (Gergen 2009). Sometimes these tendencies have been labelled as "creative methods", probably because getting too creative can create a great deal of trouble. It has also been acknowledged that researchers should not hide their own subjectivity after acknowledging that individuality of researchers is just one more social construction and that our descriptions of ourselves and others are dependent on the linguistic resources that are available (Rorty 1999, 236–237).[69]

---

67 Following Deleuze and Guattari (1993, 133–135) Latour (2013, 250) moves on to argue that the beings of fiction that are capable of travelling everywhere make the so-called scientific vision of the world possible.

68 An illustrative example of this was the so-called writing culture debate in anthropology (initiated by Cliffort and Marcus 1986).

69 This was a popular theme in the work of Foucault, and emancipatory social science that followed aspired to develop new ways of writing. For example a feminist scholar Hélène Cixous (2013, 54) aimed to develop *écriture féminine* that was seen as a way to move to the other side of the limited discourse, while Judith Butler (2006, 29) claimed that there is nothing radical repeating normalised language that makes sense for everyone. For better or worse other feminists have also been experimenting with this textual strategy.

In this research along with interviews also other cultural texts such as naturally occurring texts (like administrative documents) and talk have been utilised as a supporting empirical material to strengthen the empirical underpinnings (role of various types of empirical materials, see Moisander and Valtonen 2006, chapter 4). The meaning of the term "text" that can be interpreted in critical hermeneutical tradition that serves qualitative and critical management research has been considerably broadened to include not only written documents, but as is the case "also social and economic practices, culture and cultural artifacts, institutional activities and structures" (Gopinath and Prasad 2012). It is acknowledged that combining variety of sources and research methods make the results of qualitative research more reliable (see for example Hirsjärvi and Hurme 2001). To do this I utilised official government and European Union documents to get a better idea of the norms and standards of involving international governance and public sector HRM policies. Furthermore, I unofficially contacted and started months long conversations with older project professionals with various backgrounds to build a pre-understanding of the topic. Finally, I attempted to keep my writing open to other genres to find alternative ways of representation. However, considering these alternative methods is not enough, as the research process is also connected to metatheory.

3.4   Metatheoretical considerations

Unfortunately, researchers in Administrative Science are not usually encouraged to openly reflect upon their metatheoretical underpinnings, although many fundamental questions about research are connected with metatheoretical questions in social sciences. When a Finnish social scientist hears a word metatheory she often thinks about epistemological and ontological issues and might feel that it is a dry subject. As such, metatheory means problematising interpretative patterns or reflecting theory from meta-level (Alvesson and Sköldberg 2009, 276). To simplify, ontologies are shared understandings of "what there is", making them also a shared prison (Gergen 2009, 32–33). Next one briefly examines the implications of positivism to the mainstream research, fleet across the critical realism perspective and summarises the various approaches to social constructivism.

After this one considers how metatheoretical awareness affects the chosen reflexive research strategy. My intention is simply to summarise the main points and reflect upon these terms that keep haunting social sciences before returning to consider issues related to the philosophy of science in the conclusions chapter.[70]

Positivism, social constructivism and critical realism

To summarise, positivism is interested in "real facts", social constructionism concentrates on social reality, and critical realism seeks to study the objective world (for a good introduction, see Alvesson and Sköldberd 2009, chapter 2). In positivist thinking the basic idea is to synthesise the data of experience, as data is then something that exists out there and calls researchers to pick it up. Alasdair MacIntyre (1985, 88–89) observed that to justify managerial expertise social scientist is required to provide findings in preferably law-like generalisations that can claim to predict the outcomes of alternative policies. Thus positivists in IHRM often like to search law-like statements.[71]

For positivists, the meaning of a statement is its method of verification, making positivists effectively empiricist foundationalists (Rorty 1999, 151–152). In IHRM, this often means that (usually quantified) surface structures are studied by empirical currents and statistical methods. However, what is worth pointing out because this is a major difference, for the positivists theory is a complication of data, summarising the data of

---

70 Terminology surrounding metatheory can be somewhat misleading here: for me metatheory is mainly related to self-reflection of epistemological and ontological position. However, for example Alvesson and Sköldberg (2009) label positivism, social constructionism and critical realism as "overarching philosophies of science", while their usage of the term metatheory was also connected to critical theory and postmodernism as they arguably both have significant distance to data, and can promote critical and self-reflective interpretation or interpreting the theories used in the interpretation of interpretative subjects.

71 This standpoint helps to explain why some IHRM scholars are interested to know whether certain American HRM models work universally, or what approaches have been used to find the supposed link between HRM and performance. Often in positivist IHRM this means linking IHRM practices into some measured performance parameters, seeing the organisational level as a closed system, or somehow quantifying national culture to explain what would be the best fit of IHRM practices in that cultural context. Then again this explains why the input-output models of mainstream IHRM might not appear flawed *from the positivist viewpoint.*

surface phenomena is all there is, and there is then a tendency to ask area of application of a specific theory. To be fair, the age of excessively and openly positivist social science research is long gone, but it is still alive in the theories about science and methods (see for example Vakkala 2012, 32), as well as in the overlying values shaping how one should conduct, define and evaluate good research. There are many who, often without advertising it too much, consider that the core of positivist thinking is suited for their purposes as its logic follows "common sense" or the vocabularies of the mainstream.

Critical realists have been questioning this idea, arguing that social world (ontology) cannot be reduced to atomistic, observed events and knowledge (epistemology) cannot be reduced to spotting event regularities, and methodology cannot be reduced to engineering closed systems "so that event regularities can be presented in the form of functional relations" (Fleetwood 2007, 42). Instead, the purpose of real science would be to investigate the mechanisms between our experiences, what actually happens, and the underlying domain. For critical realists, the existence of a causal explanation has profound value because for them it makes theories real, but critical realism acknowledges that causality can exist on multiple levels, which make relations complex. Their conclusion is that although HRM might contain the elements of theory, strictly speaking there is no scientific theory in HRM based on the harsh standards of critical realism (Fleetwood 2007, 55–56; Fleetwood and Hesketh 2008).

However, critical realism not only attacks the "scientism" of mainstream positivist perspective but also those of us who only hopelessly linger on the surface level instead of acknowledging the stratified ontology of critical realism. From this position Margaret Archer (1998, 193, 199) can, after first rejecting both methodological individualism and holism of collectivism, also reject "the `methodology´ of the linguistic wrong turn" and calmly maintain that "we do not uncover deep structures by interviewing people in-depth about them." Critical realism forms something akin to a theocultural phenomenon (introduction to critical realism, see Bhashar 1998). However, critical realists are making useful points about the emancipatory nature of research, maintaining that it is also possible to change social practices and structures based on false or mistaken beliefs, or prevent positions "ossifying into petrified intellectual orthodoxies" (Reed

2009, 56–58).[72] In other words critical realism promises to break free from the naturalising underlying causal mechanisms that by nature benefit or disadvantage people.

From the social constructivist tradition an attempt to understand the intersubjective construction processes is seen as more productive than explaining deep structures behind these constructionist elements like critical realists are advocating. It could well be that deep structures are, as I am somewhat sheepishly tempted to say, real to someone. According to the famous Thomas theorem when people define situations as real, they become real in their consequences, and the consequences of such construction can have material effects (Flyvbjerg 2004; Merton 1996). In more emancipatory research of the social constructivism tradition, the purpose is often to show that things are not inevitable, that reconstruction is available if we just tear down manipulative institutions and practices that are itself merely socially constructed. The problem is that social constructivism has itself became a multifaceted concept where the differences between moderate and radical streams are considerable. For example, in the social constructivism of Gergen(s) the role of language is emphasised and the fragility of human self acknowledged, stressing that constructionism produces understandings that are only "resources for use (...) arguments tied together by metaphor and narrative, they are historically and culturally bounded, and are rational on within particular traditions" (Gergen 2009, 166).

In HRM, the constructivist stream is connected to the linguistic turn within management studies and, to grossly generalise, analyses what kind of worlds or identities HRM discourse produces (see for example Mueller and Carter 2005; Keenoy 2009). Moderate social constructivism has been challenged by the so-called second wave of social constructionism, especially actor-network-theory (ANT) with its amodern epistemology (Durepos and Mills 2012). ANT assumes that social is created on a micro-level in a continuous construction process with several both human and non-human actants participating (more about ANT, see for example Latour

---

72 Pessimist might note that emancipation from something often involves emergence of new forms of subjugation, or reveals the dark side of the emancipatory movement. For some reason advocates of critical realism seem to favour more radical changes than just modest micro-level emancipation as Foucauldian local interventions favoured by many in CMS (see for example Alvesson and Willmott 1992; Zanoni and Janssens 2007; cf. Rancièrian views about emancipation in CMS by Huault, Perret and Spicer 2014).

1996 and 2007; HRM research informed by ANT, see Vickers and Fox 2010). It has been argued that ANT alone is not critical because it does not include a reflexive examination of the position of the researcher (Whittle and Spicer 2008). However, while ANT does not privilege the subject nor aim towards emancipation, it can offer ideas that "may help to develop a critical perspective on management" (Alcadipani and Hassard 2010) by acknowledging the diffuse ways how humans and non-humans become networked in organising (Czarniawska 2006).[73]

Metatheoretical awareness and reflexive research

From my pragmatist position reflexive movement between metatheoretical positions is highly recommended, because the utilisation of different metatheoretical vocabularies can help to understand our own position. From pragmatist perspective Watson (2010) advocates HRM research where one should be able to "take up and modify concepts associated with other epistemological and ontological frames of reference (or 'paradigms') to use them in a manner consistent with one's own methodological assumptions" (see also Rorty 1989, especially chapter 1). Deetz (1996) also encourages openness and movement between different orientations of management research to get insights and clarify debates. Latour (1996, 175) points out that "[project] actors never swim twice in the same river", as they are constantly "defining one another, as they are changing their ontologies and offering each other their theories of action, there is no guarantee of their own continuity in time." Then postcolonial analysis adopts constructionist epistemology and relational ontology where "social world is composed of emerging and evolving relations of actors and identities" (Peltonen and Vaara 2012, 82). However, the overtly relativist stance towards truth claims postcolonial analysis sometimes opts for is not in line

---

73 Latour (2013, 261) considers that critical though was maybe suitable a couple of decades ago, but now one has to learn to trust institutions again to address more prevailing issues. Needless to say that the issues related to Latour, ANT, object-oriented ontologies and speculative realism are somewhat cumbersome. However, Latour's views can be regarded as social constructivist in a sense that in his experimental metaphysics everything is made, facts manu-factured, although the way he defines social is somewhat different than in mainstream social constructivism. This is why calling Latour an anti-realist might not be so fair. At least he thinks he is "a realist who refuses to assume that the real is One or indisputable" in a world where epistemology is a local and human version of ontology (see Miller 2013, 67–68).

with the principles of pragmatism where some metatheoretical positions are always more pragmatic than others, or dare I say more constructive (social constructivism and multiple realities, see Rottenburg 2006).

Although it might be that in the end the researcher cannot eradicate subjective metatheoretical commitments, but can nevertheless open them to inspection by encouraging reflexivity. Reflexivity is advertised to increase researcher´s awareness how various constructions of the world (cf. Alvesson and Kärreman 2011, 35). Some claim that reflexivity itself is an inalienable "human capacity which defines our existence" (Holland 1999).[74] The problem is that "how reflexivity itself is constituted in management research also expresses, and varies according to, the reflexive scholar's own epistemological and ontological commitments" (Johnson and Duberley 2003).[75] In the end taking social constructivism seriously means openly acknowledging that researchers have to construct or invent the thing they are seeking to understand by mobilising a set of vocabularies producing different understandings of the topic in question. This is done in the next chapter.

---

74 Johan Asplund (1987) makes the point that illustrates the idea of reflexivity when stressing that elementary forms of social life are social relations, more specifically relations of social *doing* characterised by *social responsivitet*. In these relations acting subjects have to act responsively even when they might want to introduce more of their intentions into effect.

75 Johnson and Duberley (2003) call this "an epistemological and ontological conundrum", which they illustrate using the nautical metaphor used by an exile member of empiricist philosophers of the (former) Vienna Circle, Otto Neurath (1944, 47): "[W]e are like sailors who on the open sea must reconstruct their ship but are never able to start afresh from the bottom. (...) They make use of some drifting timber of the old structure, to modify the skeleton and the hull of their vessel. But they cannot put into dock in order to start from scratch. During their work they stay on the old structure and deal with heavy gales and thundering waves."

4   CONSTRUCTING PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION IHRM FRAME

This chapter serves as what is commonly called an empirical part of the thesis. Before proceeding one important point has to stressed. Like mentioned, from the perspective of various critical research traditions empirical research where "data" is supposed to "speak" has been forcefully criticised. Then again the bulk of critical research can be criticised because it too often lacks empirical part altogether, which in the long run might be somewhat problematic. A compromise position preferred here is to move beyond datatistic description and to utilise empirical material primarily as a dialogue partner to encourage theoretical reflection. This process includes problematisation of existing vocabularies, but the aim is also to engage in theory development that moves towards constructing IHRM frame that is suited to interpret social reality in international public sector project environments.

To recap, in this research IHRM has been conceptualised as a cultural frame inhabited by researchers, practitioners and other casual visitors who form an interpretative community. Now it is time to give content for the frame, first by description that is more abundant and empirical, then engaged in a more critical theoretical dialogue in accordance with reflexive research strategy. The task here is to construct IHRM frame with a vocabulary where the words can be shared tools for the interpretative community in question.[76] Terms of this vocabulary could then be used as a sort of pidgin language to make sense of the realms that are not sharing a common language.[77]

---

76 Like Rorty (1999, xxiii) reminds us from his pragmatist position, the words of a given vocabulary must be understood not as representations of out there "reality", but in Darwinian sense as "nodes in the causal network which binds the organism together with its environment." From the perspective of critical theory Marcuse (1969, 191) once maintained that words have to be seen as expressions that express how society expects its members to speak and act.

77 Many different cultural groups that trade, and even depend on their trade, often use pidgin languages although they can disagree on the meaning of the exchange process. Pidgins are sometimes called contact languages or the languages of trade that arise under commercial transactions or political domination. They range from pure trade pidgins with limited common vocabulary to extended pidgins that have a wider communicative role, sometimes developing into a creole language that can support things like poetry and meta-linguistic reflection. Furthermore, in pidgin powerful parties often provide vocabulary while others influence syntax.

A frame like IHRM can be utilised not only interpretation, but uniting and creating things to make them meaningful, to make sense of specific aspects of the social world. Frame analysis was made famous by sociologist Erving Goffman (1986), whose idea was that frames refer to the relational dimensions of meaning and involvement. When a new event occurs frames must be adjusted or replaced for the interpretation to be meaningful, as the frame works as a classifying device giving focus for participants. Weick (1995) argues that in our sensemaking process earlier experiences serve as material for frame construction. These frames are close to the concept of "interpretational schemes" and what Czarniawska (2008) has called interpretative templates, a specific frame or genre from which similar interpretations are made. Weick (1995, 106–107) also agrees with Rorty (1989) that people pull from several different vocabularies when sense is generated by words that constrain the saying, categories to see the saying, and labels that retain the conclusion of the sensemaking process.

Unfortunately, the framing of events can also lead to increased ambiguity, frame disputes, and taking certain aspects as granted or unproblematic. It must be stressed that IHRM as a framework of meanings is not durable and must be continuously re-established. From a pragmatist position interpreting something is just describing various ways of how it is put to work (Rorty 1999, 134; see also Dewey 2012 [1929]). This is where critical reflection steps in. From more critical perspective one could also say that IHRM frame produces a certain manageable and productive individuality, a specific social construction of the workforce suited for the ideological context of IHRM. As such, people issues become governable after they are made technical (cf. Rose and Miller 2008). Thus, this chapter not only focuses on interpreting the experience of individuals on the Finnish public sector who have worked in EU funded international Twinning projects, but also critically reflects the interpretations that this IHRM frame can generate.

In the forthcoming chapter the construction of IHRM frame is presented in the following structure. The chapter begins with an opening gambit illustrating the costs of neglecting the IHRM frame presenting the perspective of people who volunteered to be interviewed. After this the context of interpretation is exemplified by analysing the self-positions of those individuals. Then IHRM is contextualised in public sector project environments by drawing from the mainstream IHRM and emerging

project HRM traditions. This exemplifies the main elements of IHRM for public sector project environments. When the reflexive interpretation continues the problems of translating IHRM into public sector context are also analysed by providing alternative interpretations that can help to develop theory about the role of IHRM frame in public sector project environments. Finally, at the end of the chapter the sinews of public sector IHRM frame are bundled together.

The perceived costs of neglecting the IHRM frame

At this point it should be clear for a reader that IHRM itself can have corrosive effects. However, IHRM can have a certain appeal: many public sector project people contacted during this research expressed that it is the myriad "people issues" of international projects that are causing them problems rather than the "merely technical" aspects that administration is geared to handle. Like one experienced manager expressed it:

> Many times I feel that the biggest obstacle is that people don´t see the importance of this, that you're happy to run a new project but somehow take it for granted that things work out and that the persons can handle it. (…) And even if you do, you don't seem to find enough time for this common thinking and going things trough together before the project. (I1)

As such, IHRM has its appeal because it addresses these people issues, and many who participated in this study had a hunch that increased understanding of IHRM issues could also help to avoid possible smaller and larger disasters in international work. As such, using IHRM frame to understand individuals could make them, to utilise the vocabulary of the so-called performative mainstream management literature, more flexible, motivated and productive. As such, utilising IHRM thinking in public management was often supposed to be a welcomed move. For example one interviewed public sector manager concluded that the biggest obstacle when developing IHRM is the public sector context itself.

> As we happen to be in state administration there are quite stiff state administration guidance, rules and finance mechanisms (…) there are

many things, like for example travel guidance which are what they are, there is no possibility for flexibility whatsoever (…) customised models are not possible. (I12)

When translated to interpret international project environments where the Finnish public sector is involved, IHRM vocabulary could arguably provide an interpretative repertoire to understand the conditions facing the individuals in these environments, because IHRM as an example of Western people management discourse is potentially suited to make sense of international project environments. Individuals interviewed sometimes had adopted the rational premises of managerial project management and they simply could not understand why the principles of "good" project or people management were missing, or why people in the public sector could not more openly discuss the difficulties experienced in these projects, repeating the same mistakes all over again.

In interview accounts especially the roles of manager in home country and the role of former long-term project specialist seemed to sometimes collide. Some people with less administrative or technical educational background also in certain occasions seemed to show slight resistance towards IHRM, but all in all those interviewed expected IHRM to somehow "correct" the sited gap between rhetorics and realities perceived during and especially after international project assignments. Many public servants had been privately wondering why international projects are not utilised in their full potential, or appreciated in other ways than saying "it's a very nice thing, it's all very exiting" (I2). People who had worked in international projects also questioned what strategic planning of human resource issues meant for the public sector. The importance of building and utilising social capital was advertised in managerial discourses of the Finnish public sector, but very little concrete efforts at this domain were experienced.

The associated talk about the problems of inadequate HRD or career planning in the Finnish public sector were also widely shared by the interviewed persons. There was a hope among people with Twinning experience that public sector managers should be more open minded when it comes to evaluating the costs and benefits of these international project activities. From the IHRM perspective people felt that these projects benefit the person when she returns back to the Finnish organisation in ways that is

not only related to increased experience, but also to something that makes the work meaningful and potentially increases employee welfare.

Altogether, daily work in many Finnish public sector organisations was perceived to be more international, but many also felt that at the moment international activities still remain in the hands of too few a people, or somewhat isolated from the other activities of the organisation. As a result "Twinning is very useful but there is lack of personnel" (I3) and in general it is seen as "a shortcoming that… (sighs) relatively little is known about these projects and what they mean" (I17). This in turn means that the nature of work during international project assignments is not understood as widely as it could be, causing practical problems during the project cycle and in some cases feelings of disillusionment related to the value of international assignments or internationalisation. Some were also somewhat unsure when it comes to the role of Twinning in Finnish foreign policy as such. International projects and especially Twinning were viewed as different compared to the more traditional international co-operation. In some organisations Twinning was seen as something that was done if there was energy left after other "core activities." However, in the international project world community project reputation of the parties was also perceived to be important, and doing project work well was considered important not just for the organisation, but for Finland.

There were some cynical voices expressing that somewhat paradoxically the resource-based thinking advocated by HRM produces the unpopularity of international projects, because the resource intensity of these activities arguably places too high a burden for home organisations, and "HR doesn't always see these foreign tours as delightful, as they cause more work" (I3). It could even be that the lack of internationalisation in some parts of the Finnish public sector has been a *chosen* strategy, in itself perfectly rational from the managerial and HRM perspective. In short, management had started to see international project activities in a less positive light after gaining experience of international projects, learned how demanding international activities can be from the management perspective, and perceived the benefits of these activities too small for them. The irony is that applying HRM thinking in the public sector can itself also advance instrumental rationality over value rationality, something managerial thinking was supposed to cure in the bureaucratic public sector. These issues are addressed later on in this chapter.

The context of interpretation: Analysing representations of the self

In interviews certain discursive acts are produced and certain vocabularies mobilised to construct and find a storyline that fits the perceived interviewing situation. The interviewee also constructs identity, promotes a certain impression and can use the interview situation for political action. These issues are analysed next by focusing what kind of self-image was constructed in interviews. However, there is also a question of authority: writing in this field can be seen as "an act of inscription where the person who writes imagines a self that is capable and author-ative of representing others" (Rhodes and Westwood 2007, 57). In interpretation a researcher considers produced empirical material from a wide angle of perspectives, but one has to remember that these expressions of self-positions are produced in interaction. Next I briefly summarise how people represented themselves during the interviews.

Many of the persons interviewed had to balance between the roles of representing their organisation and telling about their project experience. In project environments people can have their own project reputation to guard, they had to look at things from the various perspectives, and feel that they are also representing larger entities like the public sector or the state, or even EU in some isolated cases. In short, people working in international projects had "learned that you have to think what you promise, as the wishes are always very big there" (I15), but all in all one could conclude that "Finnish civil servant has a quite pragmatic approach to things, [they] want to get things done and achieved, but there are naturally failures, related to the projects or on a purely personal level" (I1).

People with longer international project experience had constructed a certain identity of an international project person who misses the hectic lifestyle of international projects where every good day is busy and well structured, and who continuously follows international developments even though they might not directly responsible for that in their work. Some confessed that "you don´t even know other people" (I6), many echoed that "these are people who don't like routine work" (I7), these are people "who are enthusiastic and open, who look for challenge and like to be in international surroundings where nothing is secure" (I10). Especially those with longer experience often placed the topic to a certain historical context:

they saw themselves as being part of the internationalisation of the Finnish public sector that mushroomed around the time Finland joined the EU, highlighting their long experience and broad vision thanks to internationalisation. Even the more modest Finnish specialists portrayed themselves as someone who are always actively developing themselves professionally, often expressing a certain passion for public sector projects work, as "all in all, most people perceive that Twinning projects are quite positive, but you have to be more than interested, you have to be brave, as it's a jump into the unknown" (I22).

Project workers in EU governance

What makes these project workers different is that they do not work in the private sector nor they are part of the traditional public sector workforce. They are also agents of new international governance in the framework of European integration. Thus they see their role a bit differently. First of all these people view themselves in international projects as representatives of Finland, which itself requires a certain *savoir faire* and ability to consider the diplomatic dimension. Most expressed that in Twinning type international project work one has to see the connections between EU policy and the local administration systems.

When it comes to the role of Twinning projects as a policy instrument, most people praised it because it is seen "as an incredibly fine project form, precisely because things weren´t ready, but people were themselves doing things – then it really produces results" (I21). The role of foreign expert was to give their examples to choose from for the beneficiary country administration. This work was viewed to require "calm people who listen and have clear specialism area, who can convince the others that they know" (I10). It was seen as strength of Twinning that it creates a partnership between the organisations and between civil servants where they can discuss and define the problems together. As one manager summarised his experience regarding Twinning:

There weren't consultancy like middlemen talking about things based on theory, but... When it was possible, taking account the limitations of different systems, we exported direct models of operation. It's quite

fast when it works well, the beneficiary and supporter are on the same wavelength, when there's a clear commitment to the goals on the beneficiary side. (I20)

Ideally the role of a Finnish project worker was to create a model the beneficiary could then choose to follow. This so-called policy of non-engagement (see for example Bauman 2011) was seen as more durable than pure technical assistance which had often produced "some documents or files" (I21) for the beneficiary country with no idea whatsoever how to utilise those. In short, it was viewed that Twinning gives good possibilities to strengthen the EU co-operation of the public sector organisations involved, but it is up to the institution to decide how to develop, or not to develop, that co-operation. Some even expressed that "the Finnish way" where the problems of our own models are shared with the beneficiary country can create trust and a more appealing model to follow.

Some people also compared the role of Twinning with development projects in the so-called developing nations, as Finnish specialists with high standards were reported to required to lower the bar, sharing their knowledge to slowly move the beneficiary country administration closer to EU. Still, for some it was perceived somewhat frustrating when projects are so a far from "ordinary people and users" (I5) and that the progress is so slow. Some also questioned the chances of a Finnish model to work in too culturally distant places, but also wondered who should be the model country of European administration. One returns to these themes later on this chapter, but before that it is time to get involved with what can be considered the core of IHRM practices in public sector project environments.

4.1   International assignment and HRM practice areas

Finland has been a sought-after development partner and Finnish expertise has been widely respected. At the same time our own administration has benefited from Twinning activity. Networks developed in Twinning could have been utilised and European best practices transferred to domestic administration. Our own administration has been developed according to the practices learnt in Twinning activity...

Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland Twinning Evaluation (2013, 3; author's translation)

In Finnish administration system many functions have been centralised, but international HRM is not exactly one of them. This means that decentralised public HRM is facing the demands of international projects environments.

> This leads to a broader discussion about the need of Finnish administration to have some professional project organisations in public administration that could in some centralised way take care the project administration. (I7)

As such, when it comes to developing the IHRM architecture and practices for international projects, many organisations have been doing it alone and experienced a learning curve. As one manager explained: "The guidance has been coming from distinct pipes to every organisation, there wasn't any cross-administrative co-operation that would have been extremely useful" (I20). Some had never heard the HR department of their home organisation to talk about the international dimension, while some viewed that the interest HR department might have had regarding Twinning activities was merely occasional and polite. As a result actual people management was usually left for the possible international unit of the department, and especially for the line managers and/or project personnel, sometimes simply because nobody else took responsibility.

Some people who were interviewed recalled that not so many years ago they had to fight with their own HR and financial administration and ask permissions for everything they did in international projects, and still today international project work was in no ways tied to the evaluation processes in home organisation. Some suspected that it would be good for these administration people to try to work in these international projects themselves to better understand the demands of international assignments and work on the field. Indeed IHRM   in the international projects was often decentralised for the individual herself, requiring a certain change of mindset compared with traditional public sector work: "It's an attitude thing, you should understand that it's also a training project for yourself" (I16).

Most people being interviewed expressed that the possible IHRM expertise in the Finnish public sector cannot be found from the HRM or administrative units and suspected that the already thin and decentralised Finnish administration seems to avoid Twinning style projects simply because they do not want to touch project administration and EU bureaucracy involved that is viewed as complicated, resource-intensive, and distant. Still, people interviewed anonymously remarked that "naturally we can't ourselves go directly to the European Commission to say that you suck when it comes to planning projects" (I11).

Overall, the decentralised way of Finnish public sector IHRM was viewed as a mixed blessing. Everybody did not exactly trust that the others could handle things. As one manager summarised:

> If you want to make sure that things are done well then you do it in house, or these are my experiences that you then have to do it alone, but it's not always possible. (…) We're thinking about these matters here alone. (…) Our field is so exotic that we don't really get any outside guidance, not that we even want it. (I19)

That said, some Finnish public sector organisations had also quite recently moved many IHRM functions to a dedicated international unit in an attempt make things clearer. These international units are now developing procedures, but getting them implemented takes time. Many people seemed to be familiar with the much more centralised model of handling international projects in the public administration of some other European countries and had been thinking about the benefits of a more centralised approach. However, some also viewed that as long as the international activities remain a sideshow for the Finnish public sector that are not so much tied to the Finnish foreign policy, centralisation itself would not change that much. Furthermore, the Finnish decentralised way of doing things was viewed to also provide possibilities for more informal co-operation.[78]

---

78   From critical perspective has also sometimes been argued that when it comes to forms of administration pluralist conceptualisations are nevertheless preferable from over other options because they allow at least some alternatives (see Marcuse 1969, 71).

4.1.1 Perceived needs during the traditional international assignment cycle

From the traditional IHRM perspective international assignment cycle contains four elements: preparation for the assignment, the assignment in the host country, received support from the sender organisation, and repatriation and return to a home country organisation. In expatriate research focus has shifted to study what is labelled as "intercultural adjustment," including assessing the time it takes to master a new role, and the various tensions involved between contradicting expectations (see for example Evans, Pucik and Björkman 2011, chapter 4). However, little has been said in the existing literature about public sector international assignments.

When it comes to the Twinning environment the assignment was approached mainly from the viewpoint of long-term assignments, but it must be said that many of those interviewed had experienced a continuum of short-term assignments as specialists in Twinning and other international projects, also in project management positions. Some Finnish public sector organisations had experienced a learning curve in ways they administer the IHRM cycle, but a hoped inflexion point at which all the aspects of the cycle are handled with the same dedication seems to wait for itself. As such, many IHRM tasks the individuals somehow expect the organisation to handle are left for them, which then consumes energy from other things. This increases the demands placed for individuals doing international assignments, requiring them to cope with the increased feelings of work-related loneliness and stress on top of all the other issues.

A) Preparation

Traditional project literature often tacitly assumes that a project has a clear beginning that is explicit for all, but defining when a Twinning project starts can be done in many ways. This is because when the project is being constructed different people step in and out at different points. There are periods of uncertainty and lacunae, which can be difficult as they conflict with the traditional logic of functional administration where official matters proceed smoothly. From the perspective of decisions about whether or not to spend even two years of your life on an international assignment

must often be made practically overnight, but then the actual start of a project can be delayed for months, maybe even a year, and during that time the person is expected to have luggage packed, not to mention that the project plan might already be outdated before the international assignment has commenced.

When nobody knows when the international assignment is going to start, a person who is supposed to be ready for international assignment just has to wait. It is during this period when the first liminal moment is experienced, often requiring that project person has to cope with the uncertainty quite alone as ties to home organisation are already weakened and it is the individual worker alone who is waiting. This can be stressful for the family, and it is problematic for the employer as the future availability and commitment of the person in question is unknown. One manager phrased the challenge by pointing out that "we naturally have guidance about Twinning, but not a mental training package" (I12).

Projects are not only about individuals doing assignments; they are also about people with various backgrounds working together. Many acknowledged that when people have to get to know each other very early on in the project, they learn to trust them, and like one expert stressed, "if that trust is being born, then it's much more easier to execute the whole project" (I15). Most people interviewed spoke about the valuable role of preparatory elements with the locals, or kick-off events, and things like making the roles of the parties clear in the very beginning of the project. That was seen as confidence building or part of the process of creating common goals. Then again sometimes there are disappointments that might feel heavier after more mental preparations and investments in the project are being made. The "political" element or concentrating more on making projects look good instead of telling what the project was about seemed to cause some mild frustration.

When it comes to preparation for the project, two basic themes were repeated: learning to live with uncertainty or better project management. The project management view emphasised the planning element:

In the end we're talking about project work here. That means that the project planning is the main point you should never sacrifice, more like invest even too much rather than too little on it. (…) Then when it's

being executed in reality, the project manager has to be able to manage projects. It means that he or she has to continuously keep contact with those people who are in charge on tasks. If you trust on some sort of collective responsibility then the project is going to end up on the rocks. (I19)

The other emphasis, mostly highlighted by those with many long-term international assignments, was the suspicion that no matter how well prepared the international project is there is always an element of uncertainty involved:

Of course you can train for project work, as there are courses of international project planning, but what can't be trained is… Well, why not, I do believe in HR training, but there are certain personal qualities that are required on the field when you work. (…) Sociality, ability to tolerate uncertainty, because there [overseas] the administration is much more unpredictable than with us, processes are different, adaptability, curiosity, seeing the value of difference… (I7)

As such, most preparation for the international assignments involved in Twinning projects is left for the sender organisation. The European Commission organises a short course for RTAs, and that was generally viewed as valuable especially for those doing their first international assignment, mostly because it offered a possibility to meet other people with a similar situation or more experience in working in the specific country. As such, preparing for unique international projects was deemed problematic, because "there can be very surprising situations, so we go through situations we have sometimes encountered" to show something about what to expect and what situations to prepare yourself (I11). Because an individual worker is more or less expected to prepare for the assignment alone, one can perceive that "preparation was relatively bad, though I had been in projects and knew something, but there was no time as I had my own work to do" (I5).

Overall, more cultural training was also hoped for, as was the possibilities for different Finnish public sector organisations to exchange experiences. The short-term experts do not get any preparatory training, but it should

be a task for the project manager and RTA to brief them as well. It was viewed that if the assignment is too short and the specialist is inexperienced problems might occur. In international projects such as Twinning difficulties might begin to pile up even before the international assignment, but how they are handled is really tested during the international assignment itself. In this task administrators search guidance from bureaucratic scripts, but as it turns out "there are still many things not well covered in the Twinning manual, when you prepare this person for the assignment (…) Twinning manual doesn't itself interfere with personal qualities and working styles at all" (I7).

B) International assignment

On the whole, at the beginning of a long-term Twinning assignment various deadlines keep the person on international assignment busy and on track, but "this mess can crate some pressure for people doing this for a first time" (I7). There is much to learn, and like one specialist praised, "it's very educational, you learn to see that there are so many different ways of doing work and projects" (I22). As a rule something unexpected will always happen, but it was felt that with a good attitude, adequate support, and a tiny amount of luck a professional Finnish civil servant can survive international assignment in an overseas Twinning project. Some might find it harder than the others, especially if they for one reason or another cannot create a positive atmosphere and a good co-operation with the key parties such as with the budged official. Many also thought that it was important to discover that no matter how hard they tried, it was not their fault when things did not work. Many had lost their faith at some point and sometimes the expectations were discovered to be simply unrealistic.

In Twinning-style projects people doing long-term international assignment often have to shape their role quite alone and one might have to start from basic things. Like one project specialist recalls: "I didn't have a desk during the first quarter, no Internet connection, I couldn't do anything. (…) it was much worse for many colleagues from other EU countries" (I4). In the begin of an international assignment, one does not only start a new work, but start building a new life in a foreign country. This can also be a relief, as people can work more freely than in back home. Long-term as-

signment often both lets and forces people to be more active, flexible and independent. One has to improvise, see how the locals are doing and learn to adapt. Unfortunately, this is not a merely positive thing as those people returning to their public sector work in Finland often realise. Still, those who had been doing many short-term assignments sometimes perceived that they could not concentrate on a single project any more as much as they would have wanted, or had experienced a sense a discontinuity.

If mainstream IHRM is right in one thing, it is that people do learn about themselves during international assignments. International work is also perceived to be more all-encompassing, and the possible risks are greater. Many who had worked in Twinning projects felt that the practical issues during the international assignment are itself always stressful, including finding a new accommodation and getting used to a new country, a new workplace, and many new people. This was still viewed as acceptable because of the rewards involved, or like one public sector manager phrased it:

> This is more my own opinion, but I think that the greatest benefit of international experiences is that you learn to understand that there are different ways of doing things, that you don't get locked in our parochially patriotic solutions, but you can see that things can be solved or done in some other way. That really opens your mind. (I20)

It is the additional difficulties that cross the line; especially things related to sorting out personal bureaucratic issues yourself. People who themselves work in Western public sector are not always prepared to experience the dysfunctional bureaucracy of the beneficiary country too intimately. On a positive side, some had also started to appreciate the Finnish public sector more after these encounters.

It might be that international assignment in a different administration culture might not always teach people more humility, but a more Hobbesian way of approaching things. If there is a risk of "going native" in these projects, it is perhaps related to people who like the international project lifestyle so much that they begin to loose the links to the Finnish public sector and behave more like the local elite of the developing beneficiary country or the richer expatriates on the business side working for some multinational. Like one long-term project specialists expressed it:

It's a common phenomenon that after you've started to circulate these things and have stayed there for a couple of years, then it's really difficult to return from that. (...) It's a problem, and it could be that the work back home doesn't interest the person anymore. There are many cases like this. (I17)

There is a risk that international consultancy firms poach these people, the risk that they never quite get on with the Finnish public sector work again and lose their expertise, but also the ethical side. Like one person with two decades of international project experience expressed his feelings about the issue by stating that "they might be good specialists, but you can't value them so much as people, morally I might even condemn them" (I10). The presented reprehensibility might be related to the perceived breach of public sector ethos. People interviewed reported that these people seemed to "loose the organic connection to the sender organisation" (I20)

C) Received support

The support people get during the assignment seem to affect how they perceive the success of the whole international assignment and project. In international project environments there are many stakeholders involved who have to work together, to communicate. However, the amount and quality of the received support for the international project workers depends on who is running the project or takes care of the administration; is it own organisation in Finland where the person has worked, some other organisation in Finland or in other EU member state, and how much they have experience and resources to give support. Still, so-called "out of sight, out of mind syndrome" (I7) was not totally uncommon: "I was there for months and nobody [from the home organisation in Finland] asked anything, was I even alive... There should be a stronger network, you should feel that there is help if needed, and where to get help" (I5).

The role of the home office is challenging because of the sheer geographical distance involved. Meeting people regularly face to face is different from simply relying on e-mails and phone conversations. Thus, people in home office support role "need the ability to sense the employee welfare [at distance] and how things go there", and even during the short visits

to the beneficiary country the problem is that "everybody wants to show that things go well, there is a challenge of knowing to interpret things between the lines" (I12). Moving alone to a foreign country can be stressful, but it was reported that something might be wrong when the person on international assignment seems to complain about all the local conditions, regardless on how much the home office can influence those. In these situations it was considered that the home office must intervene.

There are also other parties involved in international projects. For example, some persons expected more support from the delegation of the Commission and the possible Finnish embassy in the beneficiary country. Personal contacts had also proved to be valuable when support from the EU officials was requested. When it comes to the capacity and willingness of small Finnish embassies to support international projects, many felt that some larger EU countries with bigger embassies, ready contacts and a different role given to these international projects always have the advantage compared with Finland.

By and large it was considered that the role of home office is to decide who is responsible and to make sure that everyone has a clear picture of the status of the project. Most people see the project administration or bureaucracy as simply too heavy. This means that many people might be required to do extra work, and as the clear models known for all are often missing, to think about it all over themselves. Many felt that Finnish public sector was not completely up to the task, and that the international project did not get the attention they deserved. Some suspected that "if the line manager herself for one reason or another has no international orientation, no language skills, or willingness or braveness to go herself to any international task, then the attitude towards everything is stiffer" (I11).

Even if people interviewed felt they got the home office support they had required, it was not usually coming from the administrative unit of the department. Maybe the biggest concern with the Twinning was getting the financial matters during the project handled appropriately.[79] Lack of expertise or "attitude problems" were cited as the main areas of concern. As one man-

---

79 Know as "Logistical Management & Accounting" in the Twinning manual, it consists of the logistical management of the Twinning project, and the financial management including accounting of expenditure, invoicing and management of project funds. Twinning manual stresses that "the RTA should not be responsible for these tasks" (European Commission 2012, 65).

ager expressed: "The problem is lack of expertise. The financial administration experts from our administrative unit know this Finnish legislation and rules really well, but know really badly the rules of the EU projects" (I19).

Some felt that to improve things it would be important to have a couple of people specialising in administering EU projects, and to run the international project portfolio. Many also questioned if it is the task of a Finnish public sector department at all to handle the financial administration of the project, including the payroll, as it could be outsourced altogether. There is a clear trend that Finnish public sector organisations are maybe willing to give their experts to international project assignments, but are not willing to bear the administrative burden or to take care of the home office support functions.

Part of the picture is that it was considered that the line management might not always remember that there is an international project going that would require attention. International project people had also been thinking what they could have done differently to get the required support. Like one former project manager now in organisation development work reflected, international projects might be seen as too distant activities, which can then cause suspicion towards the project.

> What I would do differently now [as a project leader] is that I would be more active in keeping contact… To tell actively about the project in my own organisation, not even trying to artificially keep it [the international project] in any ways separated. (…) It should be like a normal [in-house] work project. (…) Maybe there is a danger that these [international projects] remain a somewhat mysterious as they are not discussed. (I16)

Then again there can be things advocating the practice where international projects are intentionally kept isolated. After all, when it is out of sigh it is out of mind, and some like it that way. The problem is that when a line manager is not very deeply involved in international projects, people who are supposed to give home office support or those doing short-term international assignments can be drawn in many directions. This does not exactly help to develop a stronger institutional support. Some expressed that line managers should maybe consider the benefits of international projects in other ways that just a tool for getting external funding. People

interviewed unanimously felt that it is the task of the management (top and middle) to create a supportive atmosphere. Furthermore, the dimension related to the role of support functions is not going away in a globalising world, but it might take another form as international work becomes more commonplace and ICT solutions are adopted.

D) Return

When international project life is over, if it is, the person returns to her job in the Finnish public sector. I call this phase simply return, but it is more commonly called repatriation in IHRM literature as it implies that return involves sending the person back to her native land. In too many Finnish public sector organisations this phase of the IHRM cycle fell into disrepair when people started to return to their old jobs from overseas assignments. Private sector IHRM research echo the same problem. To cut the long story short, a majority of the people interviewed expressed that in terms of their career development their long-term international assignment had not been a merit. Especially if they had returned to their old role they might have felt that "the work was total bullshit" (I2). Furthermore, many also viewed that the interest in the home organisation, including the HR department, towards their international experience had been quite low. One returns to this point later on this chapter.

One thing that is important to point out is that people do not view their return as a failure because the project might be considered as a failure. Naturally, there might have been difficult experiences, and that is also considered being part of the job, but that is not the source of repatriation problems. The problem is that people do not return as the same persons, they might even develop without the home organisation noticing, and many other things have probably changed when they have been away. As one public sector manager pondered:

These returns aren't quite problem free, I would say that the return to your own organisation is the most difficult phase, it's almost more psychological thing... It seems that many who return to their starting point get frustrated, get frustrated quite badly, and in optimum case we should be able to plan that when you return to a home organisa-

tion there are some new clear challenges. (…) It's not a battalion that's getting deployed simultaneously or something, you go alone or with a small group so the work is more independent. It might be and it is then really difficult to return to a more guided and controlled role in all ways... I think it's more got to do with the less restricted room to operate, you have to do decisions alone, it's a challenging environment, and the challenges after that [the international assignment is over] could be a compared to a situation of an athlete after the career is over. (I20)

What is difficult is that the people interviewed reported that still today some think that international assignments are some form of pleasure trips to an exotic destination where the pay level is higher. According to this storyline people who have stayed in Finland express their envy for the persons returning from an international assignment by showing them that the times of "special treatment" are over. The cultural context fuelling these cynical interpretations is related to the suspicion that the best experts are not even allowed to go abroad and often somehow difficult persons favour international assignments. It was also mentioned that one simply might not have the expertise to handle repatriation, because the procedures might be missing and it might happen relatively rarely in many Finnish public sector organisations. Whatever the case, the returning expatriates do not get the attention they feel they deserve after having been away for years, or even "somehow still feel that going to a project abroad is a burden to an employer (…) maybe the general trend is like this" (I17).

The nature of international project work as an RTA in Twinning is certainly different that the work back home, and finding a suitable position after the international assignment is not always possible. Usually during the international assignment one can concentrate on a single project and the status of the person during the project is higher, as "you socialise with even country top political leaders, you constantly meet ambassadors, you get invitations here and there, and when the person comes back as the so-called basic civil servant your status is not quite similar" (I7). This might not be communicated to the home organisation, and the expatriate can develop false expectations. In an ideal situation people viewed that the person herself, her line and project managers and the HR side should all work together well in advance to make repatriation successful. As this is

often not the case some preferred shorter-term international assignment because there is always one leg at home.[80]

Defining when the project actually ends is also problematic. The EU auditions of the Twinning projects years after it ended were viewed as stressful, but then again people returning from international assignments might feel that things should not dissolve that fast. After a demanding project, many feel that they simply do not have than much energy left or have been so busy focusing on the project that there is no time to think what to do when the project is over. Some simply retire. As one person sums things up, "it was a big challenge for myself because I left everything when I went, when I returned I had nothing, and a first task was to find myself work..." (I21). This person then somewhat accidentally ended up in HR and could use the project experiences in her new work. In many cases project experiences remain a private property of every individual, not utilised by the whole organisation and certainly not the whole public sector despite some paltry attempts to organise events to share international experiences. Many of those interviewed expressed that in ideal situation the partnerships between administrations continue after the project, but this is currently hardly the case. Indeed most felt that assiduous career planning is not something the Finnish administration is famous for.

From the perspective of the critical theory these confusions in personal and professional life experienced during repatriation, which might lead to experiences of alienation of human consciousness, could be organisationally produced. For example Marcuse 1987 [1956]) extended the Freudian interpretations into metaphorical social theory and concluded that the perceived psychological anxieties are symptoms of unhealthy dependencies people have with the modern institutions, as they have become so imprisoned by the home organisation that they cannot brake free. This might not always be a negative thing. Habermas (1987a) seems to suggest that the tensions related to the perceived gap between the formal system, the norms of the authority, and the personal meanings of the actor can offer a healthy site for critical reflection – the obvious problem from the perspective of administration is that this can turn against the home organisation.

---

80 Term *shorter* is used to refer to people doing short-term international assignments, often as a specialist in projects.

4.1.2 Reconstructing the fourfold typology of project HRM practice areas

So far this chapter has illustrated the *Lebenswelt* of the Finnish public sector international project people from the perspective of the IHRM cycle. Next it is time to look at the perambulations of these people more from the project HRM perspective. Albeit festooned with different styles, the four basic components of HRM practice areas have remained remarkably similar when HRM has been translated from context to context. They include flows, performance, development and involvement. Next attention is turned to these aforementioned practice areas in the context of international public sector Twinning projects.

A) Managing flows

This project HRM practice area mainly has to do with managing the flows of people in, through and out of the project. One person I interviewed tried to characterise the flows of people to international projects and out in the Finnish public sector based on his experiences, and came up with a word drifting. This was probably not primarily aimed as a criticism against the status of career planning in the Finnish public sector, but tells something about the fragmented nature of work life people are experiencing in the contemporary public sector. Projects require boundary spanning between the so-called limits of an organisation and as mentioned some scholars argue that the whole nature of careers is becoming boundaryless.

It would be easy to criticise the boundaryless career hype by pointing out that normalising effects of the boundaryless careers discourse is itself a manifestation of wider neoliberal ideology (what else?), emphasising the benefits for already relatively privileged individuals rather than societal or organisational responsibility, and implying that career boundaries have somehow disappeared in "boundaryless" environment (Inkson et al., 2012). However, career or work life in this environment might indeed feel more like drifting than some planned or controlled activity and to imply that individual career is analogous with harmonious and steady flow is somewhat problematic.

Drifting in

Drifting in to an international project like Twinning in the Finnish public sector usually starts when somebody begins thinking about making a project plan for a project competition. This opens work opportunities for specialists in the public sector. If the skills set of a person seems to match and somebody remembers them, they might be asked to join the project bid. Organisation might want to get their experts involved, but there are usually not that many people who can do international projects right away, and "the definitions for long-term specialist are quite tight, and usually there aren't that many volunteers (…) usually you have to hand pick and find the person who fits the profile" (I11). As such, those interviewed sometimes suspected that "it is maybe easier for men to leave" (I5) and "you can't send there a girl, it is also a selection criteria (…) maybe we have to start thinking about flexibility and capability, previously we have been looking substance matters" (I12). Sometimes even the foreign consultancy firms try to recruit these same specialists.

Recruitment itself often goes mount-to-mouth, and someone who is already known is usually selected. There were even some stories where people had to be more or less manipulated to take part in the recruitment phase, or that participating in an international project was viewed more as gift exchange: "I felt I had a small debt to pay back [to my employer] when the project started, and I felt that it was possible to organise that with a child" (I18). In these projects, the specialist asked to do a long-term assignment has to make the decision about going abroad for two years or so quite fast, evaluate many things, and commit for that project. After this, the project planning can start and it might then take a year before the international assignment can actually begin. When the project plan is given green light, the international assignment of the RTA should start within a month without further notice. It was reported that the person waiting for the international project assignment is sort of "being hanged", as she does not always clearly know what to do in the home organisation or what her role is. It was viewed that losing project competitions when people are ready to go can cause uncertainty in the long run. However, some suggested that it is a normal way of life for these international project persons.

As the general feeling almost everywhere is that less personnel are ex-

pected to do more work these days, people are getting more cautious about the effects of international assignments in the home organisation. Those interviewed pointed out the hollowness of official internationalisation rhetoric, expressing that "in speeches yes, nobody is against internationalisation, but then when you ask one person to leave, it's too busy" (I7). Thus it becomes increasingly difficult for a single Finnish public sector institution to do international projects alone, as there are not enough people who could leave their domestic job without further notice. Sometimes it could also be difficult to find a substitute for persons doing international assignments and all in all projects often require the broad expertise of the department and utilisation of various experts as it is sometimes impossible to use generalists. Furthermore, something unexpected usually happens during these projects. One might then require pack-up personnel, but people are not kept in reserve for international project activities, which means that somebody has to fill the holes and manage more flows. Furthermore, international project can cause a domino effect where drifting becomes a flood, which can then result in bad experiences.

Drifting through

Like mentioned, the recruitment pool to international assignments from Finnish public sector organisations is limited. There are often not that many adequately skilled experts, many of them cannot leave their work in Finland, and sometimes family matters or other life situations create obstacles. It has to be remembered that also family members have to drift through the international assignments. All in all those interviewed expressed that the expertise of the specialist has to be adequate, there has to be language skills and curiosity, but drifting through was viewed more of an attitude thing, often assessed in terms of expressed flexibility and ability to fit into difficult circumstances. It was viewed that international assignment requires a certain adaptability to local conditions that can be quite demanding. One interviewed manager with a long experience of running international operations expressed that she used to think ten or fifteen years ago that certain personality type perform well in international projects, but now think that predicting international project performance beforehand can be quite difficult. In international projects the perceived

key problem might not be the lack of expertise, but more related to finding ways of transferring expertise to the others.

Then again motivated people often want to go for another international assignment sooner or later, also require less guidance, already know the right people, and have the required expertise. In the competition for these projects getting experienced project people involved was viewed as important. As a result, people might start to drift from one international project to another although many felt that there should be enough blood streaming between the project activities and the main organisation, as otherwise international project activities can get somewhat detached. When it comes to short-term international assignments, the problem is that these specialists are often busy, so timing their short-term assignments becomes a challenge.

Furthermore, in Twinning projects there is also a beneficiary country administration with its own schedules that affect the project HRM flows, locals are usually hired for assistants and then there are often various subcontractors involved, and some Twinning projects are consortiums where there are more than one member state involved. In short, these issues make managing the flows of people in international project environments more complicated. Faced with these problems in the project itself, the people expressed that it is maybe no wonder when international projects are not always viewed as a development possibility, as it is not possible to mix people as a group or to allocate the roles in advance in ways that everyone survives. It was reported that one just has to be flexible and adaptable, and be prepared for a situation where these flows hit project personnel against the wall.

Drifting out

Internationalisation and projectification of work change the pattern of personnel flows in the public sector. When it comes to international projects, the flows seem to drift people not only out of the projects when it ends, but also out of the home organisation and the public sector. The problems related to the repatriation after international assignments have already been mentioned, and in research interviews people wondered why they did not get more managerial attention even though "everything nice is written to some fancy HR strategies for example about the internationalisation of

the personnel and so on" (I11). Public sector managers keep repeating the same narrative when it comes to mobility: "It has been for some reason very difficult in state administration, to make it work in practice, then of course this [international project work] is one path to mobility, and it fills the goal that the person gets some new view to her own work" (I1).

In short, in managerial discourse mobility is viewed as something worth achieving, but also something that is "naturally" resisted. Some see the lack of permanence in project environments as a problem, violation against that job security people expect in the public sector. However, age also matters. Especially for younger people projects can be viewed as an opportunity to get foot behind the door and continue their careers in projects inside and outside the house afterwards. When people are doing international assignments, it is seen as a good opportunity to get new people into the home organisations. The downside is that people have to wait for project opportunities to arise if they want to stay employed at all. Furthermore, a situation where there are too many projects during the same time, or similar projects lasting for years and years with the same people involved, was sometimes viewed as a problem.

Many specialist are also aware that the expertise their generation holds might soon disappear from the public sector when the baby boomers retire. They indeed talk about that it would be beneficial to get more younger people involved in project work to bring in new thinking, and that projects can allow older professionals to continue longer in work life and to share experience, expressing that they would be "very willing to take very young people involved [in projects] because then there's continuity, they learn very fast as international co-operation is natural for many young people nowadays" (I15). It could be that there has recently been much talk about mentoring everywhere, and the government aim is to make people work more years during their life, so people interviewed wondered why this does not seem to change the practices in the Finnish public sector.

B) Performance aspects

HRM is often connected to "set of activities aimed at building individual and workforce performance" (Boxall and Purcell 2011, 5–6). The inherent problem is how to define or let alone measure performance. There are also

many ways to define performance management. Like mentioned earlier, despite wishful thinking the aspired link between performance and HRM has proved to be complicated to prove and contain many variables that make it difficult to manage. For example international projects are known for their uncertainty, and in these uncertain environments "human being is surprising, you don't probably know yourself how to perform in such a situation" (I22).

Still, in HRM it is quite plausibly assumed that when people can influence the design of their work systems they perform better, and that the appraisal and feedback systems should support the continuous development of this area. Furthermore, most people have certain expectations on the reward system. All in all, Twinning experts being interviewed viewed that that demanding conditions during international assignment have to be compensated financially, as "those are not fun trips when you go thousands of kilometres away, sometimes very primitive condition, family might be left back home (...) the financial benefit also makes it meaningful to go" (I11) although it was stressed that money cannot be the only motive. Talk about rewards and performance also has its cultural and discursive dimension; certain things are or are not considered fair and rewarding in the specific work setting.

There has been some urge in HRM literature to elevate individual motivational matters related to the "work itself," and then dismiss hygiene factors altogether. People interviewed expressed that naturally one has to care about the project, one has to want to be involved with the foreigners, and see personal learning and challenging yourself as motivating. However, money also matters, and not only as a personal reward. Especially more experienced and older civil servants usually have a higher salary to start with and other responsibilities in Finland requiring attention. They might perceive that international project creates additional costs that are not compensated, although it was viewed as helpful that in Twinning projects the EU pays compensation both for the individual and the sender organisation. Furthermore, seeing when money was wasted because one tried to achieve too much in a single project was often viewed frustrating. Civil servants also expressed that they expect to see value for money and use language where the role of projects is to provide funding for the employer.

All in all, when it comes to the role of money as a personal reward, it

is viewed that in Twinning projects people get extra financial rewards to compensate the higher living costs abroad, which can make them more attractive for younger people. Especially younger people in international projects presumably also want to demonstrate that they can do the job. Some people interviewed suspected that the arithmetics involving the compensation of international assignments are not clear for some people who have only worked in Finland, and that it can cause envy. Whatever the case, many feel that the projects specialists could always be paid better because in international project work one has to often work long hours and the work is generally speaking demanding.

In the Finnish public sector organisation there is a feeling that the work one is doing should be motivating in itself and that pay is something that is decided in some other place. Those in the managerial position often felt that it was something they would like to influence more, because "as a government agency we don't possess very good mechanisms for that" (I12). As a result, some Finnish organisations seem to find it easier to recruit specialists to their Twinning projects from the Baltic and other Eastern European countries where the salary levels are lower.

Discussions with the Finnish civil servants about project performance in international EU projects were not always that cheerful, often dealing with pragmatic matters of how to eke out a satisfactory performance. As one manager articulated, "I don't know if anything motivates anymore [in these EU projects], because people are pretty fed up with this bureaucracy and that they cause quite a lot of extra work" (I19). Others with longer experience also expressed that when one gets bored to the work one is doing in Finland, international projects can be motivating simply because of the change of scenery. Like one specialist with long international experience summarised the elements of intrinsic motivation in international projects: "Often there are so many things to do that the fact that you survive alive with the project and even get things executed makes you feel quite good" (I17).

It is also worth pointing out that in organisations where the top management had apparently succeeded in creating a more positive attitude towards international projects, people were expressing that "there's a general spirit that Twinnings are nice (…) even making an offer is nice (…) it could be that there's a team, the team has a common goal" (I14). It was seen that

it was just "nice" to meet the contacts in the target country, and that it is "nice" when people are there voluntarily doing a common thing, making people feel that doing "project work is nice (…) it's so challenging and nice (…) that everything goes well when you pay effort for it" (I15). It must be noted that in these organisations project participation was quite focused and these specialists perceived their role in the public sector simply requires sharing information and taking part in international co-operation.

Sometimes people who were used to relatively open governance style in the Finnish public sector reported feelings of unfair treatment in EU projects: knowledge about the practices was not shared and a feedback system simply focused on making sure that the money was used. Some pointed out that for example HR development and other human issues are difficult to measure, especially if the Finnish home organisation does not focus on utilising international projects to develop substance and individuals. Furthermore, some considered it slightly odd that nobody asked the local personnel how well they perceived the project was handled. This was despite sharing information with locals in the right way was considered important to guarantee the project performance in the first place, and a failure in this was acknowledged to cause resistance and broken relationships.

C) Developing people

This HRM practice area is concerned with developing competence and the career system. In interviews development as such was viewed as a key motive for international activities, arguing that "there is no point in thinking that we have discovered everything worth while, in order to develop things we have stay involved in this international co-operation" (I20). The term development must be understood in somewhat broader sense than defined by Beer et al. (1984), where development dealt with mainly individual career development. In the case of development and international assignments one has to make a distinction between personal development taking place during the international assignment cycle on what can be called an individual level, and the use of international assignments as a human resources development tool on a more aggregate level, such as developing the competence of the specific organisation or the whole public sector. HRM literature often advocates that ideally these two dimensions

should be well integrated, but in the case of Finnish public sector they sometimes seem to exist in distinct fiefdoms of their own. Some even claim that developing the public sector can increase the competitiveness of the whole country usually in some neoliberal ways, but this is beyond the scope of this research.

Although sometimes idealised, challenging long-term international assignment can be a place for a major personal development, but most people interviewed failed to see how it advances their career in their home country. Some of those interviewed pointed out that career development in the Finnish public sector is not usually horizontal, and therefore the only ones who benefit from international assignments are those seeking top management positions or those who were able to experience international project work at the beginning of their career. As one younger project worker expressed: "Without that EU project I would not be here (…) it was a springboard for me" (I18). However, most of those interviewed expressed that long-term international assignments are demanding and one has to utilise the whole professionalism, and a bit more. As one specialist expressed:

> I feel that it develops people hugely, it's in different language, you have to take into account different cultures, that people are different, it teaches adaptability, citation awareness, and everything (…) that you make it work when there are people from different cultures. (I15)

It was often viewed that after international assignment one begins to see things in a broader framework, to learn to see connections and other perspectives. This is related to both international environment and the various roles one has in the project. It requires new information and ability to present their views for others.

One person with engineering background explained that "you had to take so different roles, you had to be a political negotiator, you had to be a mediator, you had to be creative and... various things, also motivating those people who were facing many challenges" (I21). Furthermore, people reported that international project work increases one's knowledge of other people and their courage to react in "a less Finnish way" (which was seen as a positive thing). Apparently international projects like Twinning help the Finnish civil servants to develop their self-esteem after surviving

difficult circumstances. Those in managerial positions also have to help project workers to reflect their own expertise, and find diplomatic ways to promote this expertise.

It is almost as people were telling that their way of thinking during the international assignment becomes so much "more strategic" that they often cannot utilise all of their experience in their daily work after they return, causing frustration. The problem is not that this development takes place, is is just perceived that it somehow remains too personal or underutilised. For example many told about the networks they had build during the international assignment and then left behind mostly without utilising them again, which was seen as a wasted opportunity for the public sector because "networking makes dealing international affairs faster, and time is always money" (I3). It seems that development related to international assignments is sort of outsourced for the individuals themselves.

In interviews it was often agreed that ideally "one should take the advance of the persons placed in international organisations, to utilise their knowledge and contacts on this side" (I3), but it seemed that "it's up to every person what you get and how you possibly utilise or gain from that experience [international project assignment]" (I17). As such, the people interviewed identified a perceived gap between the development they had experienced, and the utilisation of that in the development of the home organisation, let alone the whole public sector. These people often presented themselves as someone who had international development orientation they viewed the public sector in general was lacking. Many also expressed that they think about these issues either alone or with other international project people with similar experiences.

Some viewed that there was simply "no time" for development activities these days, as international project "experts are so busy going from a project to a project that they don't have time to stop" (I10), to tell their ideas and share their expertise and tacit knowledge. When facing recent or anticipated budged cuts there might be less money for other training activities, so Twinning style international projects were now advertised as instruments for developing Finnish personnel. To be fair those who advocated this often felt that the expansion of international project work could also benefit themselves, but the argument was that "normally developing personnel cost money when you have to pay some personnel development

service, for some consultant or somewhere, but this [Twinning money] is paid for the organisation and those people so that they go abroad and return as a different, hopefully as better and developed worker" (I7).

Then again there were examples in organisations facing shrinking budged where the managerial side confessed that it was them personally who had been neglecting the whole development thing, and tired to argue why:

> To tell you the truth we haven't been thinking it [the HRD aspect] a lot... This is more like a bonus here. (…) We don't really have much lessons learned style activities... I think I would have organised such if I though it would be that useful. I don't know. Somehow I feel that these projects are quite tense, and when everything is happily made ready you rather think something else. (I19)

The project life is simply seen as so stressful that there was no willingness for collective development activities anymore. In the end the development of competence was expected to be done during their own time. Development was viewed as something that "depends on your own activity" (I16), something that is "sort of private entrepreneurship" (I17). While in some cases this can work out fine, from the critical perspective the downside of demanding self-management is that issues employees are facing are internalised (Holmqvist and Spicer 2013, 14). For example if the person finds her competence lacking or underutilised after self-auditing her work, she might be let to think that the problem is her own making and not a result of, say, irreconcilable demands stemming from the surrounding work environment.

D) Maintaining involvement between shareholders

Compared with the other HR practice areas covered, the fourth one usually dubbed as "involvement" is a more abstract one. In interviews it was described as something related to keeping "your eyes and ears open" as "it's important that this employer makes sure that the person knows what is expected, what pressures or what expectations might come (I1). One can even ask if it is a distinct HR practice at all or more like a social glue or a necessary part of interaction that constructs the project organisation and the

employment relationships in the first place. It could also be that a Finnish public sector way of framing the domain of people management usually leaves out industrial relations matters as something that are not associated to be a management task. Involvement is almost self-evident to ensure the functioning of the tripartite project management in Twinning environments.

Most people agreed that problems arise when some project stakeholders are not that interested in developing the area the project is dealing. Often this party is in the top management; also in the host country where sometimes high-ranking public sector officials are only involved when "secretaries bring them project papers to sign" (I6). It seems that people in the Finnish public sector only start to talk about involvement when they feel that they would like to influence more on the content of their work or the HR solutions, or when something negative takes place that requires intervention. Involvement seemed to contain control aspect, or like one public sector manager explained:

> We follow her work, you get feedback, it might be positive or negative in a way that also if things go badly then we intervene... We must not create a situation where for example the person who can´t handle her work effort, or there are any other difficulties, that we here in the home office don´t intervene. (I1)

Some of the problems with perceived inadequate levels of involvement have already been mentioned when it comes to the desire to influence the role clarity, building of the project team, and especially things related to inadequate influence on the career options after the long-term international assignment to utilise the experiences that have been gained. Many with long public sector experience expressed that during their international assignment they could (or in some cases had to) finally work like an entrepreneur, independently responsible for planning how to do things and to pragmatically solve the problems. Then again involvement with the top management was sometimes viewed as lacking and some of those interviewed had felt themselves as outsiders because of this.

These observations resonate with the premises of the so-called high performance HRM, where people who can influence their work are more motivated and perform better. However, in the Finnish public sector ev-

eryone does not expect or want to be involved in doing all the decisions, as they feel it is not their role as a civil servant. All this can implicate that the basic assumptions of mainstream HRM do not always hold when in comes to the role of involvement in the Finnish public sector. The context specific nature of involvement or the skill to judge when and when not to be involved might make things clearer in Finland, but becomes more problematic when operating as an expatriate with the different administrative cultures. People interviewed expressed that "in the end it´s about making a contact" (I10) in the right way in multicultural environment. One returns to this theme later on.

4.2   Role of strategy and culture

Strategic value of the Twinning activity can be viewed from multiple perspectives: From common EU enlargement and neighbourhood policy perspective; from the perspective of national foreign, security, trade and development policy goals; from the perspective of the internationalisation goals of ministries and bureaux and advancement of the policy goals they represent; from the perspective of the receiver country need; and from the perspective of professional development of the individual expert...

Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland Twinning Evaluation (2013, 19; author's translation)

Next the aim is to analyse the role of strategy and culture in international public sector project context. Culture has an important role in all IHRM and there have also been many attempts to somehow make IHRM more strategic. To begin with there are various policies in the public sector attempting to guide the actions. These policies often seem to take the form of strategy talk that legitimises and even integrates various people management practices. The so-called gap between rhetorics and realities is self-evident in international projects, or like one project worker expressed it: "There are... well the reality does not always correspond with these fancy... but it is like that with many other things... one is there inside, face the problems there, and solve the situation based on resources available then" (I5). Still, most people interviewed wanted to talk about the desire to develop public sector "strategic management" as a perceived solution to improve HRM

in international projects. Strategy is viewed to be something "bigger" that should guide the HRM and all management in international administration, something "strategic" where one would like to be part in.

Then again when working in international projects one evidently soon encounters something that are commonly preferred as the effects of culture (however defined). Then again what makes these international projects different is not only the international assignment when one works in a cross-cultural environment, but the nature of projects where the focus is also on altering cultural practices. There is a Twinning joke stating that working in a former socialist country is easier if one already has all the prejudices before going there. Joking aside, every international project worker has to spend time and energy interpreting and coping with the cultural factors. But before analysing the conceptualisations of the culture attention is turned to analyse what is meant of strategy and why it keeps popping up in this public sector context.

4.2.1 Strategising international governance

Strategy is such a grandiose word that one should be cautious not to overuse it. In this research the original intention was not to be associated with "strategic management" so much, but the people interviewed decided otherwise. It could be that in the contemporary Finnish public sector strategy talk is so integral part of how administration operates that multiple strategy discourses were mobilised in interviews to legitimise chosen or aspired management practices. In the context of internationalising the Finnish public sector this strategy talk was not limited to positioning organisations "strategically", but also had a foreign policy dimension. Whilst strategy literature has slowly started to include both the development of "strategically conscious" human resources and even seeing strategising comprising negotiation processes, it still largely misses the macro-view that includes the politics of strategic management (see Alvesson and Willmott 2012, chapter 6). From critical perspective it has also been warned that colonising talk about strategy can be an attempt of the management to legitimise their power, or an agenda of others (for example international project workers) to secure their place in the so-called strategic core workforce. All in all what is good strategy depends on the metanarrative that one subscribes to.

In the public sector democratic decision-making process is often incremental or muddling through like Lindblom (1959) maintained in his seminal public administration research. This process also contains bargaining and compromises, and in these days the so-called strategic choices. All in all many Finnish public sector organisations had started to think more carefully about what role they should give for international projects and sometimes scaled back these activities after the heydays of mushrooming international project participation. It is also worth pointing out that from resource-based perspective the participation of public sector organisations in international projects had caused resistance, but also opened organisations possibilities to acquire and utilise external resources through project networks. However, ways to connect international projects with activities in Finland were often viewed as lacking.

It was perceived that international projects were left for too few, making strategic integration difficult. It was pointed out that even management in Finland might not exactly know what takes place in international projects. As one project person summarised: "These [international projects] circulate like some satellites alone there in the country in question, if there aren't accidentally many Finnish projects there, and then the utilisation of these projects here [in Finnish public sector organisation] is totally not-existent, which is a shame" (I2). Project people interviewed also viewed that international expertise acquired during the international assignments is currently "like capital that doesn't produce anything" (I3), and that in Finnish public sector one "should be able to see that this is important work that is productive for the bureau in many ways, one should be able to concretise the benefits" (I3) Some confessed that it is challenging to think international strategy issues as there are so many aspects involved, or like one manager himself complained: "Often the knowledge [about international activities] is lacking and sort of clear view is missing, kind of strategic management level clear vision about these international activities doesn't exist, and things like that [international strategy documents] have rarely been produced" (I17).

As such, it was perceived as the job of the leadership to appreciate international project activities, to encourage others to take part and see the benefits. Many of those interviewed also viewed that the priorities of international activities in the Finnish public sector remained unclear,

contributing to the age old public sector problems of finding the unit and people who should be responsible. Furthermore, there can be so many projects and activities taking place simultaneously that one can lose focus of what is important and "strategic." International projects usually require heavy individual commitment, but the benefits of these projects were said to be difficult to measure as they are not concrete enough and added benefits can be difficult to show.

The foreign policy dimensions of international public sector project work

All in all, those interviewed often had tried to strategise international project work, but had some problems linking it to the strategic discourses of the public sector, let alone integrating it into Finnish foreign policy. In private sector IHRM research foreign policy issues are not usually mentioned at all, or at least are not connected with strategy work. However, in the public sector the days when Finnish foreign policy strategy was decided by a small court and dedicated diplomats are over, meaning that public servants working in international project environments also have to consider these issues. Some of those interviewed perceived that it also contains problematic elements:

> As a normal civil servant I'm sometimes somewhat annoyed that the national policy, and I'm not talking only about Finland here, but also other [EU] member states, is in a way quite far away from daily work. Our politicians decide other things, and we here try to toil other things... (I14)

Another civil servant complained that the governments often do not show any evidence of possessing deeper knowledge of the matters they write down in their policy documents, that is if there is a policy document. That is to say that governments and projects come and go, but civil servants stay. Then who decides? "Are we tied to this government's term in office, their programme, just to that minister and that minister's lines, or can we on the international side make strategic plans that last even over that government's term in the first place..." (I17)

Furthermore, some viewed that professional civil servants can work with politically sensitive matters, but it requires that "politics should be kept separated from the day to day project work" because it was viewed that "there are different places for political negotiations" (I21). Sometimes this cannot be done, which places another set of requirements for international project people. They need to adopt a role and mindset of a diplomat or a negotiator, and preferably possess broad skills and knowledge about the ways Finnish public sector and EU administration works. In Twinning projects the ways administration is organised is up to the individual countries and organisations themselves, and everybody does it with their own style. The EU gives guidance for this as the financier, but this guidance has to be constantly interpreted and project goals negotiated. It was reported that it helps if the locals are committed and have the capacity to absorb new practices. This is not automatic, and as an international project person "you have to first think how intensive work you can do" (I3) and get to try to get the relevant information to support your decisions.

According to the basic principal-agent theory there are two basic strategies when the distribution of relevant information is asymmetrical: a system of oversight to exercise control or attempts to cultivate mutual trust (agency theory, see for example Eisenhardt 1989). Although some wished they had more "strategic control" of the projects to get things done, they had begun to perceive the transaction costs of excessive control simply too high. Some also viewed that the parties are so used to technical assistance projects that the strict project rules and project plans in Twinning might cause resistance. If one cannot control one has to learn to trust, as "[v]arious different expectations that are not said publicly will cause problems along the road" (I10). In Twinning projects, it was agreed that negotiating with project stakeholders the negotiate their expectations should be done in a quite early phase of the project, but this was viewed to require teaching how the EU wants to run these projects, to make contact with the beneficiary, and most of all attempting to build trust among the key people. It was seen that it helps in trust building if professional Finnish specialists stay calm, are pragmatic, have a certain dignity, and do not talk too much.

However, diplomacy is more than building trust and in the end international relations are constituted through complex processes, often privileging military-diplomatic complex, that empower certain actors to speak in the

name of spatial territory (Dillon 1989). As such, lacking "Finnish interests" was used to explain limited involvement in some countries where there has not been much traditional Finnish co-operation. Some questioned this as "institutions should open their views and see these [countries] as future partners" (I3), while also advocating globalisation discourse to legitimise wider international participation. International project people did not value actors "who think they can live in Finnish context" (I3), and asked "what is the Finnish interest to go very far away to countries that [might not be] potential future partners in EU" (I7).

In short, some international project people hinted international experience had helped them to develop a mindset for international governance, sort of an ability to see things one normally does not see, including the pros and cons of Finnish administration expertise. These people also stressed the importance of diplomatic skills, as "in these projects you're always representing Finland (…) then you have to behave like it" (I10). During the international assignment one is often quite alone in a foreign environment and everyone has to learn new things. As one specialists summarised:

> The more south one goes the Finnish way ceases to work… One has to persuade. What I admire in every Finnish expert is that they didn't have the attitude that we have things much better. (…) It is very important to stress that we are equal in this and find solutions together. (I4)

The diplomatic side of the international public sector project work requires dealing with the key people in beneficiary country who are in high positions, vice ministers and other people who are used to getting what they want. Contacts with the EU representatives in the beneficiary country (the delegation of the Commission) also can make things easier, as it helps them to see the project in a good light. In short, one has to negotiate with other people from different cultures, "so you have to be creative and negotiate to find a humane package, what is sensible" (I10). Sometimes stressful swapping between different roles quickly, acting in different social situations and controlling feelings requires what is can be called emotional labour (see Hochschild 2003). In addition to these demands, people interviewed reported that in international project work they had to pay attention to various cultural matters because of the nature of the work.

4.2.2 Role of administrative cultures

The problems of positivist and even paternal conceptualisations of national culture in mainstream IHRM have been noted before in this thesis. To summarise, the vicissitudes of the meaning and explanatory worth of "culture" that begun decades ago in cultural anthropology was only the beginning (Geertz 2000, 12–17). The idea of seeing cultural systems as holistic and unitary has since then been contested, and in social constructivism culture is often not seen as a unified fabric, but a heterogeneous area of discursive practices that construct the world. From postcolonial perspective Bhabha (2004) pointed out that cultural context should be understood relationally, often in relation to the colonial encounter. The attention has been shifting to processes taking place between cultures, and to the self who interprets other cultures (the importance of translocal processes, see especially Ferguson 2006; the conceptualisations of culture in development administration, cf. Rottenburg 2009).

It appears that relational way to conceptualise culture is also well expressed in the views of Twinning experts, who nowadays tend to express the roles of a negotiator and facilitator when it comes to cultural differences:

> Often our experts maybe before hand think that they go there [to the beneficiary country] to tell how we do things here, when factually the most important thing what in there is that you should be with big ears and listen about what is the overall situation, and what are the possibilities of these people, and act more as a facilitator. (I13)

In Twinning projects, one has to take the local administration culture in beneficiary countries into account. However, the so-called local cultures do not exist apart from "the wider and encompassing relations within which they are defined (Ferguson 2006, 66). The nature of project work in Twinning context shifts the focus to the space between administrative cultures, where large part of public sector international project work takes place. It can be labelled as the interstitial space, where individual project workers attempt to interpret their position in ways that makes working practically possible. Furthermore, in this thesis the concept of administrative culture is adopted from Peters (2010, 36), but broadened to refer to all shared

cultural aspects that affect how the public sector workforce interprets the conduct of public administration in a given administration system.

The so-called local administration cultures are also understood relationally, because "if you for example develop something in administration, then you have to build the solutions that it arises from the local area of operations and think what works there" (I1). However, people interviewed pointed out that "our mission is not to change their administrative culture directly in these projects" (I8), but instead one has "to be very flexible there and find the ideas that interest the beneficiary side" (I10). In this sort of activity foreign administrator "should remember that we go there to the [beneficiary] country as their quest" (I12).

However, it was also viewed that Finnish civil servants have too high a competence for certain cultural context, preventing them from seeing things from the perspective of others. In a way, those Finns suffered from the same cultural blindness than the representatives of some large EU member states, blindness that was manifested as lack of flexibility towards anything else but their own cultural practices. Some suspected that it had simple geopolitical reasons: "As a main rule you could say that the bigger the country, the more difficult it is, as the bureaucracy is more faceless and often bigger countries have a big ego" (I10)

All in all it seems that deterministic conceptualisations of culture had not completely disappeared, but following our politically correct narrative it is now prohibited to too explicitly use cultural patterns to interpret actions because it is viewed that it can offend the representatives of the beneficiary country. For example sometimes in the Twinning projects people interviewed recalled problems had occurred when "we export or at least exported these models of operation to administration culture environment that in my opinion wasn't totally mature to receive them" namely because "they were not willing to abandon their own practices, and the willingness to accept new models was lacking" (I20). Instead the Finns being interviewed viewed that it could be that "sometimes we are maybe too good, and if we aren't able to lower the bar so that the beneficiary can receive that knowledge, development can't take place too fast" (I12). Then again it was expressed that "if the locals seem to act in a completely irrational way from a Finnish point of view, it's perfectly normal in these projects" (I11).

It appears that the role of national cultures has not disappeared in

international administration, but was seen mostly in ways how different administration systems operate. Finnish project professionals had tried to understand the dynamics of different administration cultures when faced with situations that are not typical in Finnish administration. Thus, the role of culture was recognised when it was causing problems: "The distance of 5 meters to get vice minister's signature was moving 10 centimetres a day, if I remember correctly" (I4). In this example the slow movement of local bureaucracy compared with the Finnish public sector was perceived to be related to the local culture.

During the last decades or so the rhetorics of both international administration and management have started to emphasise the importance of "learning from the others" and "building international networks." In the views expressed by the Finnish Twinning professionals the rationale in international administration was also to build networks that later help operations on other geographical locations. The so-called cultural distance was perceived to be something that makes co-operation with the foreigners more challenging. Many interviewed civil servants viewed that in places where work culture is closer to the Finnish way, "or could you say closer to the European way" (I11), projects seem to go smoother. This was because in these international capacity building projects the aim is also to change the local administration culture, which was viewed problematic mainly because "their way of operating, and their culture that is quite difficult to change after thousands of years" (I21). One could say that perceived "cultural distance" plays a role in Twinning, but during their international assignments people also started to see variations in the local culture.

The problems encountered with other administration cultures had also turned the attention to the practices of the Finnish project specialists. Most realised that all the things in the world do not work like in Finnish public administration, and the "biggest mistake is to assume that when you go to some department and discuss with some official like in Finland, that it doesn't go like that, you have to grasp how things work" (I10). Many viewed that this was the main motivation to be personally involved in international projects in the first place, as when "you work in a foreign culture, you always gain your own experience, that is one reason for the whole thing that you get involved" (I17). This was said to create "a multicultural situation where our experts constantly have to reflect compared to own domestic activities (…)

you can't get this knowledge from some books" (I13). Some had also started to evaluate the benefits of learning from other cultures, and concluded that international co-operation can only serve all parties if "their organisation has about the same maturity level than us" (I19).

To summarise, interviewed people perceived that working in a cross-cultural environment is educational, as it "teaches adaptability, citation awareness, and everything" (I15). The focus in international projects can be said to shift from managing cultural differences to working effectively in a cross-cultural environment, which requires understanding the local culture, but also our own cultural position in order to communicate effectively. As one project processional with long international experience summarised:

> I've been thinking this cross-cultural communication more and more... Abroad your argumentation sometimes has to start from quite deep. (…) Sometimes it can be that you never learn to understand the unknown, as it can be so mysterious, well, the administration culture, culture in general, and the political system such that you never get in, but you can try to learn something about it, you can learn to operate in that environment. As a foreign specialist you inevitably remain somewhat outsider. (I7)

Then again in the midst of international assignment one simply cannot overplay the cultural differences. One has to both acknowledge that there are cultural differences, but still in the end trust that "humans are similar" in some fundamental ways. One returns to the practical implications of this philosophical observation later on.

Working in interstitial spaces

So cultures are relational, constructed in inscription and communication processes between the subjects and the relations power (see Cliffort and Marcus 1986). Then again much of international project work seems to take place in what could be labelled as interstitial spaces lying between the cultures, where the project worker experience liminality, interprets others and herself, and does her best to cope with liminality. Many of those interviewed viewed that one of the biggest differences between domestic work and international project work is that "in there you operate according

to the ways of the local administration" (I4), and this local administration often interprets the nature of the project differently than the person on international assignment from their own cultural context. Like one Finnish public sector manager expressed it:

> Every administration is obviously its own case, because every country has own things in the background, maybe partially this administration history and administration structure, but also own legislation. (…) Because of these basic differences the common goals and things are in a way not very concrete, but more related to the procedures and processes in itself, how to make them smooth, meaningful and effective. (I20)

These different ways of thinking between the administrations can make their co-operation in international projects more demanding. It was suggested that people from another counties taking part in projects should take time to form a common vision, so that they could work there together as a project team that is welded together.

It was agreed by practically everyone interviewed that strictly following the protocol of one administration culture leads to a certain collision course and in international public sector projects it might not be so fruitful to assume that our solutions are always the best ones. International project persons fostered an attitude where "you have to look at the phenomena in an open-minded way, learn yourself if there's something to learn" (I20). Taking the rhetorics of partnership seriously, the project professionals viewed that Finnish interest is more in exporting and developing Finnish expertise, as "learning sort of has two ways, which develops Finnish administration in that way" (I7).

However, the effects of culture were seen not only in the cultural difference between different countries, but between different organisations. What appears to be like a cultural monolith is not on closer examination. As one person expressed, during international project one "also discovered that the work atmosphere in different institutions can be quite different (…) there can be different levels of motivation" (I22). In international projects there can be very active parties who find time, expertise and willingness to co-operate, but if these do not exist one "has to be adaptable and use the rubber band to find the common tune for the work" (I22).

The people interviewed also expressed that this makes the international project work extremely interesting if it works. After repatriation many had time to reflect their international project assignment and it was the role of the international project specialist as a translator or negotiator between the cultures that seemed to gather their attention afterwards:

> Now you realise that you could have achieved much more. We should've been thinking the angle of approach somehow, as we were exporting ready models.[81] But the approach should have been at first to make the difference between the administration cultures more understandable. (…) The sender and receiver were tuned to different wavelengths, and we should have had to explicate that cultural difference in the beginning, there should have been some translation phase. (I20)

For many it has been emancipating to realise that cultural change involved in the projects where knowledge is being transferred between the administrative cultures takes time and patience. People who had tried to proceed too fast or too effectively, to technocratically try to solve the problem and go away, had experienced difficulties. The idea of these projects was to slowly share the expert's own expertise and discuss matters. Sometimes the slow "progress" was viewed as frustrating by the Finnish specialists, but many still viewed that the whole rationale of the projects was either to harmonise different cultural practices and/or to learn from other different cultures. Without cultural differences, the whole Twinning project work would be pointless.

In a way the liminal experiences of project persons can be viewed to increase the repertoire of representations available, but individuals have to be able to reflect on their condition, or achieving moral identity becomes difficult. Certain "role carving" takes place in project environments, where the perceived project problems and goals are flexibly reinterpreted to suit the interests of the individuals working there. Those interviewed mentioned different coping strategies they had utilised: various stress management tools were mentioned (everything from alcohol to yoga). Many viewed

---

81 Known as the "blueprint approach" in development aid and a "standardised package" in science and technology studies research.

that discussing the procedures of handling problematic cases beforehand in Finland could be useful.

Still, some shared rather Kafkaesque experiences with the researcher (Kafkaesque elements of organisational life, cf. also Hodson et al. 2013). These were related but not limited to high levels of inefficient bureaucracy and time consuming struggles, different ways of understanding deadlines, simple failures to communicate in cross-cultural environments, difficulties to understand how others operate, impossible demands placed by the home office or the EU, or too high a workload in unfamiliar environment. On top of this there had been more mundane things related to the local conditions like "rats jumping on the table, you don't get food, toilets aren't clean" (I7), or "+50 degrees without air conditioning in some office" (I10). It can be very demanding for an expatriate project worker facing these situations alone in a foreign environment, where the foreignness is also related to unknown administrative culture.

A general consequence of all this was stress although some had also adopted the blame mode. Drinking problems among international project people are not unheard of. An international project worker can sometimes feel really alone during her international assignment, especially if the cooperation with locals is demanding and home organisation in Finland starts to doubt that the person is not doing her job well. Furthermore, the social safety net consisting of friends and family can be lacking during the assignment. At the same time the workload can be quite high.

The coping strategies utilised in these situations include seeking clarity by discussing things or just learning to tolerate uncertainty. However, this can be easier said than done when the person is alone in foreign country, is tired and maybe wants to stay alone. It can help to hear about similar experiences, as in this way one "realised that all this is not because of me, that this is incredibly difficult no matter what I do (laughs), and no matter from what direction I approach there is always a wall in front of me" (I21). If people still want to continue the project despite difficulties like these, they apparently had to manage their feelings; maybe rationalise and depersonalise their experiences, maybe even attempt to construct a "genuine interest" to the beneficiary country so that one "finds motivation" to work for "their own good." These are simply examples of what learning to work alone between administrative cultures might require.

4.3   Rethinking and destabilising IHRM

Preparations for Twinning projects, decision-making, and execution have become simpler and more effective during the past five years. The new Twinning manual is considered consistent and clear. Despite this, these practices vary between projects in different member states, sometimes causing interpretative disagreements. Part of this variation can be explained by different administration cultures, institutional structures and the level of commitment in the target countries...

Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland Twinning Evaluation (2013, 13; author's translation)

In reflexive research part of the aim is also to "investigate how things hang together and what alternative social arrangements are possible" (Alvesson 2011a; 137). When interpreting empirical material, there have been three main themes that do not quite add up coherently with the IHRM frame. These themes are related to postcolonial dynamics in international project work, the problems of expressed resistance towards managerial thinking in interviews, and the role of bureaucratic scripts in international administration. As it turns out these issues are related, and exploring some of these issues requires moving to theoretically more contested domains, so to speak to transgress the boundaries of IHRM to rethink some of its Eurocentric, managerial and anthropocentric assumptions. A partial pragmatist solution of how to react to this critique is presented later on in this thesis.

Postcolonial dynamics of international project work

In their side streets, postcolonial science and technology studies scholars have waxed lyrical about the problematic symbiotic relationship between "the European expansion and the advance of modern sciences," maintaining that cultures often "produce knowledge in ways similar to how they produce other artefacts" and in so doing utilise their place in "global economic and political hierarchies" (Harding 2008; 136, 139). Previously in this thesis IHRM was examined from postcolonial perspective. These postcolonial dynamics are also present in Twinning projects, but are perhaps more complex with less black-and-white characteristics than some scholars imply.

For example when it comes to those Twinning projects that the people interviewed for this study deemed the most successful, many pointed out the Estonian case where there was strong willingness to abandon the old (Soviet) practices altogether. There the whole local civil service personnel was replaced by a younger generation after the collapse of the Evil Empire. In many other places the situation was somewhat different, as one public sector manager ponders:

> In Estonia that can serve as a model of success, there the management was changed on all levels to new actors... They were fucking young people. But then again in many other places I claim that... Based on my experience the management layer was so to speak converts, people who had their strong own historical tradition in their bygones, and this bunch pretended that they were looking for a new direction. (I20)

It was repeated in interviews that it was the older generation in the beneficiary countries, mostly higher in the hierarchy of the local administration that was resisting EU influence. Some suspected that they felt as outsiders as they had not been experiencing strong Western cultural influence when young and maybe lacked the language skills. The others viewed that their historical ballast was too heavy and they simply did not want to explain their past actions or to lose their turf. Those interviewed for this study also suspected that the other villains were larger EU member states with a strong colonial past. Like one public sector manager expressed:

> I see that Finland hasn't done this that much, but you have to say that in earlier years many European great powers that shall remain anonymous have made the mistake of exporting their own model and poured it from top to bottom. Well you can say that we know that in many countries where for example French public sector organisations have been, the starting point has been almost to export the French model... Or some other country, France is not the only one who is guilty. But you then see this in those countries. (I1)

In interviews many told about the cultural challenges with the French in Twinning projects. Especially those who had worked in Twinning pro-

jects in the North Africa reported that the behaviour of the French made Twinning projects difficult, the French structures were perceived as "quite bureaucratic" and "in a class of their own" compared with northern European countries, and the Finns disliked the way the French openly exported their own models. As one specialist tells:

> In a way they continued the colonial actions in a softer form, and through that they had networks, big networks, for example huge embassy doing many things, and well, they are in a completely different position there than some Finns... (I2)

The official history of the Finnish republic maintains that Finland has not been a colonial power as we never had overseas colonies. This was also mentioned in interviews, maintaining that "there is this thing that Finland is a small country, we aren't some culture occupiers, we understand the problems of a small country" (I7). Maybe this allows Finnish civil servants to spot the post/neocolonial activities of the certain other actors, but can make them somewhat blind to their own more indirect ways of doing it. In fact the Finnish civil servants saw colonial motives in the actions of the most large EU member states, and in Swedish foreign policy because of their eagerness to export their ideology as something morally superior, in the behaviour of the local elite of the beneficiary countries who had benefited too much from maintaining postcolonial links, and in the attitudes of individual Finnish project people whose attitude was sometimes characterised using a term *Besserwisserism*.

However, the actions of Finland as a member state were not deemed colonial. It was even complained that the Twinning system maintains postcolonial structures in away that discriminates Finland, because some beneficiary countries presumably want to co-operate with their same old partners from the colonial days. When it comes to working in postcolonial environments, some project specialists told about enigmatic project experiences where individual project worker sort of found herself in an environment were postcolonial struggles of resistance and the difficult national identities were present. It was in this predominantly postcolonial context where project worker as an expatriate was also representing her own member state and the EU, and it was sometimes considered stress-

ful to maintain a nimbus of neutrality in that role. All in all it appears that in international project work postcolonial dynamics sometimes get so enmeshed and hybridised that it can be difficult to find out who is the villain and why certain things are resisted.

Public sector resistance towards managerialism

Sometimes there was also slight resistance towards IHRM in interviews or people experienced problems of verbalising their own experiences with the managerial language of IHRM. As one person, herself a manager, expressed: "IHRM as a word combination is meaningful, but what is the focus? Who manages, how multinational environments, and these type of things. This is more unclear for me…" (I14). However, resisting management from within the public sector is somewhat problematic. Like Adorno and Horkheimer (1979) cynically argued, if someone tries to change the world they probably cannot do it without administration, as living without administration and management seems to be, like Bauman (2011, 106) deftly summarises, a quixotic dream and a paradox that cannot be solved. However, it is certainly possible to look for more bearable management styles and resist overtly managerialist language. Like one interviewed project manager who seemed to show some resistance towards IHRM expressed, in international projects her task was simply "to look that the kids play nicely in their own sandbox" (I8). It could be that these public servants expressed indirect criticism by allegorically showing their scepticism about the issue (use of allegories, see Law 2004, chapter 2004).

Most notably it was also the strong managerialism in the beneficiary country administration that was resisted and the locals in the beneficiary countries were almost viewed as the victims of local managerialism and bureaucratic administration. Like one project worker explained:

Their way of management is also very different, got to do with that they don't have this idea of teamwork and open discussion, it can be very much about giving orders. (…) Our administration culture is as a starting point very democratic, we are not very authoritarian, that is people talk very openly with each other, and that is not the situation in that many [beneficiary] countries. (…) [Their] administrative culture

is very authoritarian, very bureaucratic, and also not at all transparent. (…) It can be also frustrating that they don't get the information, they don't have a sort of dialogical culture. (I8)

Indeed, some Finnish civil servants seemed to think that they had almost a moral right to spread more humanistic or democratic management styles such as teamwork, or models of administration where specialists spend more time on the field to support others.[82] Sometimes it was also the local administration that seemed to show resistance towards Finnish models. Some of those interviewed had been wondering why the smarter so-called best practices that seem to work well "universally" do not work in certain beneficiary countries. Some considered that it was because of the local cultural and political traditions, or barriers because of strong persons. However, some international project specialists that were interviewed also pointed out that in Twinning context "different administration culture" actually means "less developed":

When you go abroad, well the politically correct way would be to say that you are dealing with a different administration, usually less developed... Let's say that the processes there in the administration are different compared to what you're used to. (I7)

Although people interviewed stressed that Twinning "is done together, it's partnership" (I15), there is an inherent paradox where "equal partners" are only those who co-operate with the EU, leading specialists from the member states to believe that their models are at least somewhat better, and sometimes the representatives of the beneficiaries to suspect that Twinning is hegemony disguised as participation (see also Rotternburg 2009, 84).[83] Drawing from Foucault (2010), Ahonen and Tienari (2009) have conceptualised EU project system as a disciplinary apparatus (*dispositif*) that produces the Other, often by maintaining a distinction between the advanced and the others who fail to comply with the mechanics of

---

82 Term support is commonly used in development rhetorics instead of words like management that implies that the development partner is giving orders.

83 It has been warned that conceptualising EU governance as something *normatively* better can turn third parties into "others" and allows the Union to define an ideal polity (see Diez 2005 drawing from the heritage of the bygone Copenhagen Peace Research Institute).

power as expected by the disciplinary apparatus, and aiming to produce normalisation that enables ordering of knowledge in ways that make it easy to use and transform. In this environment "trustful relationship with the beneficiary is ten points" (I10) and something that is apparently not so easy to achieve in international public sector projects. This is not only because of postcolonial dynamics or other disagreements, but also because of problems interpreting the bureaucratic scripts involved in ways that allow co-operation.

Role of bureaucratic scripts

The actors of international public sector projects can be viewed to constitute a distributed agency where various actors dispersed in different geographic locations and social worlds collaborate (distributed agency, see for example Garud and Karnøe 2003).[84] From the perspective governmentality, the difficulty of governance is "to align the political, social, and institutional goals with individual pleasures and desires, and with the happiness and fulfilment of the self" (Rose 1990, 257). In HRM human actors are privileged, but one additional problem is that there might be other than human actors involved in the agency of governance. At least from his vantage point Bruno Latour (2007) has accused that management research is usually not only hopelessly narrow in scope, but also implies that in anthropocentric naïveté it still fails to treat human and non-human actors alike.

So are all the agents of the aforementioned agency necessarily humans? According to Law (2004, 102) "[a]ctors are entities, human or otherwise, that happen to act. They are not given, but they emerge in relations." When one analysed Twinning projects there was also a non-human category all of those interviewed human actors seemed to refer to: the seemingly faceless EU bureaucracy often manifested in the official Twinning manual and other bureaucratic scripts.[85] Latour (2012) claims that when it comes to

---

84 Here agency is understood in a pragmatist processual sense as a circular process of occurring and adapted activities.

85 According to article 77.2 of Commission Regulation (EC) No 718/2007, implementing Council Regulation (EC) No 1085/2006 establishing an instrument for pre-accession assistance (IPA), it is the responsibility of the European Commission services to establish and regularly update a Twinning Manual. The latest update was made before this thesis went to press.

organisational agencies the organisational scripts just circulate thought a set of actors and provide them different personae (or "roles" as Goffman would have said).[86]

Nevertheless, the nature of EU bureaucracy involved often bothered the people interviewed. This was not only because "there's lots of EU bureaucracy you could clean a bit, as there's clearly old French style bureaucracy involved that's out of date" (I17), and because the bureaucratic process with the EU is so slow that it causes long delays and frustration as EU does not follow its own deadlines, but because EU bureaucracy causes practical problems in projects for reasons "that appear absurd for us" (I11). The problem is that the people who work in these projects do not always appreciate this logic of the EU bureaucracy. Some stated that "there is no point in looking for reason in EU bureaucracy" (I10), but it was viewed that one still learns to live with it. Some project actors being interviewed suspected that EU bureaucracy was not designed for humans anyway:

> The bureaucracy is quite wild, it's made to be quite difficult (…) no matter how much you stress for the experts that there's no point in calling for common sense, you always encounter situations that appear completely against reason (…) that appear absurd for us. (I11)

The Twinning manual (European Commission 2012, 56) stresses the accounting and project management logic, including the importance of "well defined, focused and achievable" mandatory results, which should be "concrete, clearly measurable for control purposes, inter alia through adequate indicators." However, the Twinning guidance has to be interpreted in the local context, leaving fair amount of translation work for project

---

86   For Latour (2012, 171) there is no individual as such, but "many different characters inscribed into many contradictory scripts with different deadlines." As such, Latour (2013, 391, 397) views that scripts are stories that manage subject narratives, giving roles to those who have sent them in organising acts that define frames. In other words, subjects can be regarded as individuals, but only "as long as the processes of individualization persist" (Miller 2013, 149). If this sounds too absurd, maybe it is fruitful to consider Latour´s views in a context of a much longer French discourse spanning from attacks against British utilitarianism and liberalism in French political philosophy, antagonism towards individualism in socialism, and in *Vatermord* manifested in French radical structuralism and its offspring. Latour just happens to reject Durkheim´s solution to the individual versus collectivism dilemma in an effort to benefit from more radical ontological pluralism after crushing the division between Subject and Object.

personnel. It was reported that sometimes these people are afraid to do or say anything without reading the project manual, and then wondering what it means.

Indeed in international project administration serious problems arise if the project actors produce myriad of incompatible reports, not least because production of the so-called metacode or translocal knowledge that allows control from a distance and accountability is missing (the role of metacode, see Rottenburg 2005). In Twinning projects people interviewed could somehow understand the accounting logic behind the EU bureaucracy, but also seemed to hint that all the parties do not possess the same basic cultural technologies related to the bureaucratic procedures that allow to interpret and produce bureaucratic scripts in ways that actors agree on their meaning. Previous research indicates that in these situations ceremonial façades or ritualised evaluation mechanisms are sometimes constructed or issues are treated as merely technical problems in order to avoid violating the diplomatic protocol (see Rottenburg 2009, 81–82, 194–195). One manager who expressed doubts about the issue considered that the problem is that "what we have on paper often works in practice, [but] I'm not so sure about the others" (I14). Many project people viewed that the best they could do was to endure the EU bureaucracy and to use their own procedures in place of a better alternative.

4.4   The sinews of public sector IHRM frame

After rethinking and destabilising IHRM it is finally time to conceptualise what constitutes IHRM frame in public sector project network environments. But before doing that it is worth pointing out that all management frameworks are always highly problematic as they naturalise power. As such, neutral IHRM practices do not exist as there is always a link between moral convictions and the conduct of work. Sandberg and Tsoukas (2011) remind us that "to be involved in a practice is to be immersed in a context, in which things, people, actions, and options already matter in specific ways." Philosopher Alasdair MacIntyre (1985, 71, 187) maintains that practices must be understood with goods internal to itself and it is wrong to separate the questions of effectiveness from the moral ends that effectiveness serves, meaning that management has to be located within the

institutional realm of particular practices (Kavanagh 2013). Without this it becomes possible to be a "good" HR practitioner in a morally questionable institutional settings.[87] Previously, it was concluded that when it comes to IHRM frameworks the problem is that they originate from another context: namely serving the values large Anglo-American private enterprises, often from a rather instrumental and positivist perspective. Whilst the so-called mainstream IHRM attempts to showcase an objective image of external reality, postcolonial analysis and science and technology studies research maintain that these representations of IHRM are itself deeply ethnocentric.

However, suitable frameworks can also make interpretation easier for the reflective practitioner helping to make sense of the social reality in productive ways. It was also concluded that international project administration seems to require metacode of some sort, because relying on a relativist stance towards truth claims on international administration seem to result in unsuitable amount of interpretative disagreements that were discussed previously. As such, it seems that both managerial IHRM thinking and EU bureaucracy aim to produce metacode or translocal knowledge of some kind. The problem is that this metacode can also be interpreted, in the light of the postcolonial narrative, as hegemonic disciplining instruments enabling long-distance control. Therefore, one of the most pervasive dilemmas when attempting to escape ethnocentrism in international administration is to figure out how to conduct international governance without a metacode (cf. also Rottenburg 2009, 192). With this dilemma in mind, next I conceptualise the role of IHRM frame in this contested environment and present a pragmatist way to bypass the problem of relativism. This requires some further theorising.

---

87 MacIntyre (1985, 151) also points out that virtues are linked to the communities where they are practised, such as communities where people "would need to recognize a certain set of qualities as virtues and the corresponding set of defects as vices", recognising that certain virtues strengthen the bonds of community. An example of such community would be an expedition in an ancient world, and maybe a project organisation in contemporary life. MacIntyre himself criticised bureaucratic manager who works in ways that damage the constituent virtues.

IHRM as a boundary object in the interstitial

If one is to use IHRM frame to interpret social reality in international project environments, then I think that the purpose of framing activities is to give IHRM the required temporary "interpretative legitimacy" to enable pragmatic co-operation in IHRM matters (cf. Jarzabkowski 2005, 157). As such, it is not a matter of establishing a consensus where the community that uses IHRM agrees on everything, but a consensus about leaving as many things out as practically possible to create a trading zone where people, albeit having different *Weltanschauung* or paradigmatic underpinnings, interpret the matters relevant to project IHRM in similar ways (trading zones, see Galison 1997, chapter 9). In their study of WHO experts, Diedrich and Styhre (2012) have utilised the concept of the trading zone as something that international workers and locals have to jointly construct to share their specific expertise in a way that allows local and international actors to collaborate. Nowotny, Scott and Gibbons (2001, 146–146) maintain that it is possible to generalise the metaphor of the trading zone into wider exchanges that take place across institutional boundaries and call it a transaction space, a place where the transaction works only when all the parties have something to be exchanged, something considered valuable by the others, and then have the resources to transfer that something from the other participants to their own use. After this, the participants return to "home base" with their gains and in doing so reinforce the links.

Previously in this thesis it was conducted that much of international project work takes place in so-called interstitial lying between the cultures, where the project worker has to interpret others and herself. In these environments IHRM frame can be, at least metaphorically, regarded as a boundary object. The concept of the boundary object gained popularity in different fields during the last decades although it was originally developed to study organisational context where consensus was weak. The original concept of the boundary objects, where the boundary means a shared space between social worlds, and object a set of work arrangements that are at once material and processual, had three distinct elements: interpretive flexibility; the structure of informatic and work process arrangements; and the dynamic between ill-structured and more tailored uses of the objects. All

in all, boundary object should provide "a sort of arrangement that allow different groups to work together without consensus" and something that is "subject to reflection and local tailoring." This is precisely what is required from IHRM frame. (Boundary objects, see Star 2010; boundary objects from institutionalist perspective, see Fujimura 1992; the role of boundary objects as conflict mediators in global projects, see Iorio and Taylor 2014.)

When IHRM gets translated from context to context, it must first be disembedded or separated from its original institutional surroundings, translated into the so-called boundary object (such as text), and then unpacked to fit the new context. In the process of travelling through time and space the original name of the thing and the names of the practices it contains can change or remain the same, but the result is always something new. In case of HRM empirical evidence suggest that the names of practice areas remain remarkably similar when the context of HRM changes. To serve as a boundary object, a management frame needs to have meaning to all participants in order to bridge diverse fields and make communication meaningful. Like Fujimura (1992, 166–170; italics original) states, the concept of boundary object is "useful for analyzing how collective action is managed *across* social worlds to achieve enough agreement at various times to get the work done", serving as interface that facilitate the flow of resources.

The advantage of conceptualising IHRM frame as a boundary object in the interstitial is that this allows to circumvent, albeit temporarily, the problems related to both ethnocentrism and relativism. It has been acknowledged that the IHRM is a situated formation framed in a specific cultural context, that the Other can never be fully know, and that universal objective meta-position in IHRM is impossible. However, there is a pragmatist solution to managing projects in the multicultural world (see also Czarniawska 2012). Anthropologist Richard Rottenburg (2009) suggests that despite the destabilising critique it is possible to temporarily maintain an illusion of the Enlightenment by sticking to its language that allows to reach an understanding that can then be translated into local vocabularies. Following Rorty (cf. 1991b), international projects could be understood to function like bazaars where the problem of relativism has to be avoided by agreeing certain procedures of evidence in bazaar negotiations, leading to more self-reflective actors This pragmatist stance can be called anti-anti-ethnocentrism.

In these bazaars (interstitial spaces) human project actors must learn to pragmatically treat IHRM as if it would be universal (what is an illusion but necessary for practical purposes), and at the same time allow reflection to analyse the cultural assumptions that always affix to IHRM frame. In this way the players that practice IHRM have to review their own frames of reference. This reflection that hopefully allows to see the world through the eyes of others might enable project actors to escape some of their blind spots. Therefore, in the new context IHRM should be as loosely coupled as practically possible so that it does not interfere with the bazaar negotiations. The trick would be to allow project people to identify HR models and artefacts that are solid enough to circulate between different social worlds, but flexible and robust enough to be adaptable to various local contexts. (see Rottenburg 2009, especially page 104.)

With the following considerations in mind, an exemplified IHRM frame for public sector project environments is represented. The role of IHRM frame is to provide a pidgin vocabulary to make meaningful communication between stakeholders possible and to make sense of the relevant aspects of social reality in international project environments. Various human actors can utilise this IHRM frame as a tool for interpreting IHRM from their perspective and from the perspective of others. IHRM frame as a boundary object is situated in between and partly overlapping the political units of various localities from where the project personnel originates or is based, and in interstitial spaces between the administration cultures of dominant political units (namely states). It contains the elements of the IHRM cycle: preparation, international assignment, received support and return that organise the IHRM frame from the perspective of individual on international assignment. From the perspective of people management the project HRM practice areas of managing flows, performance aspects, developing people and maintenance of involved together ritualise the functions of HRM ideology. The relationship between this boundary object and the administration cultures is relational and contains the strategising processes and inscription work that link IHRM to the sphere of international governance.
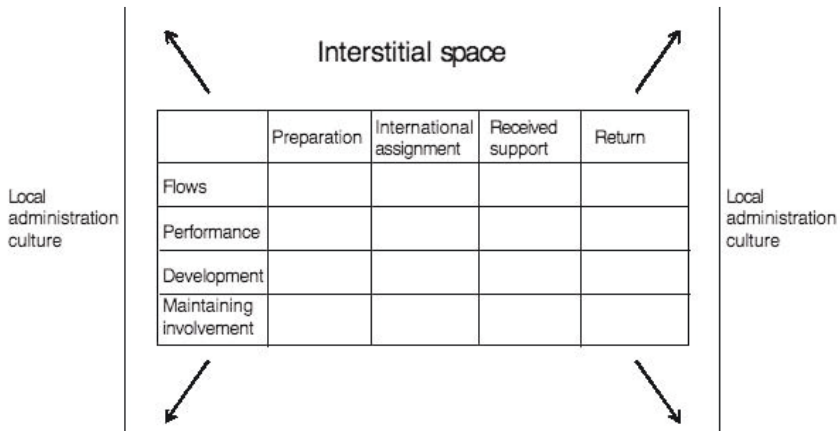
	Preparation	International assignment	Received support	Return
Flows				
Performance				
Development				
Maintaining involvement				

Figure 5. IHRM frame as a boundary object in the project environments of international administration. Arrows indicate strategising.

However, it must be underlined that in international project governance an idea of IHRM frame must be understood in the context of the distributed agency. This must not be seen as a (futile) attempt to construct a permanent, neural and unified frame of inquiry. In short, it is the combination of documents, devices and drilled people that together enable or obstruct mobility and long-distance control, and without placed in a proper contextual envelope the human beings working overseas tend to lack fidelity or become otherwise rather ineffective (see especially Law 1986b). As such, government at a distance requires that actors adopt shared vocabularies to enable the translation of the objectives and values of others so that they provide norms for actions (sociology of translation, see edited volume by Law 1986a; government at a distance, see Miller and Rose 2008).

The current trend, partly influenced by the European Commission, is to see public-private partnerships (PPPs) as an attractive solution for governments worldwide to provide public services in efficient ways (see edited volume by Hodge, Greve and Boardman 2010). This effectively means that one has to cross public interfaces and there are demands of hybrid public management, where public sector actors are expected "to act as if they were situated in the private sphere, while at the same time remain within the public sphere" (cf. Kickert 2001, 136). As such, operating within the limits

of single administration culture also becomes impossible. Here project work might be seen like playing with rhetorical processes in and across various social boundaries where the project needs are negotiated, taking also non-human actants like institutions into account because they can hold a strong position in defining boundaries and objects in project environments. Ever present is the double fear that when IHRM gets translated from context to context the copy is either too different from the original to work, or not different enough to fit the new context. When one proceeds to the conclusions of this research, one can also ask what this hybrid character means from people perspective, as some of these so-called resources or actors are human beings who in the end have to bear the consequences of ambiguous or unsuitable IHRM.

5 CONCLUSIONS

Wanderer quietly steps within;
Pain has turned the threshold to stone.
There lie, in limpid brightness shown,
Upon the table bread and wine.

Georg Trakl, *A Winter Evening*

This thesis and the symbolic hermeneutic movement carrying it has reached its conclusions section. It was Hölderlin's view that what abides was founded by poets who have intuited (*ahnen*) what goes on in the night. When it comes to poetry, Trakl captures the underlying theme of this research in the epigraph above. In my reading of his poem *Winter Evening* from the perspective of people in international project environments the wanderer returns after the international assignment, but the liminal experience (crossing the threshold) can cause perceptions of pain. In his œuvre Trakl hints that a travelling soul has to search a place where it can remain a wanderer, staying a stranger wherever it goes. Life becomes an incessant international assignment trapped in liminal condition. By turning to poetry I want to point out that like Sköldberg (1998) maintains, poetry can provide openings away from the road to a netherworld of rationalising and ordering Being that is devoid of inner meaning. It is said that for Heidegger reading of poetry was primarily a quest to understand what is meant to be human in a modern world characterised by individualism and instrumental rationality (Niku 2009).

In this concluding session I reconsider the issues I raised in the beginning of this thesis. Drawing on only some of the themes covered in this thesis for the purpose of illustrating key points, it is now time to draw conclusions based on this research project. First I try to reformulate in passing how the key themes of this research are engaged by different research traditions and what is my position towards them. Taking the position of reflexive pragmatism towards IHRM, I also acknowledge the shortcomings of this position if it is not anchored on normative reasoning that is guided by

systematic metatheoretical reflection. In the second part of this section I offer a concluding synthesis of European governance from the perspective of IHRM in an effort to point out that the ways people perceive social reality in international project environments not only helps to understand how IHRM is practised, but also that the discourses and practices are related to European governance. Finally, I briefly consider the limitations of this study and partly based on them propose possible future avenues public sector IHRM related research could follow.

It must be noted that as a text a research report is never ready, but elements of reflective movement – plots, counterplots and temporary conclusions can be seen as a *Bildungsroman* written by researcher who has analysed the IHRM frame according to reflexive research strategy. As such, reflexive approach adopted here encourages open attitude and warns against the use of final vocabularies to understand the topic. This requires accepting the notion that all things considered, certain things sometimes appear more plausible than others in a given context. However, the question of how to judge this is enough to inconvenience thoughtful researchers because it ultimately requires dealing with questions connected to philosophy of science and conflicting expectations in different research traditions. What follows is a moment of self-reflection about these issues.

5.1   Trying again

In the beginning of this research I expressed my mild dissatisfaction when it comes to certain approaches to administration and management research, mainly because it had bothered me that sometimes researchers did not even attempt to denaturalise and challenge their foundationalist assumptions and the language of rationality. I concluded that I must oppose the foundational narrative tradition of academic writing where things are supposed to neatly follow each other in explaining and ordering fashion. Thus, I turned to CMS research, where critical performativity is said to include affirming ambiguity, working with mysteries, applied communicative action, exploring heterotopias and engaging micro-emancipations (Alvesson and Spicer 2012). I also made the simplistic but serviceable distinction between mainstream functionalist view and critical position as a tool of inquiry to suggest some implications that I consider both CMS

and Finnish Administrative Science communities might want to consider if they are, like I am, convinced by Habermasian reasoning calling for more open dialogue.[88]

Indeed in CMS being critical have been defined as scepticism towards issues related to the inequalities of power and control (Antonacopoulou 2010), and this scepticism should be marked by critical reflection where all interpretations are seen as interested rather than neutral (Reynolds 1999). However, what I did not fully understand before this research was how institutional forces and conventions in research help to maintain the status quo. Furthermore, I had to acknowledge that critical reflection is much more difficult that I had anticipated because it is dealing with metatheoretical assumptions.

In this research I set task to understand IHRM in international public sector project environments in a more or less a pragmatist way by developing plausible stories in a Rortyan sense that allow "a continuous movement of docking at and then leaving the harbours of established epistemological and ontological groundings" (Albert and Kopp-Malek 2002). Indeed an eclectic approach that is firmly rooted on the philosophical tradition of pragmatism labelled as "analytical eclecticism" has been promoted in political science as an approach that could not only break intellectual blinders and institutional barriers, but also to bypass metatheory and avoid paradigm wars (analytical eclecticism, see Sil and Katzenstein 2010). The appeal of this approach was by no means diminished by the fact that it is based on anti-foundational assumptions that recognise the inevitable fallibility of truth claims and messiness of social reality, attempting to focus on the consequences of conclusions about various research problems (see Sil and Katzenstein 2010, 43–48).

However, like the critics of analytical eclecticism have warned, without metatheoretical reflection eclectic approach produces merely empirical-

---

88 Metatheoretical positions in broad church CMS range from "orientations that are extremely non-objectivist and assum[e] the unknowability of the social world" to "approaches that assume there is an objective world out there that we can develop robust (if imperfect) scientific knowledge about." In short, the list moves from "extreme constructivist to more objectivist, materially interested and realist ontologies and epistemologies" and seems to include everything from light to hard-core CMS (Alvesson 2008, 16–17). It has been argued that the opportunities this plurality within CMS itself requires "reflexive engagement at these ontological and epistemological borders" (see Delbridge 2014, 108; cf. also Janssens and Steyaert 2009).

theoretic insights that are not integrated with normative forms of reasoning (Reus-Smit 2013). As such, an attempt to see reality steadily and as a whole is futile, but problems start when there are various truth claims that compete when one has to agree on successful future action (Rorty 1999, 270). Although metatheoretical positions are not so inconsumable or static as they are sometimes portrayed, moving between them requires translation of truth claims into other metatheoretical languages in comprehensible ways (cf. also Jackson 2011, 210). What I found out was that doing this produces a certain extent of additional *Verfremdung.*

To begin with, in philosophy of science there are no widely accepted ways to divide its distinct schools of thought. This effectively meant that a roadmap that could guide a more systematic metatheoretical reflection between different epistemological and ontological positions explored in this research did not exist. To overcome this obstacle has led some to propose a Deweyan solution where classification in philosophy of science should be arranged to promote successful action for ends (Jackson 2011, 32-34). With this in mind I could sketch my own robust roadmap that nevertheless captures many of the controversies I faced when trying to conceptualise IHRM in the public sector project environments. In short, my central question was to move away from research approaches that maintain mind-world dualism of foundational functionalism without moving all the way to relativism of certain post-foundational approaches that altogether reject the pragmatic value management practices might possess when connected to normative forms of reasoning.[89] What follows is an attempt to make a shift from technocratic optimism to reflexive pragmatism without completely falling to critical pessimism.

Play it again, Sam

Mainstream IHRM literature carries with it an aura of Western technocratic optimism. Like the vocabulary of administration and management in general, mainstream IHRM is often functionalist with traces of positivist

---

89 This research has studied the topic that is essentially rooted to Euro-American late modernity. If future research wants to move beyond that, it could probably benefit from a more radical metatheoretical pluralism.

thinking. The problem is that the language of IHRM also creates social reality by imposing demands for actors to behave accordingly. One way IHRM researcher could avoid this would be to position oneself as a *critical scholar*. However, like Voronov (2008) concludes in his Bourdieusian analysis of critical management scholars, dismissing demands to serve instrumental reasoning and bottom-line concerns only privileges academics over practitioners. It can also be counterproductive for critical management research to concentrate only critically representing the shortcomings of others (Cunliffe 2008). What is at stake here is the dilemma that has beset so-called critical scholars who have tried to analyse the shortcomings of "modernity", and still seems to beset critical management scholars of late-modern era: What are they to condemn widely accepted cultural practices of practitioners that appear problematic for critical scholars? Reflecting on these issues let me to move this research closer towards an approach that I call tendered functionalism because of pragmatic reasons, despite my underlying doubts and unwarranted metatheoretical consequences of this move.

Therefore, in this research a framework for public sector IHRM was also developed to help individuals working in international project environments and their managers to evaluate IHRM practices. Especially those without their own international experience could find this typology helpful to understand the demands individuals are facing when working in international project environments. But before moving to this I will next synthesise the rather managerialist solutions interviewed public sector professionals commonly proposed to develop IHRM in Finnish public sector and international project environments. To their credit, most of the people interviewed were experienced civil servants who showed evidence of sophisticated techno-rational thinking.

To summarise, the people interviewed viewed that public sector was in demand of more systematic management to control the people aspects in international projects. However, achieving project control in international environments was also deemed to consume managerial resources that were often not available, indicating ruptures in the façade of management. Next I will list the main propositions from this perspective that could be formulated based on the empirical material. Because this is an academic research and not a consultant's report, I will not speculate who or how one should

pursue the aforementioned propositions. However, many project people have been indicating that developing these issues probably should be a more collective and continuous endeavour with firm top management support.

- Firstly, it was often proposed something that could be labelled as a more institutionalised strategic approach to Finnish public sector IHRM. This could potentially help individuals to experience return after the international assignment in a more positive way.
- Secondly, an approach that would entail developing the HRD side related to the international work was advocated, potentially making the nature of international project work in the Finnish public sector less stressful for both the individuals involved.
- Thirdly, the people interviewed often wished to improve public sector HRM so that international project work could be utilised as an integral part of public administration. They further hoped that, rather than being seen as a burden, international projects should be seen as an activity that generates potential benefits and added value for the whole Finnish public sector.
- Fourthly, based on the interview material one could conclude that IHRM should incorporate themes of people management that are more workforce-centred than resource-centred. It should be considered how IHRM practices influence the quality of work in the workplaces, including paying attention to the issues related to the perceived value of international project work to foster positive relationships in work life.

People interviewed pointed out that in the public sector improvements do not happen overnight and all in all in the Finnish public sector "things move quite slowly" (I14). Still, after extensive (neo)positivist empirical study, O'Toole and Meier (2009) conclude that it might be advantageous to treat public sector human capital as a long-term asset rather than a set of interchangeable individuals. All in all it appears that NPMish private sector inspired IHRM practices have been adopted by the Finnish public sector often without integrating them to broader SHRM policies. Furthermore, co-ordination between various actors is something that could probably be further pursued in public sector IHRM.

However, the underlying problem in this study was how to utilise private-sector oriented IHRM and management language to interpret public sector developments. I concluded that doing this without reflexive scrutiny contains a risk of repeating the scene resembling Gogol's *The Government Inspector*. In it a fake government inspector takes advantage of the aspirations and fears of the town officials and dupes the administration of a small Russian town. The ploy turns from absolutism towards a collapse of an illusion, and to re-establish order a new authority is simply dispatched from the capital. Finally as a coda the immobilised characters experience a moment of existential terror after the distraught mayor has reminded the audience: "What are you laughing at? You are laughing at yourselves!" With these warnings of Gogol in mind, a couple of more critical notes have to be made.

Palinode

This research has interpreted the *Lebenswelt* of the Finnish public sector international project persons from the perspective of the IHRM. Overall, it must be noted that when describing their experiences, international project persons commonly mobilised linguistic resources that, although not framed coherently, were penetrated by managerialist language. From a more critical perspective aforementioned functionalist propositions to improve public sector IHRM are itself somewhat problematic, not least because these propositions are as constructions rooted to the techno-rational thinking aimed to improve short-term efficiency. However, there is another problem I have continuously encountered during this research process that is more related to the tacit background assumptions of management studies: Both mainstream and critical management scholarship too often seem to have assumed that international managers of the private sector are special because of their power as extraterritorial actors (cf. Banerjee, Carter and Clegg 2009, 192).

Others like Ulrich Beck (2008) have pointed out that to regain national autonomy and power in an age characterised by global risks, also other actors have begun to create dense networks of transnational interdependencies, and thus social sciences in general should move towards what Beck calls "methodological cosmopolitanism" to study this shift. I think the

challenge is that one should aim to move beyond knowledge claims that can be firmly grounded on a known spatially limited case towards broader questions to which they relate (attempts to do this in anthropology, see especially Ferguson 2006), demystifying the role of people in international administration, and seeing people dynamics as part of larger bundles of social practices that ultimately define what states are (cf. Gupta 1995).

As such, it is generally agreed that in the so-called culture of new capitalism (Sennet 1998) or liquid modernity (Bauman 2011) that we are living, capital usually outmanoeuvres labour in mobility. However, the point that I want to stress is that IHRM and the techniques it contains to improve effectiveness of international work can also be interpreted as a managerial attempt to configure labour to keep in pace and to enable long-distance control, to make employees globally governable extraterritorial actors. In international public sector project environments individuals as actors can experience first had temporal shifts in their roles between national and extraterritorial actors in various transnational networks affecting their identity construction.

This means that from a more negative perspective feelings of liminality or a sense of not belonging, that people commonly experienced during international assignments, can cause anxiety. Labour also face liminal experiences, which require coping with involved uncertainties. Following the ideology of boundaryless careers (see Inkson et al. 2012), many HR responsibilities were effectively outsourced for the individual, who themselves stressed that working in international projects requires flexibility. Furthermore, the confusions in personal and professional life during the repatriation may involve experiences of alienation of human consciousness that are organisationally produced (cf. Marcuse 1987 [1956]). Honneth and Hartmann (2012, 186) conclude that in project-oriented capitalist culture "contemporary subjects have difficulty attaining certainty about the 'true' value of their contributions and achievements." As such, perceived value and status individuals have experienced during international projects can also be difficult to recognise from the performance management perspective.

Bauman (2008, 66) has accused that individual flexibility that is demanded in liquid modern world is a synonym for spinelessness; an ability to forget fast, change tracks without regret, dispose past assets than have turned into liabilities, and staying loyal to nobody. Indeed many project

persons themselves hoped that international project activities would be more integrated to the other activities of home organisation and public sector, so that international projects would not remain as detached ephemeral fiefdoms of their own without much outside institutional support. Prozorov (2004) has argued that the role of an external facilitator in participatory development projects often resembles that of a shaman, a charismatic figure with esoteric skills setting in motion processes of transformation, and normalising particular type of conduct as rational. In this light project people who utilise managerialist vocabularies can be seen as contemporary gris-gris men. Unfortunately critical perspective points out that functionalist improvement of management alone might not make international work in the public sector project environments less unproblematic as the language and practices of the techno-rational consciousness keep on producing yet another set of tensions to keep the future managers in the public sector occupied.

Public sector IHRM research should at least be aware of these issues and tensions that people experience when attempting to make sense of international assignments using managerialist vocabularies. When it comes to IHRM, Peltonen (1998) has pointed out that in IHRM there is a strong tendency to extend the prevailing rationality to people doing international assignments by imposing practices of self-inspection and developmental planning. It has been noted that IHRM often emphasises end-goals, while the issue of values is easily sidelined (Delbridge, Hauptmeier and Sengupta 2011; Janssens and Steyaert 2012). It was Weber (1949) who warned that if science does not know its limits, it is used to eradicate those aspects of our lives that make the it meaningful for us because they look "irrational." From this perspective all governmental techniques are bound to produce unexpected outcomes that are then analysed, polemised and administered by functionalist technocrats and managers (cf. Miller and Rose 2008).

Envisioning a pragmatist role for IHRM in international governance

But what is left for IHRM if there is no room for technocratic optimism? I consider that it is worthwhile to conceptualise IHRM as ambiguous and problematic ideological managerial discourse as language that constructs social reality makes many concepts in administration and management appear dubiously artificial yet powerfully real. However, although hard core

of critical researchers argue that reflexivity should only be used as a "means to defuse the bombs of the established disorder" (Haraway 1994), from a pragmatist position one can consider that functionalist management toolbox also has *some* pragmatic value for "the human beings who are informed by it" (Watson 2010).[90]. Therefore, unlike nightmarish technocratic optimism or paralysing critical pessimism, pragmatists like Dewey (2012 [1929], 194–195) can only propose melioristic processual improvements in life, hoping that possible future creative effort in IHRM will, with some effort and luck, aim at producing greater human happiness. Rorty has argued for his perspective of pragmatism that democratic advantages (which he still viewed as worth pursuing), are not so much related to institutional legitimacy, but happen through multiplication of practices that enable democratic forms of willingness and sympathy, through a whole set of practices that make democratic agency possible (see also Mouffe 1996).[91]

However, Sjöblom et al. (2006) point out that in the public sector projects are often embedded in parent organisations, but there is a lack of conceptualisation concerning the ways project sphere or so-called institutionalised temporality interacts with the politico-administrative context, as projects are also transmitters between international regimes and national administrative levels. Peculiarly, people interviewed linked many of these corrosive effects to the political aspects of the project governance. My intention here is not to state that political conflict is a negative thing, but to point out that in the political arena the role of international civil servant is something else than a mere "neutral outsider" or "technical expert" because these issues require normative interventions.[92]

---

90 Marxists have argued that critical theory should not be "dematerialised and de-historicised" to serve an updated liberal idealism (Beate 1998).

91 Here Rorty comes close to Habermas (their minor merely philosophical disagreement, see Rorty 1980, 306–311). In short, it can be argued that what is required to cure Western democracy is a bigger dose of liberalism and the maintenance of distinction between public and private, even with a risk of totalising effects when doing it. What Rorty is offering produces the practices of freedom formed inside the liberal governmental regime.

92 Lévinas (1969, 21) once concluded that commerce and administration can be peaceful activities, but politics (meaning High Politics) must ultimately be regarded as, like he defined it, "an art of foreseeing war and of winning it by every means." Conceptualised this way the domain of High Politics always harbours conflict towards the others. Well known conceptualisations of "the political" that highlight its conflictual nature date back to *Allgemeine Staatslehre* tradition and the work of political philosopher Carl Schmitt (see notably Schmitt 1996).

As I have advocated before, small-scale contextual studies of HRM should be linked with broader questions to which they relate. What makes this problematic is that, among other things, it requires fusing the horizons of organisational and political modes of existence that utilise different vocabularies. Indeed existing research usually does not acknowledge the role of IHRM in international governance or politics, but as it turns out, management or construction of followers is ultimately an integral part of governance in the Western civilisation, and that technocratic governance sometimes seeks to make the world a better place for small parts of humanity. As such, it could be argued that it can be possible to align at least parts of the goals of individual workers and international governance by utilising the vocabulary of IHRM to inform the practices of the trading zone of international project governance. To do this in international project administration requires that one has to temporarily create a democratic consensus among the project actors that enables public cooperation and keeps disagreements in the private sphere.

As such, when the political domain starts to hinder the daily work of international public sector project professional the main solutions offered by the people interviewed were to tacitly join the game, or what was more popular, to practice technocratic pragmatism, in other words, to leave the political aspects outside the international project work in an effort to concentrate on purely technical aspects. This was often viewed as the professional thing to do. If this could not be done the political domain floods into international projects and effectively makes it look bad, even unsuccessful. This is something project people usually want to avoid. To answer this call my research has conceptualised a pragmatist role for IHRM frame in interactional governance. So far it has been hinted that international public sector projects and relevant people management is connected to foreign policy, that the activity is linked to the new forms of governance which is both difficult if not downright impossible to evaluate by using so-called objective standards, and that it contains some corrosive elements all the actors should be aware of.

It seems that many Finnish project professionals are quite pragmatic already and try to achieve this. During the project they "can think that maybe I haven't changed the whole world, but I've done something" (I8). Using the language of anthropology one could say that when actors work pragmatically

they attempt to construct a trading zone where the co-operation can take place, and leave all the problematic factors, like disagreements about how to interpret the EU bureaucracy, and various other forms of political conflict, outside. To be successful IHRM framework has to work in this trading zone, in the interstitial between the different administration cultures, and it must be able to link this framework to the foreign policies with strategising processes. Using IHRM in framing can have a positive role in sensemaking in temporal project environments, where lack of routines can even have negative effects on mental health. Then again, like the critical theory reminds us, too ordered IHRM practices can hamper the self-actualisation of individuals.

However, from a more constructive perspective, what I call reflexive pragmatism, IHRM can have a positive role in facilitating sensemaking and providing material for rites that help individuals to cope with ambiguity in international project life. As Habermas (1987a) has indicated, tensions related to the perceived gap between the formal system, the norms of the authority, and the personal meanings of the actor can offer a healthy site for critical reflection. Sometimes this can be highly rewarding as the reflexive knowledge actors produce can be emancipating and even spark ideas about social change for the better. For example self-reflection during international assignment process can possibly help individuals to become aware of their techno-rational consciousness and parochial thinking, enabling them to reflect on their own blind spots. Liminal experiences could also enable individuals to create new paths and more independently construct their own choices to make sure that the price individuals are paying in competition of international mobility does not end up too high, something that the aforementioned functionalist propositions also tried to address.

Furthermore, international project environments can help to promote a more pluralist administration where there is room for pluralism of democratic agency and settings where actors can perceive that they are all benefitting. As such, in the trading zones collaboration between various parties takes place only if everyone can feel that they have something to exchange (hence the importance of trade metaphor), but the parties also impose constraints in the nature of the exchange and try to acquire the perceived virtues of the other parties (Gallison 1997, 806–807). Actors with different cultural background might have to set aside their general modes of work to construct a hybrid of practices that are in line with the principles

of the trading zone, and adopt a pidgin language at the boundary between the groups (ibid., 827, 831). It is here where the vocabulary of IHRM can assist if actors regard it as a metacode shared by project participants for pragmatic reasons to facilitate communication, and it does not end up as a technocratic instrument of pseudo-objective evaluation or ordering.

5.2   IHRM, international governance and people in project environments

After these remarks, attention can now be turned to the dynamics of IHRM in public sector project context. One thing that has bothered me in mainstream IHRM research is the level of analysis it takes, or to be more precise, the strict delineation between micro and macro views. The problem is also related to the conventions of presenting research results in ways that may imply that the so-called micro and macro levels should remain two distinct areas of inquiry. I think that it is not a very pragmatic delineation when the idea is to analyse IHRM issues in international public sector projects, because, it leads to false assumption that international governance takes place separate of what people in project environments do.

As such, from discourse perspective climbing the ladder from local-situated **d**iscourses to macro-systemic **D**iscourses has proved to be problematic (see also Alvesson and Kärreman 2000). However, from the perspective of governmentality, such a binary framework provides only false comfort (Miller and Rose 2008, 20-21). Furthermore, from the perspective of ANT micro and macro as places do not exist at all; there is only a flatland or a chain of connected localities (Latour 2007). Deleuze and Guattari (1987, chapter 9) argue that the question is not individuality per se, but rather the flow of bureaucratic micro-imitations and the associated beliefs and desires. Thus, the more interesting question ultimately becomes how international governance is perceived and framed in light of IHRM that takes place locally in organisational life. With these considerations in mind one can start drawing conclusions by considering IHRM from the perspective of individuals and then linking these considerations to more abstract issues of international governance by discussing what public sector projects studied here tell about international governance and what they mean from IHRM perspective.

IHRM cycle from the perspective of individuals

From IHRM perspective it is maintained that international assignments are found to be important for individual's "identity, self-awareness and growth" (Jokinen, Brewster and Suutari 2008). The international assignment cycle that remains the focus of IHRM has four dimensions: preparation, international assignments, received support, and repatriation. Describing what usually takes place during these phases might appear mundane, but understanding the related processes is paramount to interpreting the role of IHRM. When the cycle begins, experiencing the first liminal moment causes anxiety: the person feels she does not totally belong to her home organisation any more, but the international project has not really started. This requires coping with the uncertainty before the international assignment, often with luggage packed before the assignment gets the green light and necessary preparations are made. During this time the individual has to often personally handle various practical matters in both private and work life. It can be concluded that among public sector project workers interviewed in this study it is important that the individual builds trust with the project personnel and other key contact persons, as the personal connections are often important especially if and when things do not go as planned. Some sort of (limited) cultural training also usually takes place, but the focus has been on learning project practices.

When the international assignment begins, the person moves (often alone) to a foreign country and starts work in a new community. Deadlines can help to keep track of this in the beginning. People interviewed viewed that it was important to build a good co-operation with the local key parties of the project from the start. This requires constructing representations of the project and one's own position. Many things become known only in the beginning of the international assignment, so one has to be prepared to modify perceived unrealistic assumptions, see how the locals are doing, and learn to adapt. Usually the nature of international assignment means that one is required to work independently with a broader range of matters than in back home. One has to reflect one's own position, whilst avoiding formalism and cynicism when encountering the local bureaucracy, and maintaining links to Finland despite the geographical distance involved.

It must also be stressed that people on an international assignment also expect that there has to be institutional or organisation support if required. Even if help is not needed, one has to be able to trust that there is a back office support and know how to get it. Too often individuals simply feel that they are left alone, out of sight and out of mind. There are also practical problems in handling employee welfare issues due to the geographical and cultural distance. One has to rely on electronic means of communications or short trips. This makes it important to regularly update the project status for all the relevant parties so that they understand the roots of the problems encountered. Taken together, handling all of these points should contribute in creating a supportive atmosphere for the international project activities.

When international project is over, if it is, the person returns to her job in the Finnish public sector. In too many Finnish public sector organisations this phase of the IHRM cycle, i.e. when people started to return to their old jobs from overseas assignments, was woefully ignored. For the individual, repatriation is characterised by self-reflection about how you have changed during the project and what you have learnt. Eventually one also has to start building a new role in work after the international project, and try to avoid feeding false expectations. Many of those interviewed hoped that there would be more procedures to handle repatriation process, and genuine efforts to share project experiences, capitalising cultural capital and network connections. Nowadays this is often not the case, but nevertheless an individual can use the increased awareness gained during the international assignment when preparing for a new international project.

Preparation	Tolerance of uncertainty when moving to liminal condition
International assignment	Building own role independently, requirements of flexibility and self-reflection
Received support	Availability of institutional support and trust of stakeholders helpful when working in foreign environment
Return	Dealing with frustrating elements related to repatriation

Figure 6. Perceived main HRM areas of attention during international assignment cycle summarised

Project HRM practice areas

From IHRM perspective it is also important to understand how the context shapes practice areas of HRM. This research confirms that project HRM is often perceived as heteromorphic because it follows project life cycle. Furthermore, project HRM is conceptualised not from a perspective of a single project, but from a perspective of project environments where HRM practices play a role. This is where the specific public sector context also plays a role in shaping how HRM practice areas related to management of flows, performance, development and involvement are perceived. Furthermore, it must be noted that HRM practices also shape the expectations of people involved. As such, one has to understand that in HRM ideology the role of human capital is re-framed to allow constant controlled circulation, and it should be the task of management as part of governmental rationality to minimise the inherent dangers in these flows (see Weiskopf and Munro 2012; see also Foucault 2010).

However, this research indicates that management of flows of people in the Finnish public sector international project context usually requires active role of the individual, a bit of good luck, and often what might be characterised as mild manipulation. It was viewed as vital that people maintain personal contacts and are prepared to drift and let others drift to a project: it is the task of personnel to be flexible and adaptable, to see projects as opportunities. In project life that can be perceived fragmented and where there are often inconstancies with timing it is demanding for the individuals that high personal commitment to international assignment is expected early on. This can become problematic especially if there are conflicting signals regarding the role or importance of the international project. Furthermore, in the times when the number of personnel is shrinking in many public sector organisations, it can be feared that committing human resources to international project can cause domino effect elsewhere. All in all, co-ordinating these HR flows can be challenging and contribute to the perceived lack of international mobility in the Finnish public sector.

HRM is also often connected to "set of activities aimed at building individual and workforce performance" (Boxall and Purcell 2011, 5-6). During the international projects the uncertainties encountered during the international assignment can have an unexpected effect on performance.

Overall, the performance requirements in international projects are viewed to be higher, but the human dimension is difficult to capture using existing evaluation tools. When it comes to motivation of individuals taking part in international projects, international projects can be motivating simply because of the change of scenery, but the bureaucracy requiring one to work extra hours can have corrosive effects. Role of money must also not be underestimated; people viewed that they should get extra financial rewards to compensate the higher living costs abroad, and not to get frustrated when they see public money wasted in international projects. The role of top management to help creating an atmosphere where taking part in international projects is viewed as "nice" was emphasised.

Many people with international project experience advocated that in their view the Finnish public sector should learn to utilise international projects as systematic HR development tools. For them there was a gap between perceived individual development during the project and more aggregate levels of developing the home organisation or the public sector competence. It was usually praised how one learns to see things in a broader framework during the international project, to understand other ways of doing things, and the strengths and weaknesses of their own administrative system. Still, development of competence was often left for the individual employee. With few exceptions, developing personal competences in international projects is seldom linked to career development, and the employees are not able to utilise their international connections or their gained experience. It can be a cause of frustration after the international assignment.

When it comes to the HRM practice area that can be labelled as maintaining involvement, it seems that in the international project framework of the Finnish public sector involvement is usually only mentioned and considered when it is viewed as lacking: people have a desire to influence role clarity, build the project team, influence their career options after the long-term international assignment, and complain about the lacking top management and/or political leadership involvement. These observations suit well the premises of the so-called high performance HRM, where people who can influence their work are perceived to be more motivated and perform better. However, in the Finnish public sector, everyone does not expect or want to be involved in doing all the decisions, as they feel it is not their role as a civil servant. All this can implicate that the basic

assumptions of mainstream HRM do not always hold when in comes to the role of involvement in the Finnish public sector, indicating that the nature of involvement is context specific, and requires skills to judge how or when to get involved. This can make involvement more problematic when operating as an expatriate with different administrative cultures.

Flows	Management of flows often done impromptu, individual should see projects as possibilities despite conflicting signals
Performance	Maintenance of performance often related to the individual's own attitude and atmosphere created by top management
Development	Role of international projects in the development of personnel was perceived to be limited
Involvement	Viewed as problematic if individual was alone and/or could not influence project content

Figure 7. Main individual reactions to project HRM practice areas summarised

Living between administrative cultures

Based on this research IHRM in public sector project environments should pay more attention to the perceived administrative cultures and the position of people between them. Mainstream cross-national HRM research with its national factors highlights the context-specific nature of HRM (Budhwar and Sparrow 2002), but this thesis advocates a position where one moves beyond examining the (assumed) mechanisms of how the culture nation states "have" influence HRM. As such, survey of IHRM literature indicates that "cultural differences" and "absorptive capacity" must be taken into account when designing and transferring HRM policies and practices (Lengnick-Hall et al. 2009). However, because of the nature of project work, the attention shifts to spaces between cultures, and to the self who interprets other cultures from this position. As such, international project professionals themselves highlighted the importance of the roles of negotiator and facilitator, and sensitivity of their own position.

In the public sector context it must be noted that it is not always the national cultures, but administrative cultures that shape the people dynamics in international project environments. The concept of administrative

culture utilised in this research was adopted from Peters (2010, 36), but broadened to refer to all shared cultural aspects that affect how the public sector workforce interprets the conduct of public administration in a given administration system. Exposure to different administration cultures that operate in ways that are not typical in Finnish administration enables learning from others and is often educational for the individual, but in international project environments the culture argument also comes to play, when one views that the representatives of the other administration culture are viewed to fall out of the assumed norm. These problems can be partly connected to negative aspects of formalism and colonial heritage. Nevertheless, so-called cultural blindness was viewed to be a hindrance that is manifested as a lack of flexibility towards anything else than your own cultural practices. It might be useful to keep in mind that there are limits what a single individual can do during an international project when it comes to learning, coping or let alone changing cultural practices. Humility and some self-reflection can also help to avoid stress.

As such, much of international project work takes place in what could be labelled as interstitial spaces between the cultures, where the project worker has to interpret others and themselves, and learn how things can be done in a different cultural context. This was viewed to be extremely educational, and the potential role of international projects as learning opportunities and sites for human capital development was also constantly repeated. When it comes to the nature of international work in these settings, diplomatic skills, including the skills as a negotiator, they were usually viewed to be much more important during international project assignment than when working in the home organisation. Furthermore, international project people themselves usually viewed that they had developed a mindset for international governance many of their colleagues lacked, including the ability to see the strengths and weaknesses of Finnish administration system much more clearly, and therefore they had the ability to see more holistically where it should be developed.

There can also be a lack of perceived meaningfulness in strategising processes that shape people's experiences. From governmentalist perspective the problem has been to align the political and institutional goals of project governance with the goals of individuals whose public sector work plays a role in their self-fulfilment. During their international assignment this

can also be a problem because of the requirements of so-called policy of non-engagement (cf. Bauman 2011), which requires that project personnel must construct an appealing package that the local party chooses to follow and that they themselves, to a certain extent, believe in what they export. From a postcolonial perspective this type of project administration is based on the principles of the postcolonial emancipation narrative with an aim to cultivate mutual trust instead of direct control, as direct colonial rule is today considered impossible or undesirable in European governance. Finnish project people where prone to spot postcolonial dynamics in the behaviour of actors from the larger EU member states. In some cases the life of individual project worker is made difficult when she ends up in the middle of postcolonial struggle of resistance where various national identities are present quite unprepared. In can be stressful to represent a member state and EU, stay neutral, and try to implement own "best practices", which usually have to be adapted to the local conditions.

This basic logic of project governance also tends to produce the Other, often by maintaining a distinction between the advanced and the others who fail to comply with the mechanics of power. Nevertheless, from postcolonial perspective Bhabha (2004, 326) states that it is "the 'foreign' element that reveals the interstitial (...) the indeterminate temporality of the in-between, that has to be engaged in creating the conditions through which 'newness comes into the world'." As such, analysing postcolonial dynamics can help to understand the human element of international public sector co-operation better than in mainstream IHRM, where it is often only noted that public organisations in emerging economies have not been too keenly adopting the principles of strategic HRM (cf. Lengnick-Hall et al. 2009).

Foreign policy aspects and European governance implications

Last but not least this research concludes that in the public sector IHRM is connected to foreign policy and has wider governance implications. As such, various administration cultures where public sector IHRM is practised are often connected to certain political units, often nation states, with their own foreign policy of how to handle their relations with the other political units. When it comes to the links between foreign policy and IHRM, it would be tempting to jump to the bandwagon with those who argue that

in Schumpeterian Workfare State (to use the expression coined by Jessop [for example 1993]) the role of states is to compete against each other in the global economy like MNEs, and push an argument about the role of strategic human resources accordingly. Apart from the sheer ideological problems, there is an empirical argument against this, because the concept of foreign policy as a clearly defined domain of specific government organisations appears obsolete. However, from a pragmatist perspective the shifting and wavering line of distinction between the state and other forms of political communities, and their continuous mutation and transformation is not something unprecedented, but a mere empirical consequence (Dewey 1988 [1927], 263).

To summarise, from the perspective of contemporary international relations the realist conceptualisation that reproduces the distinction between sovereign inside and the anarchic outside of the nation state is simply empirically unsound way to understand European project administration. Thus, the narrow conceptualisations of public sector human resources that support this view are not perfectly suited for the era of new international public governance. Instead, in this research the people interviewed also effectively decried the elements of the so-called policy of non-engagement in project governance, an idea where the role of international specialist is to provide examples and models of self-supervision (see Bauman 2011). Based on this research one can add that those actors in the Finnish public sector who are involved in international or European governance also produce discursive acts and mobilise vocabularies to construct an accepted storyline of their involvement that fits their perceived image of legitimate foreign policy. As such, strategy talk is produced in an attempt to link public sector people issues to foreign policy.

Many people interviewed told about the difficulties and the clash of interests they had experienced when the resource-based logic of the domestic public management had collided with the more abstract goals of the international project governance. On a personal level the social reality experienced by the project people in interactional project activities were often quite detached from the activities of the rest of the Finnish public sector. It was also viewed that Finnish public sector was often incapable of defining vague concepts like "the Finnish interests" and linking them to the goals of international projects. It could be that this is due to the

nature of international project administration where the benefits are often intangible and related to issues like building networks and co-operation, to develop international competence, and sharing local knowledge with the project stakeholders. These perceived benefits related to the HR development aspects of international project activities were already touched upon, and linked to the perceived lacking competences in the public sector to operate in cross-cultural environments.

The advertised benefits of Twinning projects can also be evaluated based on the progress narrative of European integration where the idea of these capacity building projects aim to make the beneficiary countries develop their public sectors in ways that increase their integration into the EU. From a more critical perspective, EU and various institutions in the Western member states in league with the Westernised elites of these beneficiary countries work alongside the expansion of European capitalism. Indeed sometimes project governance even becomes associated with problematic historical heritage and the practices that maintain the associated links and power structures. This is the institutional background where also Finnish project specialists have to navigate during their international assignments. Despite the stubborn appeal of European liberal democracy people working in the project environments of European governance are not always happy with EU bureaucracy, can feel that the bureaucratic apparatus is frustrating, and sometimes fail to understand the logic of EU bureaucracy.

When actors have to at least tacitly assume that the other parties understand EU bureaucracy even less, meaning that the social reality of project administration becomes relational, leaving actors to seek pragmatic solutions that work temporarily in these projects. In this environment mutual trust has an important role as it can be problematic to regard the statements of the other parties as factual. Furthermore, in relational social reality the perceived benefits of international project governance are intangible and difficult to quantify, and it has to be questioned whether the EU bureaucracy provides cultural technologies for this evaluation. It could be that the benefits of international project governance should be evaluated based on a different logic than is currently often the case, for example focusing more on things that contribute to the competences of the public sectors of both the member state and the beneficiary country in the long run rather than trying to objectively evaluate the achievements of individual projects.

5.3   Epilogue: Limitations of the research and future avenues

He travelled.
He came to know the melancholy of the steamboat,
the cold awakening in the tent,
the tedium of landscape and ruins,
the bitterness of interrupted friendship.
He returned.

Gustave Flaubert, *Sentimental Education*

As a *dénouement* it is now time to consider the limitations of this research and take the opportunity to share some of my ideas about the future directions public sector IHRM could take. When it comes to common limitations of research in social sciences, Alvesson (2013) concludes that organisation researchers usually have relatively little to say to anyone outside a very small group of "like-minded people in one's own sub-tribe", and often the only value of academic writing is "[i]nput to tribal self-reflection." That might be the case, but nevertheless I consider that doing research can be a meaningful experience because it allows considering the societal context, questioning the dominant frameworks and looking for possible alternatives, while also contributing to a struggle against scholastic sectarianism. That said, this thesis also has some specific limitations.

Limitations and omissions of the study

Overall, some might view the explorative nature of this research as a weakness. It must be noted that author's own views regarding the importance and various possibilities of doing IHRM research in the public sector context are carefully optimistic, but others might not share that view. From managerial perspective some might not understand the added value of studying the topic the way it was done here and would have hoped for something that can be more easily turned to improving performance. Then again from a more critical perspective one could quite fairly reject IHRM thinking because of its ideological underpinnings together with its often

ethnocentric, gender-absent and instrumental stance. By bringing these views into dialogue in accordance to the principles of reflexive pragmatism was a way to openly acknowledge these limitations. All in all, public sector IHRM research should also be more firmly tied to existing public administration and public policy research.

Every research project is a unique learning experience where mistakes should be seen as learning opportunities. However, it must be noted that ideally this research would have taken a more culturalist approach that would have been guided by even firmer ontological and epistemological reasoning. Unfortunately resource constraints dictated that it was not possible to conduct comparative or longitudinal study, let alone utilise international ethnography as a method. Furthermore, in this thesis it was decided not to anchor this research and the concepts explored into literature that has studied transformations of administration especially in post-communist Central and Eastern European Countries, leaving this task to future research projects. Besides resource limitations gaining access remains a challenge in research, such as this, that involves busy project people as research participants.

Some might also be bothered that this research cannot be firmly assigned to any specific research tradition. However, from anti-foundationalist position one can only conclude that this research was not even intended to construct a single convincing picture based on empirical material or one theoretical view. Issues related to the epistemological limitations of interview research were already covered in detail in the methods chapter of this thesis. One has to conclude that the problems related to the use of language, in both the research report and the research interview in mirroring or capturing the reality, are profound and there is no way of knowing whether interviews revealed some stable personal meanings, external truths, simply local dynamics, or something else.

Mobilising postcolonial vocabulary in this research can also be criticised, mostly because beneficiary countries of Twinning projects are not those poor "developing" countries that are more commonly perceived as victims of colonialism, and Finland is not viewed as an exploiting colonial power. However, it can be argued that postcolonial dynamics in contemporary international governance are much more subtle and less straightforward than the portrayal in the aforementioned traditional image of colonialism.

Therefore applying postcolonial or other critical lens, has the potential to make us more sensitive to these matters while also helping to counter the fetishisation of the so-called newness of the new in management research.[93] That said, this research process has also sparked some ideas about how to conduct future research.

Possibilities for future research

Given the current state of affairs, all research studying IHRM related themes in the public sector context is welcomed, but one should also move towards envisioning a culturalist research agenda for public sector IHRM. Reflexive and critical research orientations could also assist in moving beyond the limitations of functionalist mainstream IHRM. In the field of IHRM research for example Evans, Pucik and Björkman (2011, chapter 14) argue that the most important future role of IHRM is in tension management, in handing those underlining dualities that never have definitive solutions management can provide, and advocate that the best IHRM (or whatever it is called in the future) can do is to preserve focus on long-term sustainable goals. If IHRM wants to assist in this in the public sector it cannot any longer neglect the public sector context like it has done in the past.

To be relevant in the public sector future IHRM research should connect IRHM to public administration and public policy research, while also try to suture the gap between the micro and macro views, and investigate IHRM more thoroughly from the perspective of international governance. One should also explore the dynamics between public sector people management and democratic governance, as people management has a role of generating, balancing and sometimes even exploiting various requirements between and for public offices and other actors. The IHRM frame constructed earlier in this thesis could also be utilised in small-scale qualitative contextual studies to analyse HRM in international project environments, in research where positivist frameworks of comparative cross-national HRM are not ideally suited (example of such framework, see Budhwar and Sparrow 2002).

---

93 Foucault himself suggested that emphasis should be placed on the so-called boomerang effect of colonial government, where the West ends up practicing something resembling "colonization, or an internal colonialism, on itself" (Foucault 2003, 103; see also Barratt 2009).

Furthermore, dialogue between IHRM and more critical research traditions should continue. It would be worthwhile to study international governance from the science and technology studies perspective to get a more comprehensive view of the technologies of inscription and organisational procedures that define, maintain, and change the role of IHRM in its institutional context.[94]. As such, there appears to be a clear demand of ethnographic field studies to connect anthropological concepts explored in this thesis to the everyday social experiences of people doing international assignments in public sector project environments, and to get a more detailed view of international assignments in general. For example Augé (1995) points out that contemporary life also produces so-called non-places where people spend large amount of time in transit. In the case of international assignments one should pay more attention to various locations where the international assignment takes place: the non-places can include various transit points between home and parent country, as well as temporary abodes, offices and virtual places. One could study what kind of role IHRM has in various exchanges that constitute temporary project organisations and their relations to public sector (Maussian insights to organisation theory, see Alter 2009).[95]

To summarise, utilisation of IHRM in public administration research is a much welcomed development, but the research studying the people aspects in international governance should also keep close ties with philosophy and other branches of the social sciences, bringing together a wide array of perspectives. For example policy transfer research might benefit from taking people and cultural issues into account in a more nuanced way. Still in the end it is certainly too early to say anything certain about the fate of IHRM or CMS and the roles they will take in future international governance and Administrative Science research. Like famous

---

94 All in all IHRM research should probably be more reflexive to the non-human elements of the agency, in this case especially in relation to how spatial mobility is organised. Some insights about the emerging themes that bound management to the material forms and spaces through which actors interact at work, see edited volume by de Vaujany and Mitev 2013.

95 Alter (2009, 224–225) argues that "le management est trop théorique, et donc insuffisamment practique", that is to say incapable to "célébrer les dons et les sacrifices faits par les salariés", and therefore paradoxically "les salariés sont mal compris, mal gérés et finalement mal « exploités »." The alternative view Alter is trying to offer is connected to the principles of M.A.U.S.S. (Mouvement anti-utilitariste en sciences sociales).

futurist Alvin Toffler once astutely noted, the future usually arrives too soon and in wrong order.

This thesis begun with a metaphor of a lone settler arriving in the wilderness of Lapland. He has slowly begun to grasp what takes place under the northern sky after building a small house using various construction materials and experimenting with untested building principles. As he rests after all the hard work, he understands that new management practices come and go, new public administration approaches rise and fall, but the need for political units to employ people engaged in international work remains. Therefore themes of this research will go on, and to understand them in a specific temporal and spatial context will require constant reflection. A mere mirage of hope envisioning future administration research that is not cloistered or that safely sails in surveyed waters can serve as an inspiration to those reflective administration researchers with an open critical mind.

References

Ackroyd, Stephen (2004) Less bourgeois than thou: A critical review of studying management critically. *ephemera* 4(2).

Adler, Paul (2007) The future of critical management studies: A paleo-Marxist critique of labour process theory. *Organization Studies* 28(9).

Adorno, Theodor and Max Horkheimer (1979) *Dialectic of Enlightenment* (English translation of 1969 edition of Dialektic der Aufklarung by John Cumming). London: Verso.

Ahonen, Pasi and Janne Tienari (2009) United in diversity? Disciplinary normalization in an EU project. *Organization* 16(5).

Albert, Mathias and Tanja Kopp-Malek (2002) The pragmatism of global and European governance: Emerging forms of the political `beyond Westphalia'. *Millennium – Journal of International Studies* 31(3).

Alcadipani, Rafael and John Hassard (2010) Actor-Network Theory, organizations and critique: Towards a politics of organizing. *Organization* 17(4).

Alter, Norbert (2009) *Donner et prendre: La coopération en entreprise*. Paris: La Découverte.

Alvesson, Mats (1987) *Organization Theory and Technocratic Consciousness: Rationality, Ideology, and Quality of Work*. Berlin: De Gruyter.

Alvesson, Mats and Hugh Willmott (1992) On the idea of emancipation in management and organization studies. *Academy of Management Review* 17(3).

Alvesson, Mats and Stanley Deetz *(*2000) *Doing Critical Management Research.* London: Sage.

Alvesson Mats and Dan Kärreman (2000) Varieties of discourse: On the study of organizations through discourse analysis. *Human Relations* 53(9).

Alvesson, Mats and Hugh Willmott (2002) Identity regulation as organizational control: Producing the appropriate individual. *Journal of Management Studies* 39(5).

Alvesson, Mats (2003) Beyond neopositivists, romantics, and localists: A reflexive approach to interviews in organizational research. *Academy of Management Review* 28(1).

Alvesson Mats and Stefan Sveningsson (2003) The good visions, the bad micromanagement and the ugly ambiguity: Contradictions of (non-)leadership in a knowledge-intensive company. *Organization Studies* 24(6).

Alvesson, Mats and Dan Kärreman (2007) Identity, ceremony, and control in a management consulting firm. *Organization Science* 18(4).

Alvesson, Mats (2008) The future of Critical Management Studies. In Daved Barry and Hans Hansen (Eds), *The Sage Handbook of New Approaches in Management and Organization*, pp. 13– 30. London: Sage.

Alvesson, Mats, Cynthia Hardy and Bill Harley (2008) Reflecting on reflexivity: Reflexive textual practices in organization and management theory. *Journal of Management Studies* 45(3).

Alvesson, Mats and Kaj Sköldberg (2009) *Reflexive Methodology: New Vistas for Qualitative Research* (2nd Edition). London: Sage.

Alvesson, Mats, Todd Bridgman and Hugh Willmott (Eds.) (2009) *The Oxford Handbook of Critical Management Studies*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Alvesson, Mats (2011a) *Interpreting Interviews*. Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Alvesson, Mats (Ed.) (2011b) *Classics in Critical Management Studies*. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar.

Alvesson, Mats and Dan Kärreman (2011) *Qualitative Research and Theory Development: Mystery as a Method*. London: Sage.

Alvesson, Mats and Jörgen Sandberg (2011) Generating research questions through problematisation. *Academy of Management Review* 36(2).

Alvesson, Mats and André Spicer (2012) Critical leadership studies: The case for critical performativity. *Human Relations* 65(3).

Alvesson, Mats and Hugh Willmott (2012) *Making Sense of Management* (2nd Edition). London: Sage.

Alvesson, Mats (2013) Do we have something to say? From re-search to roi-search and back again. *Organization* 20(1).

Alvesson, Mats and Jörgen Sandberg (2013) *Constructing Research Questions: Doing Interesting Research*. London: Sage.

Andersen, Poul and Maria Skaates (2004) Ensuring Validity in Qualitative International Business Research. In Rebecca Marschan-Piekkari and Catherine Welch (Eds.), *Handbook of Qualitative Research Methods for International Business*, pp. 464– 485. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar.

Antonacopoulou, Elena (2010) Making the business school more 'critical': Reflexive critique basedon phronesis as a foundation for impact. *British Journal of Management* 21, Special supplement.

Appadurai, Arjun (1995) The Production of locality. In Richard Fardon (Ed.), *Counterworks: Managing the Diversity of Knowledge*, pp. 204– 225. London: Routledge.

Archer, Margaret (1998) Introduction: Realism in the Social Sciences. In Margaret Archer, Roy Bhaskar, Andrew Collier, Tony Lawson and Alan Norrie (Eds.), *Critical Realism. Essential Readings*, pp. 189–205. London: Routledge.

Asplund, Johan (1971) *Om undran inför samhället*. Stockholm: Argos.

Asplund, Johan (1987) *Det sociala livets elementära former*. Göteborg: Korpen.

Astley, Graham (1985) Administrative science as socially constructed truth. *Administrative Science Quarterly* 30(4).

Aubry, Monique, Brian Hobbs and Dennis Thuillier (2007) A new framework for understanding organisational project management through the PMO. *International Journal of Project Management* 25(4).

Augé, Marc (1995) *Non-Places. Introduction to an Anthropology of Supermodernity* (English translation of Non-Lieux. Introduction à une anthropologie de la surmodernité byJohn Howe). London: Verso.

Badiou, Alain (2012) *Filosofian puolesta. Kaksi manifestia.* (Finnish translations of Second manifeste pour la philosophie and Manifeste pour la philosophie by Lauri Pekonen, Janne Porttikivi ja Anna Tuomikoski) Helsinki: Tutkijaliitto.

Baker, Carolyn (2001) Ethnomethodological Analysis of Interviews. In Jaber F. Gubrium and James A. Holstein (Eds.), *Handbook of Interview Research. Context and Method*, pp. 777–795. London: Sage.

Bandura, Albert (1977) *Social Learning Theory*. Englewood Cliffs (New Jersey): Prentice-Hall.

Banerjee, Subhabrata Bobby and Stephen Linstead (2001) Globalization, multiculturalism and other fictions: Colonialism for the new millennium? *Organization* 8(4).

Banerjee, Subharata Bobby, Chris Carter and Steward Clegg (2009) Managing Globalisation. In Mats Alvesson, Todd Bridgman and Hugh Willmott (Eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Critical Management Studies*, pp. 186-212. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Banerjee, Subhabrata Bobby (2011) Voices of the Governed: towards a theory of the translocal. *Organization* 18(3).

Bardon, Thibaut and Emmanuel Josserand (2010) A Nietzschean reading of Foucauldian thinking: Constructing a project of the self within an ontology of becoming. *Organization* 18(4).

Barratt, Edward (2003) Foucault, HRM and the ethos of the critical management scholar. *Journal of Management Studies* **40***(5).*

Barratt, Edward (2009) Governing public servants. *Management and Organization History* **4***(1).*

Batteau, Allen (2001) Negations and ambiguities in the cultures of organization. *American Anthropologist* 102(4).

Batteau, Allen (2013) The Changing Rhetoric of Corporate Culture. In Douglas Caulkins and Ann Jordan (Eds.), *A Companion to Organizational Antropology*, pp. 56–73. Somerset (New Jersey): Wiley-Blackwell.

Baudrillard, Jean (1988) *Selected Writings* (Edited and introduced by Mark Poster). Cambridge: Polity Press.

Bauman, Zygmunt (2008) *The Art of Life*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Bauman, Zygmunt (2011) *Culture in a Liquid Modern World*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Beate, Jahn (1998) One step forward, two steps back: Critical theory as the latest edition of liberal idealism. *Millennium – Journal of International Studies* 27(3).

Beck, Ulrich (2008) Reframing Power in the Globalized World. *Organization Studies* 29(5).

Beech, Nic (2010) Liminality and the practices of identity reconstruction. *Human Relations* 64(2).

Beer, Michael, Bert Spector, Paul R. Lawrence, D. Quinn Mills and Richard Walton (1984) *Managing Human Assets*. London: Collier Macmillan.

Bennis, Warren and Philip Slater (1968) *The Temporary Society*. New York: Harper & Row.

Berman, Evan, James Bowman, Jonathan West and Montgomery Van Mart (2010) *Human Resource Management in the Public Service. Paradoxes, Processes, and Problems* (3rd Edition). Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Bhabha, Homi (2004). *Location of Culture* (Classics Edition). London: Routledge.

Bhaskar, Roy (1998) General introduction. In Margaret Archer, Roy Bhaskar, Andrew Collier, Tony Lawson and Alan Norrie (Eds.), *Critical Realism. Essential Readings*, pp. ix–xxiv. London: Routledge.

Blackburn, Sarah (2002) The project manager and the project-network. *International Journal of Project Management* 20(3).

Bolton, Sharon and Maeve Houlihan (Eds.) (2007) *Searching for the Human in Human Resource Management: Theory, Practice and Workplace Contexts*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Boselie, Paul (2009) A balanced approach to understanding the shaping of human resource management in organisations. *Management Revue* 20(1).

Boselie, Paul, Chris Brewster and Jaap Paauwe (2009) In search of balance – managing the dualities of HRM: An overview of the issues. *Personnel Review* 38(5).

Bourdieu, Pierre and Loïc Wacquant (1995) *Refleksiiviseen sosiologiaan. Tutkimus, käytäntö ja yhteiskunta* (Finnish volume of Résponses, pour un anthropologie reflexive, edited by M' hammed Sabour and Mikko A. Salo). Joensuu: University of Joensuu Press.

Boxall, Peter and John Purcell (2011) *Strategy and Human Resource Management* (3rd Edition). Houndmils: Palgrave Macmillan.

Boxall, Peter, John Purcell and Patrick Wright (2007) Human Resource Management: Scope, Analysis, and Significance. In Peter Boxall, John Purcell and Patrick Wright (Eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Human Resource Management*, pp. 1–16. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Boyne, George, Michael Poole and Glenville Jenkins (1999) Human resource management in the public and private sectors: An empirical comparison. *Public Administration* 77(2).

Boyne, George (2002) Public and private management: what's the difference? *Journal of Management Studies* 39(1).

Brady, Tim and Andrew Davies (2004) Building project capabilities: From exploratory to exploitative learning. *Organization Studies* 25(9).

Branine, Mohamed (2011) *Managing Across Cultures. Concepts, Policies and Practices*. London: Sage.

Braverman, Harry (1974) *Labour and Monopoly Capital: The Degradation of Work in the Twentieth Century*. Monthly Review Press: London.

Bredin, Karin (2008) *Human Resource Management in Project-Based Organisations – Challenges, Changes, and Capabilities*. Linköping: Linköping University (Linköping Studies in Arts and Science 431).

Bredin, Karin and Jonas Söderlund (2011) *Human Resource Management in Project-based Organizations. The HR Quadriad Framework*. Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan.

Brewis, Joanna and Gavin Jack (2009) Culture: Broadening the Critical Repertoire. In Mats Alvesson, Todd Bridgman and Hugh Willmott (Eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Critical Management Studies*, pp. 232–250. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Brewster, Chris and Hugh Scullion (1997) Expatriate HRM: A review and an agenda. *Human Resource Management Journal* 7(3).

Brewster, Chris and Henrik Larsen (2000) *Human Resource Management in Northern Europe: Trend Dilemmas and Strategy.* Oxford: Blackwell.

Brewster, Chris, Paul Sparrow and Hilary Harris (2005) Towards a new model of globalizing HRM. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management* 16(6).

Brewster, Chris and Vesa Suutari (2005) Global HRM: Aspects of a research agenda. *Personnel Review* 34(1).

Brewster, Chris (2006) Comparing HRM Policies and Practices Across Geographical Borders. In Stahl, Günther and Ingmar Björkman (Eds), *Handbook of Research in International Human Resource Management*, pp. 68–90. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar.

Brewster, Chris (2007) Comparative HRM: European views and perspectives. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management* 18(5).

Brewster, Chris and Wolfgand Mayrhofer (2012) Comparative human resource management: an introduction. In Chris Brewster and Wolfgang Mayrhofer (Eds.), *Handbook of Research on Comparative Human Resource Management,* pp. 1–23. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar.

Briscoe, Dennis, Randall Schuler and Lisbeth Claus (2009) *International Human Resource Management. Policies and Practices for Multinational Enterprises*. (3rd Edition). Milton Park: Routledge.

Broussine, Mike (2008) *Creative Methods in Organizational Research*. Los Angeles: Sage.

Brown, Steve (2002) Michel Serres: Science, translation and the logic of the parasite. *Theory, Culture and Society* 19(1).

Browning, Christopher and Pertti Joenniemi (2008) Geostrategies of the European neighbourhood policy. *European Journal of International Relations* 14(3).

Bruce, Kyle and Chris Nyland (2011) Elton Mayo and the deification of human relations. *Organization Studies* 32(3).

Bryman, Alan and Emma Bell (2007) *Business Research Methods* (2nd Edition). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Buckle, Pamela and Janice Thomas (2003) Deconstructing project management: A gender analysis of project management guidelines. *International Journal of Project Management* 21(6).

Budd, Leslie (2007) Post-bureaucracy and reanimating public governance. A discourse and practice of continuity? *International Journal of Public Sector Management* 20(6).

Budhwar, Pawan and Paul Sparrow (2002) An integrative framework for under-standing cross-national human resource management practices. *Human Resource Management Review* 12(3).

Burnett, Bill (2006) Twinning: A Mechanism for delivering capacity building in SAIs. *International Journal of Government Auditing* 33(3).

Burrell, Gibson and Gareth Morgan (1979) *Sociological Paradigms and Organisational Analysis*. Ashgate: Heinemann.

Burke, Rory and Steve Barron (2007) *Project Management Leadership: Building Creative Teams*. London: Burke Publishing.

Butler, Judith (2006) *Hankala sukupuoli. Feminismi ja identiteetin kumous.* (Finnish translation of Gender Trouble by Tuija Pulkkinen ja Leena-Maija Rossi) Tampere: Gaudeamus.

Calás, Marta and Linda Smircich (1993) Dangerous liaisons: The 'feminine-in-management' meets 'globalisation'. *Business Horizons* 36(2).

Callon, Michel (1986) Some Elements of a Sociology of Translation: Domestication of the Scallops and Fishermen of St Brieuc Bay. In John Law (Ed.), *Power, Action and Belief. A New Sociology of Knowledge?*, pp. 196–233. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.

Camps, Joaquín and Roberto Luna-Arocas (2009) High involvement work practices and firm performance. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management* 20(5).

Cappellen, Tineke and Maddy Janssens (2010) The career reality of global managers: An examination of career triggers. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management* 21(11).

Carroll, Peter and Richard Common (Eds.) (2013) *Policy Transfer and Learning in Public Policy and Management. International Contexts, Content and Development.* London: Routledge.

Castells, Manuel (1996). *The Network Society. A Cross-cultural Perspective*. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar.

Chapman, Malcolm, Hanna Gajewska-De Mattos and Christos Antoniou (2004) The Ethnocraphic International Business Researcher: Misfit or Trailblazer? In Rebecca Marschan-Piekkari and Catherine Welch (Eds.), *Handbook of Qualitative Research Methods for International Business*, pp. 287–305. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar.

Cicmil, Svetlana and Damian Hodgson (2006) New possibilities for project management theory: A critical engagement. *Project Management Journal* 37(3).

Cicmil, Svetlana, Terry Williams, Janice Thomas and Damian Hodgson (2006) Rethinking project management: Researching the actuality of projects. *International Journal of Project Management* 24(8).

Cicmil, Svetlana, Damian Hodgson, Monica Lindgren and Johann Packendorff (2009) Project management behind the façade. *ephemera* 9(2).

CIPD or Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (2011). Factsheet on international culture. http://www.cipd.co.uk/hr-resources/factsheets/international-culture.aspx Last checked 14.5.2013.

Cixous, Hélène (2013) *Medusan nauru ja muita ironisia kirjoituksia* (Finnish translation of Le Rire de la Méduse et autres ironies by Heta Rundgren and Aura Sevón). Helsinki: Tutkijaliitto.

Cleland, David and Roland Gareis (Eds.) (2006) *Global Project Management Handbook. Planning, Organizing, and Controlling International Projects* (2nd Edition). London: McGraw-Hill.

Cliffort, James and George Marcus (Eds.) (1986) *Writing Culture: The Poetics and Politics of Ethnography*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Cobb, Anthony (2012) *Leading Project Teams. The Basics of Project Management and Team Leadership* (2nd Edition). London: Sage.

Cohen, Anthony (1985) *The Symbolic Construction of Community*. Chichester: Tavistock.

Collings, David and Hugh Scullion (2006) Global Staffing. In Günther Stahl and Ingmar Björkman (Eds.), pp. 141–157. *Handbook of Research in International Human Resource Management*. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar.

Collings, David (2008) Multinational corporations and industrial relations research: A road less travelled. *International Journal of Management Reviews* 10(2).

Collings, David and Geoffrey Wood (2009) Human Resource Management: A Critical Approach. In David Collings and Geoffrey Wood (Eds.), *Human Resource Management: A Critical Approach*, pp. 1–16. Milton Park: Routledge.

Collings, David, Hugh Scullion and Deirdre Curran (2009) International human resource management. In David Collings and Geoffrey Wood (Eds.), *Human Resource Management: A Critical Approach*, pp. 296–312. Milton Park: Routledge.

Collings, David, Hugh Scullion and Peter Dowling (2009) Global staffing: a review and thematic research agenda. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management* 20(6).

Common, Richard (2011) International trends in HRM in the public sector: reform attempts in the Republic of Georgia. *International Journal of Public Sector Management* 24(5).

Conway, Neil and Rob Briner (2005) *Understanding Psychological Contracts at Work: A Critical Evaluation of Theory and Research*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Cooke, Bill (2004) The managing of the (third) world. *Organization* 11(5).

Cooke-Davies, Terry (2002) The '"real" success factors on projects . *International Journal of Project Management* 20(3).

Court of Auditors (2003) Special Report No 6/2003 Concerning twinning as the main instrument to support institution-building in candidate countries together with the Commission's replies. *Official Journal of the European Union* C 167/02 Vol 46.

Covaleski, Mark, Mark Dirsmith, James Heian and Sajay Samuel (1998) The calculated and the avowed: techniques of discipline and struggles over identity in big six public accounting firms. *Administrative Science Quarterly* 43(2).

Crawford, Lynn and Jane Helm (2009) Government and governance: The value of project management in the public sector. *Project Management Journal* 40(1).

Crevani, Lucia and Thomas Shinozaki Lennerfors (2009) Pull yourselves together, guys! A gendered critique of project managers' ethics in a public sector context. *ephemera* 9(2).

Cunliffe, Ann (2003) Reflexive inquiry in organizational research: Questions and possibilities. *Human Relations* 56(8).

Cunliffe, Ann (2008) Will You Still Need Me … When I'm 64?1 The Future of CMS. *Organization* 15(6).

Czarniawska, Barbara (2003) This way to paradise: On creole researchers, hybrid disciplines, and pidgin writing. *Organization* 10(3).

Czarniawska, Barbara and Carmela Mazza (2003) Consulting as liminal space. *Human Relations* 56(3).

Czarniawska, Barbara and Guje Sevón (Eds.) (2005) *Global Ideas. How Ideas, Objects and Practices Travel in the Global Economy*. Malmö: Liber and Copenhagen Business School Press.

Czarniawska, Barbara (2006) Reassembling the Social: An introduction to Actor-Network Theory (Book review). *Organization Studies* 27(10)

Czarniawska, Barbara (2008) *A Theory of Organizing*. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar.

Czarniawska, Barbara (2009) Emerging institutions: Pyramids or anthills? *Organization Studies* 30(4).

Czarniawska, Barbara (2010) The uses of narratology in social and policy studies. *Critical Policy Studies* 4(1).

Czarniawska, Barbara (2012) Organization theory meets anthropology: A story of an encounter. *Journal of Business Anthropology* 1(1).

Dany, Françoise (2003) 'Free actors' and organizations: Critical remarks about the new career literature, based on French insights. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management* 14(5).

Davies, Jonathan (2011) The limits of post-traditional public administration: Towards a Gramscian perspective. *Critical Policy Studies* 5(1).

De Cieri, Helen, Marilyn Fenwick and Kate Hutchings (2005) The challenge of international human resource management: Balancing the duality of strategy and practice. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management* 16(4).

De Cieri, Helen and Peter Dowling (2006). Strategic International Human Resources Management in Multinational Enterprises: Developments and Directions. In Günter Stahl and Ingmar Björkman (Eds.), *Handbook of Research in International Human Resource Management*, pp. 15–35. Northhampton: Edward Elgar.

De Cieri, Helen (2007) Transnational Firms and Cultural Diversity. In Peter Boxall, John Purcell and Patrick Wright (Eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Human Resource Management*, pp. 507–528. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

De Cieri, Helen, Julie Wolfram Cox and Marilyn Fenwick (2007) A review of international human resource management: Integration, interrogation, imitation. *International Journal of Management Reviews* 9(4).

Deetz, Stanley (1996) Describing differences in approaches to organization science: Rethinking Burrell and Morgan and their legacy. *Organization Science* 7(2).

Delbridge, Rick and Tom Keenoy (2010) Beyond managerialism? *The International Journal of Human Resource Management* 21(6).

Delbridge, Rick, Marco Hauptmeier and Sukanya Sengupta (2011) Beyond the enterprise: Broadening the horizons of International HRM. *Human Relations* 64(4).

Delbridge, Rick (2014) Promising futures: CMS, post-disciplinarity, and the new public social science. *Journal of Management Studies* 51(1).

Deleuze, Gilles and Felix Guattari (1987) *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia* (English translation of Capitalisme et schizophrénie, tome 2: Mille plateaux by Brian Massumi).Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Deleuze, Gilles and Félix Guattari (1993) *Mitä filosofia on?* (Qu'est-ce que la philosophie translated by Leevi Lehto) Helsinki: Gaudeamus.

Deleuze, Gilles (1992) Postscript on the societies of control. *October* 59: 3– 7.

Denzin, Norman (2001) The Cinematic Society and the Reflexive Interview. In Jaber F. Gubrium and James A. Holstein (Eds.), *Handbook of Interview Research. Context and Method*, pp. 833–847. London: Sage.

Denzin, Norman and Yvonna Lincoln (Eds.) (2008) *Collecting and Interpreting Qualitative Materials*. London: Sage.

Dewey, John (1988 [1927]) The Public and Its Problems. In John Dewey, *The later works 1925–1953. Volume 2, 1925–1927*. Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press.

Dewey, John (2012 [1929]) *Filosofian uudistaminen* (Finnish translation of Reconstruction in Philosophy by Tuukka Perhonniemi). Tampere: Vastapaino.

Diedrich, Andreas and Alexander Styhre (2012) International expertise and local know-how in the trading zone. *Scandinavian Journal of Management* 28(4).

Diener, Edward and Rick Grandall (1978) *Ethics in Social and Behavioral Research*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Diez, Thomas (2005) Constructing the self and changing others: Reconsidering 'normative power Europe'. *Millennium – Journal of International Studies* 33(3).

Dillon, Michael (1989) Modernity, discourse and deterrence. *Current Research of Peace and Violence* 12(2).

Dowling, Peter (1999) Completing the puzzle: Issues in the development of the field of international human resource management. *Management International Review* 3/99 Special Issue.

Drucker, Peter (1954) *The Practice of Management*. New York: Harper Brothers.

Dubois, Anna and Lars-Erik Gadde (2002) Systematic combining: An abductive approach to case research. *Journal of Business Research 55*(7).

Du Gay, Paul, Graeme Salaman and Bronwen Rees (1996) The conduct of management and the management of conduct. *Journal of Management Studies* 33(3).

Du Gay, Paul (2003) The tyranny of the epochal: Change, epochalism and organizational reform. *Organization* 10(4).

Du Gay, Paul (2007) Office as a Vocation? The Ethos of Bureaucratic Office and Public Service. In Chris Carter, Steward Clegg, Martin Kornberger, Stephan Laske and Martin Messner (Eds.), *Business Ethics as Practice. Representation, Reflexivity and Performance*, pp. 13–31. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar.

Durepos, Gabrielle and Albert Mills (2012) Actor-Network Theory, ANTi-History and critical organizational historiography. *Organization* 19(6).

Editors' Forum (2007) Editors' forum on the research-practice gap in HRM. *Academy of Management Journal* 50(5).

Eco, Umberto (1995) *Six Walks in the Fictional Woods*. London: Harvard University Press.

Edström, Anders and Jay Galbraith (1977) Transfer of managers as a coordination and control strategy in multinational organizations. *Administrative Science Quarterly* 22(2).

Eisenhardt, Kathleen (1989) Agency theory: An assessment and review. *The Academy of Management Review* 14(1).

Engwall, Mats (2003) No project is an island: Linking projects to history and context. *Research Policy* 32(5).

European Commission (2001) *European Governance. A White Paper*.

European Commission (2009) *Institution Building in the Framework of European Policies. Common Twinning Manual* (revision 2009).

European Commission (2012) *Institution Building in the Framework of European Policies. Common Twinning Manual* (revision 2012).

Evans, Paul (1999) HRM on the edge: A duality perspective. *Organization* 6(2).

Evans, Paul, Vladimir Pucik and Ingmar Björkman (2011) *The Global Challenge: International Human Resource Management* (2nd Edition). New York: McGraw-Hill Irwin.

Evans, Paul, John Hassard and Paula Hyde (2013) *Critical Leadership. Leader-follower Dynamics in a Public Organization*. Milton Park: Routledge.

Farndale, Elaine, Jaap Paauwe, Shad Morris, Günter Stahl, Philip Stiles, Jonathan Trevor and Patrick Wright (2010) Context-bound configurations of corporate HR functions in multinational corporations. *Human Resource Management* 49(1).

Fenner, Charles Jr. and Jan Selmer (2008) Public sector expatriate managers: Psychological adjustment, personal characteristics and job factors. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management* 19(7).

Ferguson, James and Akhil Gupta (2002) Spatializing states: Toward an ethnography of neoliberal govermentality. *American Ethnologist* 29(4).

Ferguson, James (2006) *Global Shadows: Africa in the Neoliberal World Order*. London: Duke University Press.

Feyerabend, Paul (1975) *Against Method. Outline of an Anarchistic Theory of Knowledge*. London: NLB.

Fleetwood, Steve (2005) Ontology in organization and management studies: A critical realist perspective. *Organization* 12(2).

Fleetwood, Steve (2007) Searching for the human in the empirical research of the HRM-organisational performance link: a meta-theoretical approach. In Bolton, Sharon and Maeve Houlihan (Eds.), *Searching for the Human in Human Resource Management: Theory, Practice and Workplace Contexts*, pp. 41–60. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Fleetwood, Steve and Anthony Hesketh (2008) Theorising under-theorisation in research on the HRM-performance link. *Personnel Review* 37(2).

Fleming, Peter and Andrew Sturdy (2009) Just Be Yourself": Towards Neo-Normative Control in Organizations? *Employee Relations* 31(6).

Fleming, Peter (2013) "Some might call it work … But we don't": Exploitation and the emergence of *free work* capitalism. In Mikael Holmqvist and André Spicer (Eds.), *Managing `Human Resources´ by Exploiting and Exploring People's Potentials. Research in the Sociology of Organizations, Volume 37*, pp. 105–128. Bingley: Emerald.

Flyvbjerg, Bent (2004) Five Misunderstandings About Case-study Research. In Clive Seale, Giampietro Gobo, Jaber Gubrium, and David Silverman (Eds.), *Qualitative Research Practice*, pp. 420–434. London: Sage.

Fogde, Marinette (2010) Governing through career coaching: Negotiations of self-marketing. *Organization* 18(1).

Fombrun, Charles, Noel Tichy and Mary Devanna (1984) *Strategic Human Resource Management*. New York: John Wiley & Sons.

Foucault, Michel (2003) *Society must be defended. Lectures at the Collège de France* (Il faut défendre la société translated by David Macey). New York: Picador.

Foucault, Michel (2010) *Turvallisuus, alue, väestö. Hallinnallisuuden historia. Collège de Francen luennot 1977–1978.* (Finnish translation of Sécurité, Territoire, Population by Antti Paakkari) Helsinki: Tutkijaliitto.

Fournier, Valérie and Chris Grey (2000) At the critical moment: Conditions and prospects for critical management studies. *Human Relations* 53(7).

Freyens, Benoît (2010) Managing skill shortages in the Australian public sector: Issues and perspectives. *Asia Pacific Journal of Human Resources* 48(3).

Fromm, Erich (1976) *Pako vapaudesta* (Finnish translation of Escape from Freedom by Markku Lahtela, 2nd Edition). Helsinki: Kirjayhtymä.

Frontinus, Sextus Julius (1925) *Stratagems, On the Aqueducts of Rome* (translated by C.E. Bennett and Mary McElwain). Cambridge (Massachusetts): Harvard University.

Fujimura, Joan (1992) Crafting Science: Standardised Packages, Boundary Objects, and "Translations". In Andrew Pickering (Eds.), *Science as Practice and Culture*, pp. 168–211. London: The University of Chicago Press.

Fukuyama, Francis (2004) The imperative of state building. *Journal of democracy* 15(2).

Gabriel, Yiannis (2005) Glass cages and glass palaces: Images of organization in image-conscious times. *Organization* 12(1).

Gadamer, Hans-Georg (1981) *Truth and Method* (2nd Edition, English translation of Wahrheit und Metode by William Glen-Doepel). London: Sheet and Ward.

Gaddis, Paul (1959) The Project manager. *Harvard Business Review* 37(3).

Gahan, Peter and Lakmal Abeysekera (2009) What shapes an individual's work values? An integrated model of the relationship between work values, national culture and self-construal. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management* 20(1).

Galison, Peter (1997) *Image and Logic: A Material Culture of Microphysics*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

Garsten, Christina (1999) Betwixt and between: Temporary employees as liminal subjects in flexibie organizations. *Organization Studies* 20(4).

Garsten, Christina (2008) *Workplace Vagabonds: Career and Community in Changing Worlds of Work*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Garud, Raghu and Peter Karnøe (2003) Bricolage versus breakthrough: Distributed and embedded agency in technology entrepreneurship. *Research Policy* 32(2).

Gauthier, Jacques-Bernard and Lavagnon Ika (2012) Foundations of project management research: An explicit and six-facet ontological framework. *Project Management Journal* 43(5).

Gavin, Jack, Robert Westwood, Nidhi Srinivas and Ziauddin Sardar (2011) Deepening, broadening and re-asserting a postcolonial interrogative space in organization studies. *Organization* 18(3).

Geertz, Clifford (1983) *Local Knowledge: Further Essays in Interpretive Anthropology*. New York: Basic Books.

Geertz, Clifford (2000) Available Light. Antropological Reflections in Philosophical Topics. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Gellner, Ernest (1992) *Reason and Culture: The Historic Role of Rationality and Rationalism*. Oxford: Blackwell.

Gergen, Kenneth and Mary Gergen (1991) Toward reflexive methodologies. In Frederick Steir (Ed.), *Research and Reflexivity,* pp.76–95. London: Sage.

Gergen, Kenneth (2009) *An Invitation to Social Construction* (2nd Edition). London: Sage.

Goffman, Erving (1986) *Frame Analysis: An Essay on the Organization of Experience*. Boston: Northeastern University Press.

Goldsmith, Stephen and William Eggers (2004) *Governing by Network: The New Shape of the Public Sector*. Washington DC: The Brookings Institution.

Gopinath, C. and Anshuman Prasad (2012) Toward a critical framework for understanding MNE operations: Revisiting Coca-Cola's exit from India. *Organization* 20(2).

Grant, David, Tom Keenoy and Cliff Oswick (Eds.) (1998) *Discourse and Organization*. London: Sage.

Greener, Ian (2013) *Public Management* (2nd Edition). Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan.

Greenwood, Michelle and Eve Anderson (2009) 'I used to be an employee but now I am a stakeholder': Implications of labelling employees as stakeholders. *Asia Pacific Journal of Human Resources* 47(2).

Grey, Christopher (1994) Career as a project of the self and labour process discipline. *Sociology* 28(2).

Grey, Christopher and Hugh Willmott (2002) Contexts of CMS. *Organization* 9(4).

Grey, Christopher and Amanda Sinclair (2006) Writing differently. *Organization* 13(3).

Grey, Chris (2013) *A Very Short, Fairly Interesting and Reasonably Cheap Book about Studying Organizations* (3rd Edition). London: Sage.

Guest, David (1990) "Human resource and the American dream", *Journal of Management Studies* 27(4).

Guest, David (2008) HRM and the Worker. Towards a New Psychological Contract? In Peter Boxall, John Purcell and Patrick Wright (Eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Human Resource* Management, pp. 127–146. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Gupta, Akhil (1995) Blurred boundaries: The discourse of corruption, the culture of politics, and the imagined state. *American Ethnologist* 22(2).

Habermas, Jürgen (1981) Modernity versus postmodernity. *New German Critiqu*e 22, 3–14.

Habermas, Jürgen (1987a) *Theorie des kommunikativen Handelns. Band 2. Zur Kritik der funktionalistischen Vernunft*. Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp.

Habermas, Jürgen (1987b) *The Philosophical Discourse of Modernity* (English translation of Der philosophische Diskurs der Moderne by Frederick Lawrence). Cambridge: Polity Press.

Hanlon, Gerard (2007) "HRM is redundant? Professions, immaterial labour and the future of work", In Bolton, Sharon and Maeve Houlihan (Eds.), *Searching for the Human in Human Resource Management: Theory, Practice and Workplace Contexts*, pp. 263–280. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Hansen, Hans (2008) Abduction. In Daved Barry and Hans Hansen (Eds), *The Sage Handbook of New Approaches in Management and Organization*, pp. 454–463. London: Sage.

Haraway, Donna (1994) A game of cat's cradle: Science studies, feminist theory, cultural studies. *Configurations* 1(59).

Harding, Sandra (2008) *Sciences from Below. Feminisms, Postcolonialities, and Modernities*. Durham (North Carolina): Duke University Press.

Harisalo, Risto (2009) *Organisaatioteoriat*. Tampere: Tampere University Press.

Harvey, David (1990) *The Condition of Postmodernity. An Enquiry into the Origins of Cultural Change*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.

Hassard, John, Leo McCann and Jonathan Morris (2007) At the sharp end of new organizational ideologies. Ethnography and the study of multinationals. *Ethnography* 8(3).

Hays, Steven and Gregory Plagens (2002) Human resource management best practices and globalization: The universality of common sense. *Public Organization Review: A Global Journal* 2(4).

Heidegger, Martin (1960) *Unterwegs zur Sprache* (2nd Edition). Pfullingen: Neske.

Heijes, Coen (2011) Cross-cultural perception and power dynamics across changing organizational and national contexts: Curaçao and the Netherlands. *Human Relations* 64(5).

Held, David, Anthony McGrew, David Goldblatt, and Jonathan Perraton (1999) *Global Transformations: Politics, Economics and Culture*. Oxford: Polity.

Hertz, Rosanna (Ed.) (1997) *Reflexivity and Voice*. London: Sage.

Henrie, Morgan and Andres Sousa-Poza (2005) Project management: a cultural literary review. *Project Management Journal* 36(1).

Hirsjärvi, Sirkka and Helena Hurme (2001). T*utkimushaastattelu. Teemahaastattelun teoria ja käytäntö*. Helsinki: Yliopistopaino.

Hochschild, Arlie (2003) T*he Managed Heart. Commercialisation of Human Feeling*. (Twentieth Anniversary Edition) London: University of California Press.

Hodge, Graeme, Carsten Greve and Anthony E. Boardman (Eds.) (2010) *International Handbook on Public-Private Partnerships*. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar.

Hodgson, Damian (2002) Disciplining the professional: The case of project management. *Journal of Management Studies* 39(6).

Hodgson, Damian (2004) Project work: The legacy of bureaucratic control in the post-bureaucratic organization. *Organization* 11(1).

Hodgson, Damian (2005) 'Putting on a professional performance': Performativity, subversion and project management. *Organization* 12(1).

Hodgson, Damian and Svetlana Cicmil (Eds.) (2006) *Making Projects Critical*. Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan.

Hodson, Randy, Vincent Roscigno, Andrew Martin and Steven Lopez (2013) "The ascension of Kafkaesque bureaucracy in private sector organizations", *Human Relations* 66(9).

Holland, Ray (1999) Reflexivity. *Human Relations* 52(4).

Holmqvist, Mikael and André Spicer (2013) The Ambidextrous Employee: Exploiting and Exploring People's Potential. In Mikael Holmqvist and André Spicer (Eds.), *Managing `Human Resources´ by Exploiting and Exploring People's Potentials. Research in the Sociology of Organizations, Volume 37*, pp. 1–23. Bingley: Emerald.

Holstein, James and Jaber Gudrium (1995) *The Active Interview*. Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Holsti, Ole (1969) *Content Analysis for the Social Sciences and Humanities*. Reading (Massachusetts): Addison-Wesley Publishing.

Honneth, Axel (2007) *Disrespect. The Normative Foundations of Critical Theory* (English translation of Das Andere der Gerechtigkeit, edited by Joseph Ganahl). Cambridge: Polity.

Honneth, Axel and Martin Hartmann (2012) Paradoxes of Capitalist Modernisation: A Research Programme. In Axel Honneth *The I in We. Studies in the Theory of Recognition* (English translation of Das Ich im Wir by Joseph Ganahl), pp. 169–190. Cambridge: Polity.

Hood, Christopher (1991) A Public Management for all seasons? *Public Administration* 69(2).

Hood, Christopher (2005) Public Management: The Word, the Movement, the Science. In Ewan Ferlie, Laurence Lynn, Jr and Christopher Pollitt (Eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Public Management*, pp. 7–26. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Howe, Irwing (1989) The Treason of the Critics. *New Republic*, 12 June 1989, pp. 28–30.

Huault, Isabelle Véronique Perret and André Spicer (2014) Beyond macro- and micro-emancipation: Rethinking emancipation in organization studies. *Organization* 21(1).

Huemann, Martina, Anne Keegan and Rodney Turner (2007) Human resource management in the project-oriented company: A review. *International Journal of Project Management* 25(3).

Hughes, Owen (2012) *Public Management and Administration. An Introduction.* (4th Edition) Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Hölderlin, Friedrich (1996) *Leipä ja viini* (Finnish edition of Brot und Wein, translated and commented by Teivas Oksala and Risto Niemi-Pynttäri, edited by Keijo Virtanen). Jyväskylä: Jyväskylän yliopiston kirjallisuuden laitoksen julkaisuja 11.

Inkson, Kerr, Hugh Gunz, Shiv Ganesh and Juliet Roper (2012) Boundaryless careers: Bringing back boundaries. *Organization Studies* 33(3).

Iorio, Josh and John Taylor (2014) Boundary object efficacy: The mediating role of boundary objects on task conflict in global virtual project networks. *International Journal of Project Management* 32(1).

Irwin, Brian (2008) *Managing Politics and Conflict in Projects*. Vienna (Virginia): Management Concepts.

Ivory, Chris, Neil Alderman, Ian McLoughlin and Roger Vaughan (2006) Sence-making as a process within complex projects. In Damian Hodgson and Svetlana Cicmil (Eds.) *Making Projects Critical*, pp. 316–334. Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan.

Jack, Gavin and Robert Westwood (2009) *International and Cross-Cultural Management Studies: A Postcolonial Reading*. Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan.

Jackson, Patrick (2011) *The Conduct of Inquiry in International Relations: Philosophy of Science and Its Implications for the Study of World Politics*. Milton Park: Routledge.

Jackson, Terence (2002) *International HRM: A Cross-Cultural Approach*. London: Sage.

James, William (2008 [1907]) *Pragmatismi – uusi nimi eräille vanhoille ajatteluta-voille* (Finnish translation of Pragmatism: A New Name for Some Old Ways of Thinking by Antti Immonen). Tampere: Eurooppalaisen filosofian seura.

Janssens, Maddy and Chris Steyaert (2009) HRM and performance: A plea for reflexivity in HRM studies. *Journal of Management Studies* 46(1).

Janssens, Maddy and Chris Steyaert (2012) Towards an ethical research agenda for international HRM: The possibilities of a plural cosmopolitan framework. *Journal of Business Ethics* 111(1).

Jarzabkowski, Paula (2005) *Strategy as Practice: An Activity-Based Approach*. London: Sage.

Jessop, Bob (1993) Towards a Schumpeterian workfare state? Preliminary remarks on post- Fordist political economy. *Studies in Political Economy* (40), 7–40.

Jessop, Bob (2006) From micro-powers to governmentality: Foucault's work on statehood, state formation, statecraft and state power. *Political Geography* 26(1).

Johnsen, Rasmus and Marius Gudmand-Høyer (2010) Lacan and the lack of humanity in HRM. *Organization* 17(3).

Johnson, Phil and Joanne Duberley (2003) Reflexivity in management research. *Journal of Management Studies* 40(5).

Johnson, Phil (2009) HRM in changing organizational context. In David Collings and Geoffrey Wood (Eds.), *Human Resource Management: A Critical Approach*, pp. 19–37. Routledge: Milton Park.

Jokinen, Tiina, Chris Brewster and Vesa Suutari (2008) Career capital during international work experiences: contrasting self-initiated expatriate experiences and assigned expatriation. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management* 19(6).

Kallen, Horace (1915). Democracy versus the melting-pot. A study of American nationality (Parts I and II). *The Nation,* 18 and 25 February.

Kaufman, Bruce (2007) The Development of HRM in Historical and International Perspective. In Peter Boxall, John Purcell and Patrick Wright (Eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Human Resource Management*, pp. 19–47. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Kavanagh, Donna (2013) Problematizing practice: MacIntyre and management. *Organization* 20(1).

Keating, Mary and Karen Thompson (2004) International human resource management: Overcoming disciplinary sectarianism. *Employee Relations* 26(6).

Keegan, Anne and Paul Boselie (2006) The lack of impact of dissensus inspired analysis on developments in the field of human resource management. *Journal of Management Studies* 43(7).

Keenoy, Tom (1999) HRM as hologram: A polemic. *Journal of Management Studies* 36(1).

Keenoy, Tom (2009) Human Resource Management. In Mats Alvesson, Todd Bridgman and Hugh Willmott (Eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Critical Management Studies*, pp. 454–472. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Kennett, Patricia (2010) Global Perspectives of Governance. In Stephen Osborne (Ed.), *The New Public Governance? Emerging Perspectives on the Theory and Practice of Public Governance*, pp. 19–35. Abingdon: Routledge.

Kerzner, Harold (2006) *Project Management: A Systems Approach to Planning, Scheduling, and Controlling* (9ᵗʰ Edition). Hoboken (New Jersey): John Wiley & Sons.

Kickert, Walter (2001) Public management of hybrid organizations: Governance of quasi-autonomous executive agencies. *International Public Management Journal* 4(2).

Kim, Pan Suk (1999) Globalization of human resource management: A cross-cultural perspective for the public sector. *Public Personnel Management* 28(2).

Kim, Pan Suk (2008) How to attract and retain the best in government. *International Review of Administrative Sciences* 74(4).

Kivelä, Juhani (2010) *Valtion talousohjauksen tila – tuki vai taakka?* Tampere: Tampere University Press.

Kobrin, Stephen (1994). Is there a relationship between a geocentric mind-set and multinational strategy? *Journal of International Business* 25(3).

Kodama, Mitsuru (2007) *Project-Based Organization in the Knowledge-Based Society*. London: Imperial College Press.

Kolb, David (1984) *Experiential Learning: Experience as the Source of Learning and Development*. Englewood Cliffs (New Jersey): Prentice-Hall.

Korczynski, Marek (2002) *Human Resource Management in Service Work*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.

Korczynski, Marek (2007) HRM and the menu society: the fetishisation of individual choice of work. In Sharon Bolton and Maeve Houlihan (Eds.), *Searching for the Human in Human Resource Management: Theory, Practice and Workplace Contexts*, pp. 103–114. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Koskinen, Kaj and Pekka Pihlanto (2008) *Knowledge Management in Project-based Companies: An Organic Perspective.* New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Kostera, Monika (2007) Kronos and Eros. Making Sense of Organizing in the Service Economy. In Daniel Hjorth and Monika Kostera (Eds.), *Entrepreneurship and the Experience Economy*, pp. 283–318. Copenhagen: Copenhagen Business School Press.

Krippendorff, Klaus (2004) *Content Analysis. An Introduction to Its Methodology* (2nd Edition). Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Krone, Oliver (2007) *The Interaction of Organisational Structure and Humans in Knowledge Integration*. Rovaniemi: University of Lapland (Acta Universitatis Lapponiensis 115).

Kuula, Arja (2006) *Tutkimusetiikka. Aineistojen hankinta, käyttö ja säilytys*. Rovaniemi: Lapin yliopistokustannus.

Kuus, Merje (2011) Policy and geopolitics: Bounding Europe in Europe. *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 101(5).

Kvale, Steinar (1996) *Interviews: An Introduction to Qualitative Research Interviewing*. Thousand Oaks (California): Sage.

Kymlicka, Will (1995) *Multicultural Citizenship*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Köstner, Kathrin (2008) *International Project Management*. London: Sage.

Latour, Bruno (1996) *Aramis or the Love of Technology*. Cambridge (Massachusetts): Harvard University Press.

Latour, Bruno (2006) *Emme ole koskaan olleet moderneja* (Finnish translation of We Have Never Been Modern by Risto Suikkanen). Tampere: Vastapaino.

Latour, Bruno (2007) *Reassembling the Social. An Introduction to Actor-Network-Theory*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Latour, Bruno (2012) "What's the story?" Organising as a mode of existence. In Jan-Hendrik Passoth, Birgit Peuker and Michael Schillmeier (Eds.), *Agency Without Actors? New Approaches to Collective Action*, pp.163–177. London: Routledge.

Latour, Bruno (2013) *An Inquiry into Modes of Existence: An Anthropology of the Moderns* (Enquête sur les *modes* d'*existence* translated by Catherine Porter). Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Laurent, André (1986) The cross-cultural puzzle of international human resource management. *Human Resource Management* 25(1).

Lavigna, Robert and Steven Hays (2004) Recruitment and selection of public workers: An international compendium of modem trends and practices. *Public Personnel Management* 33(3).

Law, John (Ed.) (1986a) *Power, Action and Belief. A New Sociology of Knowledge?* London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.

Law, John (1986b) On the methods of long-distance control: vessels, navigation and the Portuguese route to India. In John Law (Ed.), *Power, Action and Belief. A New Sociology of Knowledge?*, pp. 234–263. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.

Law, John (2002) *Aircraft Stories: Decentering the object in Technoscience*. Durham (North Carolina): Duke University Press.

Law, John (2004) *After Method. Mess in Social Science Research*. London: Routledge.

Lazarova, Mila, Michael Morley and Shaun Tyson (2008) International comparative studies in HRM and performance – the Cranet data. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management* 19(11).

Legge, Karen (1978) *Power, Innovation and Problem-solving in Personnel Management*. London: McGraw-Hill.

Legge, Karen (2005) *Human Resource Management: Rhetorics and Realities* (Anniversary edition). Houndmils: Palgrave Macmillan.

Lengnick-Hall, Mark, Cynthia Lengnick-Hall, Leticia Andrade and Brian Drake (2009) Strategic human resource management: The evolution of the field. *Human Resource Management Review* 19(2).

Lepak, David and Jason Shaw (2008) Strategic HRM in North America: Looking to the future. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management* 19(8).

Lévinas, Emmanuel (1969) *Totality and Infinity : An Essay on Exteriority* (English translation of Totaite et infini by Alphonso Lingis). Pittsburgh: Duquesne University Press.

Levy, Jacob (2000) *The Multiculturalism of Fear*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Lewin, Kurt (1947) *Field Theory in Social Science: Selected Theoretical Papers*. New York: Harper & Row.

Lindblom, Charles (1959) The science of 'muddling through'. *Public Administration Review* 19(2).

Linde, Anneli and Henrik Linderoth (2006) An Actor Network Theory perspective on IT projects. In Damian Hodgson and Svetlana Cicmil (Eds.), *Making Projects Critical*, pp. 155–170. Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan.

Lindgren, Monica and Johann Packendorff (2006) What's new in new forms of organizing? On the construction of gender in project-based work. *Journal of Management Studies* 43(4).

Lindgren, Monica and Packendorff, Johann (2009) Project leadership revisited: Towards distributed leadership perspectives in project research. *International Journal of Project Organisation and Management* 1(3).

Lindkvist, Lars (2005) Knowledge communities and knowledge collectivities: A typology of knowledge work in groups. *Journal of Management Studies* 42(6).

Lock, Dennis (2007) *Project Management* (9th Edition). Aldershot: Gower Publishing.

Lundin, Rolf and Runólfur Steinthórsson (2003) Studying organizations as temporary. *Scandinavian Journal of Management* 19(2).

Lyautey, Louis (1920) *Lettres du Tonkin et de Madagascar*. Paris: Armand Colin.

MacIntyre, Alasdair (1985) *After Virtue. A Study in Moral Theory* (2nd Edition). London: Duckworth.

Macdonald, Stuart and Bo Hellgren (2004) The Interview in International Business Research; Problems We Would Rather Not Talk About. In Rebecca Marschan-Piekkari and Catherine Welch (Eds.), *Handbook of Qualitative Research Methods for International Business*, pp. 264–281. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar.

Machiavelli, Niccolo (1883) *Discourses on the First Decade of Titus Livius*. London: Kegan Paul, Trench & Co.

March, James G. and Herbert Simon (1958) *Organizations*. New York: John Wiley.

March, James G. (1991) Exploration and exploitation in organisational learning. *Organization Science* 2(1).

Marchington, Mick and Irena Grugulis (2000) 'Best practice' human resource management: Perfect opportunity or dangerous illusion? *International Journal of Human Resource Management* 11(6).

Marchington, Mick, Jill Rubery and Damian Grimshaw (2011) Alignment, integration, and consistency in HRM across multi-employer networks. *Human Resource Management* 50(3).

Marcuse, Herbert (1969) *Yksiulotteinen ihminen: Teollisen yhteiskunnan tarkastelua* (Finnish translation of One Dimensional Man by Markku Lahtela). Helsinki: Weilin+Göös.

Marcuse, Herbert (1987 [1956]) *Eros and Civilization: a Philosophical Inquiry into Freud*. London: Ark Paperbacks.

Martín-Alcázar, Fernando, Pedro Romero-Fernández and Gonzalo Sánchez-Gardey (2005) Strategic human resource management: integrating the universalistic, contingent, configurational and contextual perspectives. *International Journal of Human Resource Management* 16(5).

McCann, Leo, Jonathan Morris and John Hassard (2008) Normalized intensity: The new labour process of middle management. *The Journal of Management Studies* 45(2).

McKinlay, Alan, Chris Carter and Eric Pezet (2012) Governmentality, power and organization. *Management & Organizational History* 7(1).

McMillan, Elizabeth (2008) *Complexity, Management and the Dynamics of Change: Challenges for Practice*. New York: Routledge.

McSweeney, Brendan (2009) Dynamic diversity: Variety and variation within countries. *Organization Studies* 30(9).

Merton, Robert K. (1996) *On Social Structure and Science*. London: The University of Chicago Press.

Metcalfe, Beverly and Christopher Rees (2005) Theorizing advances in international human resource development. *Human Resource Development International* 8(4).

Meyer, John and Brian Rowan (1977) Institutionalized organizations: Formal structure as myth and ceremony. *American Journal of Sociology* 83(2).

Meyskens, Moriah, Mary Von Glinow, William Werther, Jr. and Linda Clarke (2009) The paradox of international talent: Alternative forms of international assignments. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management* 20(6).

Miles, Raymond (1975) *Theories of Management: Implications for Organizational Behavior and Development*. Tokyo: McGraw-Hill.

Miller, Adam (2013) *Speculative Grace: Bruno Latour and Object-Oriented Theology*. New York: Fordham University Press.

Miller, Daniel (2001) The poverty of morality. *Journal of Consumer Culture* 1(2).

Miller, Peter and Nikolas Rose (2008) *Governing the Present: Administering Economic, Social and Personal Life*. Cambridge: Polity.

Milosevic, Dragan (1999) Echoes of the silent language of project management. *Project Management Journal* 30(1).

Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland (2013) *Suomenlahdelta Euroopan laidoille: Kokemuksia Suomen Twinning-hankkeista vuosina 1998–2012* (Evaluation of the results and effects of Finnish Twinning participation, written by Petri Uusikylä ja Matti Tervo).

Mintzberg, Henry (1999) Managing quietly. *Leader to Leader* 12(spring).

Mir, Raza and Ali Mir (2012) The colony writes back: Organization as an early champion of non-Western organizational theory. *Organization* 20(1).

Moisander, Johanna and Anu Valtonen (2006) *Qualitative Marketing Research: A Cultural Approach*. London: Sage.

Moisio, Sami (2012) *Valtio, alue, politiikka. Suomen tilasuhteiden säätely toisesta maailmansodasta nykypäivään*. Tampere: Vastapaino.

Morgan, David (2008) Snowball sampling. In Lisa Given (Ed.) *The SAGE Encyclopedia of Qualitative Research Methods,* pp. 816–817. Thousand Oaks (California): Sage.

Morgan, Gareth (1988) *Riding the Waves of Change. Developing Managing Competencies for a Turbulent World*. London: Sage.

Morgan, Gareth (1997) *Images of Organization* (2nd Edition). Thousand Oaks (California): Sage.

Morton, Clive, Andrew Newell and Jon Sparkes (2001). *Leading HR: Delivering Competitive advantage*. London: Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development.

Mouffe, Chantal (1996) Deconstruction, Pragmatism, and the Politics of Democracy. In Chantal Mouffe (Ed.), *Deconstruction and Pragmatism*, pp. 1–12. London: Routledge.

Mueller, Frank and Chris Carter (2005) The "HRM project" and managerialism, Or why some discourses are more equal than others. *Journal of Organizational Change Management* 18(4).

Muriithi, Ndiritu and Lynn Crawford (2003) Approaches to project management in Africa: Implications for international development projects. *International Journal of Project Management* 21(5).

Neurath, Otto (1944) *Foundations of the Social Sciences*. Chicago: Chicago University Press.

Newton Tim (1994) Discourse and agency: The example of personnel psychology, and ´assessment centres´. *Organization Studies* 15(6).

Nietzsche, Friedrich (1974) *The Gay Science* (translated with commentary by Walter Kaufmann). New York: Vintage Books.

Nikkilä, Juhani (1983) *Kriittisen teorian byrokratiakonseptio: tutkimus hermeneuttis-dialektisen metodin ja ideologiakritiikin merkityksestä julkishallinnollisten ongelmien, erityisesti kansalainen-byrokratiasuhteen tutkimisen kannalta*. Tampere: University of Tampere (Acta Universitatis Tamperensis ser. A, vol. 152).

Niku, Annikki (2009) *Heidegger ja runon tie*. Helsinki. Tutkijaliitto.

Nkomo, Stella (2011) A postcolonial and anti-colonial reading of 'African' leadership and management in organization studies: Tensions, contradictions and possibilities. *Organization* 18(3).

Nowotny, Helga, Peter Scott and Michael Gibbons (2001) *Re-thinking Science: Knowledge and the Public in an Age of Uncertainty*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Nussbaum, Martha (2000) *Women and Human Development: the Capabilities Approach*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Oberg, Kalervo (1960) Cultural shock: Adjustment to new cultural environments. *Practical Anthropology* 7, 177–182.

Olsen, Johan (2008) European governance: Where do we go from here? In Beate Kohler-Koch and Fabrice Larat (Eds.), *European Multi-level Governance: Contrasting Images in National Research*, pp. 191–209. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar.

O'Mahoney, Joe (2007) Disrupting identity: Trust and angst in management consulting. In Bolton, Sharon and Maeve Houlihan (Eds.), *Searching for the Human in Human Resource Management: Theory, Practice and Workplace Contexts*, pp. 281–302. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Ondrack, Daniel (1985) International human-resources management in European and North-American firms. *International Studies of Management and Organization* 15(1).

Ongaro, Edoardo, Dario Barbieri, Nicola Bellé and Paolo Fedele (2012). European Union (EU) Agencies. In Koen Verhoest, Sandra Van Thiel, Geert Bouckaert and Per Lægreid (Eds.), *Government Agencies: Practices and Lessons from 30 Countries*, pp. 400–410. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Osborne, Stephen (2006) The New Public Governance. *Public Management Review* 8(3).

Osborne, Stephen (2010) *The New Public Governance? Emerging Perspectives on the Theory and Practice of Public Governance*. Abingdon: Routledge.

Oswick, Cliff, Tom Keenoy and David Grant (2002) Metaphor and analogical reasoning in organization theory: Beyond the orthodoxy. *Academy of Management Review* 27(2).

O'Toole, Laurence Jr. and Kenneth Meier (2009) The human side of public organizations: Contributions to organizational performance. *The American Review of Public Administration* 39(5).

Paauwe, Jaap (2004) *HRM and Performance*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Paauwe, Jaap and Paul Boselie (2005) Best Practices... In spite of Performance: Just a Matter of Imitation? The International Journal of Human Resource Management 16(6).

Paauwe, Jaap (2009) HRM and performance: achievements, methodological issues and prospects. *Journal of Management Studies* 46(1).

Paauwe, Jaap and Corine Boon (2009) Strategic HRM: a critical review. In David Collings and Geoffrey Wood (Eds.), *Human Resource Management: A Critical Approach*, pp. 38–54. Routledge: Milton Park.

Packendorff, Jonas (1995) Inquiring into the temporary organization: New directions for project management research. *Scandinavian Journal of Management* 11(4).

Palonen, Kari (1980) *Politiikan ja valtion käsitteiden kriiseistä suomalaisen valtio-opin historiassa. Tieteenalan perusteiden ja itseymmärryksen muuttuminen erityisesti suhteessa Allgemeine Staatslehre-traditioon.* Jyväskylä: University of Jyväskylä Institute of Political Science Publications.

Parker, Barbara (1998) *Globalization and Business Practice: Managing across Boundaries*. London: Sage.

Parker, Martin (2002) No theory. *Organization* 9(1).

Parkin, James (1996) Organizational decision making and the project manager. *International Journal of Project Management* 14 (5).

Paton, Steve, Damian Hodgson and Svetlana Cicmil (2010) Who am I and what am I doing here? Becoming and being a project manager. *Journal of Management Development* 29(2).

Peltonen, Tuomo (1998) *Expatriate Experience and Career: Studies of Cross-Cultural Transfers, Modern Ordering and the Limits of Career Management in Multinational Corporations*. Helsinki: Helsinki School of Economics and Business Administration.

Peltonen, Tuomo (2006). Critical theoretical perspectives on international human resource management. In Stahl, Günther and Ingmar Björkman (Eds), *Handbook of Research in International Human Resource Management*, pp. 523–535. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar.

Peltonen, Tuomo (2012) Kohti johtamisen käsitehistoriaa Suomessa: 1950-luvun oppikirjojen kieli. *Hallinnon tutkimus* 31(4).

Peltonen, Tuomo and Eero Vaara (2012) Critical approaches to comparative HRM. In Chris Brewster and Wolfgang Mayrhofer (Eds.), *Handbook of Research on Comparative Human Resource Management*, pp. 69–89. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar.

Penrose, Edith (1971) *The Growth of Firms, Middle East Oil and Other Essays*. London: Frank Cass and Company.

Penrose, Edith (1995) *The Theory of the Growth of Firm* (3rd Edition). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Perlmutter, Howard (1965) L'entreprise internationale – Trois conceptions. *Revue économique et sociale* 23(2).

Perttula, Juha and Timo Latomaa (Eds.) (2005) *Kokemuksen tutkimus: merkitys, tulkinta, ymmärtäminen*. Rovaniemi: Lapin yliopistokustannus.

Peters, Guy (2010) *The Politics of Bureaucracy: An Introduction to Comparative Public Administration* (6th Edition). Milton Park (Oxfordshire): Routledge.

Peters, Guy (2011) Comparative Public Admistration: After New Management, What? In Esa Hyyryläinen and Olli-Pekka Viinamäki (Eds.), *Julkinen hallinto ja julkinen johtaminen. Juhlakirja professori Ari Salmisen 60-vuotispäivän kunniaksi*, pp. 20–32. Vaasa: Universitas Wasaensis.

Phillips, Louise, Marianne Kristiansen, Marja Vehviläinen and Ewa Gunnarson (2013) Tackling the Tensions of Dialogue and Participation. In Louise Phillips, Marianne Kristiansen, Marja Vehviläinen and Ewa Gunnarsson (Eds.), *Knowledge and Power in Collaborative Research: A Reflexive Approach*, pp. 1–18. Milton Park: Routledge.

Piekkari, Rebecca and Catherine Welch (2010) The human dimension in multinational management: A way forward. *Scandinavian Journal of Management* 26(4).

Pierre, Jon and B. Guy Peters (2000). *Governance, Politics and the State*. Houndmills: Macmillan.

Pollack, Julien, Kerry Costello and Shankar Sankaran (2013) Applying Actor–Network Theory as a sensemaking framework for complex organisational change programs. *International Journal of Project Management* 31(8).

Pollitt, Christopher (2011) Time and Place in Public Administration: Two endangered species? In Esa Hyyryläinen and Olli-Pekka Viinamäki (Eds.), *Julkinen hallinto ja julkinen johtaminen. Juhlakirja professori Ari Salmisen 60-vuotispäivän kunniaksi*, pp. 33–53. Vaasa: Universitas Wasaensis.

Pollitt, Christopher and Geert Bouckaert (2011) *Public Management Reform: a Comparative Analysis – New Public Management, Governance and the Neo-Weberian State* (3th Edition). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Pollitt, Christopher and Peter Hupe (2011) Talking about government: The role of magic concepts. *Public Management Review* 13(5).

Prasad, Anshuman (2003) *Postcolonial Theory and Organizational Analysis*. London: Palgrave.

Pringle, Judith and Mary Mallon (2003) Challenges for the boundaryless career odyssey. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management* 20(2).

Project Management Institute (2009). *A Guide to the Project Management Body of Knowledge (PMBOK® guide, 4ᵗʰ edition).* Newtown Square (Pennsylvania): Author.

Prozorov, Sergei (2004) *Political Pedagogy of Technical Assistance: A Study in Historical Ontology in Russian Postcommunism.* Tampere: Studia Politica Tamperensis.

Pynes, Joan (2009) *Human Resources Management for Public and Nonprofit Organizations: A Strategic Approach* (3ʳᵈ Edition) San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Rantala, Kati and Pekka Sulkunen (Eds.) (2006) *Projektiyhteiskunnan kääntöpuolia.* Helsinki: Gaudeamus.

Reiche, Sebastian (2011) Knowledge benefits of social capital upon repatriation: A longitudinal study of international assignees. *Journal of Management Studies* 49(6).

Reckwitz, Andreas (2002) Toward a theory of social practices. A development in culturalist theorizing. *European Journal of Social Theory* 5(2).

Reed, Michaeli (2009) Critical Realism in Critical Management Studies. In Mats Alvesson, Todd Bridgman and Hugh Willmott (Eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Critical Management Studies*, pp. 52–75. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Reeser, Clayton (1969) Some potential human problems of the project form of organization. *Academy of Management Journal* 12(4).

Rehn, Alf (2008) On meta-ideology and moralization: A prolegomena to a critique of management studies. *Organization* 15(4).

Reid, Julian (2006) Life struggles. War, discipline, and biopolitics in the thought of Michel Foucault. *Social Text* 86(24).

Reus-Smit, Christian (2013) *Beyond metatheory? European Journal of International Relations* 19(3).

Reynolds, Michael (1999) Critical reflection and management education: Rehabilitating less hierarchical approaches. *Journal of Management Education* 23(5).

Rhodes, Carl and Robert Westwood (2007) Letting Knowledge Go: Ethics and Representation of the Other in International and Cross-Cultural Management. In Chris Carter, Steward Clegg, Martin Kornberger, Stephan Laske and Martin Messner (Eds.), *Business Ethics as Practice. Representation, Reflexivity and Performance*, pp. 68–83. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar.

Rhodes, Carl (2009) After reflexivity: Ethics, freedom and the writing of organization studies. *Organization Studies* 30(6).

Ring, Peter and James Perry (1985) Strategic management in public and private organizations: Implications of distinctive contexts and constraints. *The Academy of Management Review* 10(2).

Rorty, Richard (1980) *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.

Rorty, Richard (1989) *Contingency, Irony, and Solidarity*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Rorty, Richard (1991a). Inquiry as recontextualization: An anti-dualist account of interpretation. In his *Objectivity, Relativism, and Truth: Philosophical Papers Volume 1*, pp 93–110. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Rorty, Richard (1991b) On ethnocentrism: A reply to Cliffort Geerz. In his *Objectivity, Relativism, and Truth: Philosophical Papers Volume 1*, pp 203–210. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Rorty, Richard (1998) *Achieving Our Country*: Leftist Thought in Twentieth-Century America. London: Harvard University Press.

Rorty, Richard (1999) *Philosophy and Social Hope*. London: Penguin Books.

Rose, Nikolas (1990) *Governing the Soul: The Shaping of the Private Self*. London: Routledge.

Rosenthal, Robert (2004) Pygmalion effect. In Michael S. Lewis-Beck, Alan Bryman and Tim Futing Liao (Eds.), The SAGE Encyclopedia of Social Science Research Methods, pp. 886–887. Thousand Oaks (California): Sage.

Rottenburg, Richard (2000) Sitting in a bar. *Studies in Cultures, Organizations, and Societies* 6(1).

Rottenburg, Richard (2005) Code-switching, or why a metacode is good to have. In Barbara Czarniawska and Guje Sevón (Eds.), *Global Ideas. How Ideas, Objects and Practices Travel in the Global Economy*, pp. 259–274. Malmö: Liber & Copenhagen Business School Press.

Rottenburg, Richard (2006) Social Constructivism and the Enigma of Strangeness. In Richard Rottenburg, Burkhard Schnepel and Shingo Shimada (Eds.), *The Making and Unmaking of Differences: Anthropological, Sociological and Philosophical Perspectives,* pp. 27–41. Bielefeld: Transcript.

Rottenburg, Richard (2009) *Far-fetched Facts: A Parable of Development Aid* (Weit hergeholte Fakten: Eine Parabel der Entwicklungshilfe, translated by Allison Brown and Tom Lampert). Cambridge (Massachusetts): The MIT Press.

Rowlinson, Michael and John Hassard (2011) How come the critters came to be teaching in business schools? Contradictions in the institutionalization of critical management studies. *Organization* 18(5).

Sachs, Wolfgang (1997) *The Development Dictionary: A Guide to Knowledge as Power*. London: Zed Books.

Sage, Daniel, Andrew Dainty and Naomi Brookes (2011) How actor–network theories can help in understanding project complexities. *International Journal of Managing Projects in Business* 4(2).

Sage, Daniel, Andrew Dainty and Naomi Brookes (2013) Thinking the ontological politics of managerial and critical performativities: An examination of project failure. *Scandinavian Journal of Management* 29(3).

Sager, Tore (2005) Communicative planners as naïve mandarins of the neo-liberal state? *European Journal of Spatial Development,* December 2005; 1–9.

Sahlin-Andersson, Kerstin and Anders Söderholm (2002) *Beyond Project Management – New Perspectives on the Temporary – Permanent Dilemma*. Malmö: Liber Ekonomi.

Sandberg, Jörgen and Haridimos Tsoukas (2011) Grasping the logic of practice: Theorizing through practical rationality. *Academy Of Management Review* 36(2).

Sapolsky, Harvey (1972) *The Polaris System Development. Bureaucratic and Programmatic Success in Government*. Cambridge (Massachusetts): Harvard University Press.

Sayer, Andrew (2007) Moral economy and development. In Sharon Bolton and Maeve Houlihan (Eds.), *Searching for the Human in Human Resource Management: Theory, Practice and Workplace Contexts*, pp. 21–40. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Saïd, Edward (1978). *Orientalism*. New York: Pantheon Books.

Scheurich, James (1997) *Research Methods in the Postmodern*. London: Falmer.

Schmidt, Tiina and Sinikka Vanhala (2010) *Henkilöstöjohtaminen Suomessa 1992–2009. Tutkimus suurten yritysten ja julkisten organisaatioiden henkilöstökäytäntöjen omaksumisesta ja konvergoitumisesta*. Helsinki: Aalto-yliopiston kauppakorkeakoulu.

Schmitt, Carl (1996) *The Concept of the Political* (Der Begriff des Politischen translated by George Schwab). Chigaco: University of Chicago Press.

Schuler, Randall, Peter Dowling and Helen De Cieri (1993) An integrative framework for strategic international human resource management. *International Journal of Human Resource Management* 4(4).

Schuler, Randall and Susan Jackson (2005) A Quarter-century review of human resource management in the U.S.: The growth in importance of the international perspective. *Management Revue* 16(1).

Schuler, Randall and Ibraiz Tarique (2007) International human resource management: A North American perspective, a thematic update and suggestions for future research. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management* 18(5).

Schuler, Randall, Susan Jackson and Ibraiz Tarique (2011) "Global talent management and global talent challenges: Strategic opportunities for IHRM", *Journal of World Business* 46(4).

Schwalbe, Michael and Michelle Wolkomir (2002) Interviewing men. In James Holstein and Jaber Gubrium (Eds.), *Handbook of Interview Research*, pp. 203–219. London: Sage.

Schön, Donald (1983). *The Reflective Practitioner: How Professionals Think in Action*. Gower: Aldershot.

Scroggins, Wesley and Philip Benson (2010) International human resource management: Diversity, issues and challenges. *Personnel Review* 39(4).

Scullion, Hugh and Jaap Paauwe (2004) International human resource management: recent developments and empirical research. In Anne-Wil Harzing and Joris van Ruysseveldt (Eds.) *International Human Resource Management* (2nd Edition), pp. 65–88. London: Sage.

Scullion, Hugh and David Collings (2006) *Global Staffing*. London: Routledge.

Scullion, Hugh, David Collings and Patrick Gunnigle (2007) International human resource management in the 21st century: Emerging themes and contemporary debates. *Human Resource Management Journal* 17(4).

Selmer, Jan and Vesa Suutari (2011) Expatriation – old issues, new insights (Guest editorial). *Cross Cultural Management: An International Journal* 18(2).

Sen, Amartya (1999) *Development as Freedom*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Sennett, Richard (1974) *The Fall of Public Man*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Sennett, Richard (1998) *The Corrosion of Character. The Personal Consequences of Work in the New Capitalism*. New York: Norton.

Sil, Rudra and Peter Katzenstein (2010) *Beyond Paradigms: Analytical Eclecticism in the Study of World Politics*. Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan.

Silverman, David (1993) *Interpreting Qualitative Data*. London: Sage.

Silverman, David (2006) *Interpreting Qualitative Data* (3rd Edition). London: Sage.

Sippola, Aulikki (2007) *Essays on Human Resource Management Perspectives on Diversity Management*. Vaasa: University of Vaasa.

Simon, Herbert (1946) The proverbs of public administration. *Public Administration Review* 6(1).

Sjöblom, Stefan (2006) Kohti projektoitunutta julkishallintoa. In Kati Rantala and Pekka Sulkunen (Eds.), *Projektiyhteiskunnan kääntöpuolia*, pp. 71–86. Helsinki: Gaudeamus.

Sjöblom, Stefan, Kjell Andersson, Erland Eklund and Sebastian Godenhjelm (Eds.) (2006) *Project Proliferation and Governance: the Case of Finland*. Helsinki: Swedish School of Social Science, University of Helsinki.

Sköldberg, Kaj (1998) Heidegger and organization: Notes towards a new research programme. *Scandinavian Journal of Management* 14(1–2).

Smale, Adam and Vesa Suutari (2011) So near and yet so far: the internationalisation of HRM. In Riitta Viitala, Vesa Suutari and Maria Järlström (Eds.), *Ikkunoita henkilöstötyön tulevaisuuteen. Tutkimuksia henkilöstöbarometrin 2010 tuloksista*, pp. 84–108. Vaasa: University of Vaasa Publications.

Smith, Barbara Herrnstein (1997) *Belief and Resistance: Dynamics of Contemporary Intellectual Controversy.* London: Harvard University Press.

Sparrow, Paul and Criss Brewster (2006) Globalizing HRM: The Growing Revolution in Managing Employees Internationally. In Cary Cooper and Ronald Burke (Eds.), *The Human Resources Revolution: Research and Practice*, pp. 99–122. London: Elsevier.

Spicer, André and Peter Fleming (2007) Intervening in the inevitable: Contesting globalization in a public sector organization. *Organization* 14(4).

Spicer, André, Mats Alvesson and Dan Kärreman (2009) Critical performativity: The unfinished business of critical management studies. *Human Relations* 62(4).

Spoelstra, Sverre (2007) *What is Organization?* Lund: Lund Business Press.

Ssorin-Chaikov, Nikolai (2012) Writing power: An anarchist anthropologist in the looking glass of critical theory. *Critique of Anthropology* 32(2).

Stacey, Ralph (2011) *Strategic Management and Organisational Dynamics: The Challenge of Completely* (6th Edition). London: Pearson.

Stahl, Günther and Chei Chua (2006) Global Assignments and Boundaryless Careers: What Drives and Frustrates International Assignees? In Michael Morley, Noreen Heraty and David Collings (Eds.), *International Human Resource Management and International Assignments*, pp. 135–152. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Stahl, Günther and Ingmar Björkman (Eds.) (2006) *Handbook of Research in International Human Resource Management*. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar.

Star, Susan Leigh (2010) This is not a boundary object: Reflections on the origin of a concept. *Science, Technology, & Human Values* 35(5).

Steir, Frederick (1991) *Research and Reflexivity*. London: Sage.

Stenvall, Jari and Petri Virtanen (2012) *Sosiaali- ja terveyspalveluiden uudistaminen. Kehittämisen mallit, toimintatavat ja periaatteet.* Helsinki: Tietosanoma.

Stivers, Camilla (2009) The ontology of public space: Grounding governance in social reality. *American Behavioural Scientist* 52(7).

Stone, Diane (2008) Global public policy, transnational policy communities, and their networks. *The Policy Studies Journal* 36(1).

Syväjärvi, Antti (2005) *Inhimillinen pääoma ja informaatioteknologia organisaatiotoiminnassa sekä strategisessa henkilöstövoimavarojen johtamisessa.* Rovaniemi: University of Lapland.

Syväjärvi, Antti, Juha Perttula, Jari Stenvall, Kaija Majoinen ja Hanna Vakkala (2007) Psykologisen johtamisen haaste kompleksisessa muutostilanteessa ja ihmisen muutosdynamiikassa. *Hallinnon Tutkimus* 26(3).

Sädevirta, Jukka (2004) *Henkilöstöjohtamisen ja sen tutkimuksen kehittyminen. Henkilöstöhallinnollisesta johtamisesta ihmisvoimavarojen strategiseen johtamiseen.* Tykes raportteja 35, Helsinki: Työministeriö.

Söderlund, Jonas and Karin Bredin (2006) HRM in project-intensive firms: Changes and challenges. *Human Resource Management* 45(2).

Söderlund, Jonas (2005) Developing project competence: Empirical regularities in competitive project operations. *International Journal of Innovation Management* 9(4).

Taggart, William and Valdier Silbey (1986). *Informational Systems: People and Computers in Organizations.* Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

Tarde, Gabriel (1962 [1903]) *The Laws of Imitation* (English translation of the second French edition of Les lois de l'imitation by Elsie Clews Parsons). Gloucester (Massachusetts): Peter Smith.

Tayeb, Monir (1995) The competitive advantage of nations: The role of HRM and its sociocultural context. *The International Journal of Human Resources Management* 6(3).

Temmes, Markku (2006) The Administrative structure of the project state. In Stefan Sjöblom, Kjell Andersson, Erland Eklund and Sebastian Godenhjelm (Eds.), *Project Proliferation and Governance: the Case of Finland*, 45–57. Helsinki: Swedish School of Social Science, University of Helsinki.

Temmes, Markku (2008) Suomen hallintopolitiikan pitkät aallot ja käännekohdat. *Hallinnon Tutkimus* 3, 69–79.

Tempest, Sue (2009) Learning from the alien: Knowledge relationships with temporary workers in network contexts. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management* 20(4).

Thau, Susanne (2009) *Twinning – Ein europäisches Förderinstrument: Entstehung, Ziele und Bewertung partnerschaftlicher Zusammenarbeit*. Saarbrücken: VDM Verlag Dr. Müller.

Thomas, David and Mila Lazarova (2014) *Essentials of International Human Resources Management: Managing People Globally*. London: Sage.

Thomas, Janice (2000) *Making Sense of Project Management: Contingency and Sencemaking in Transitory Organizations*. Calgary: University of Alberta.

Thomas, Janice (2006) Problematising project management. In Damian Hodgson and Svetlana Cicmil (Eds.), *Making Projects Critical*, pp. 90–107. Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan.

Thomas, Robyn and Annette Davies (2005) Theorizing the Micro-politics of Resistance: New Public Management and Managerial Identities in the UK Public Services. *Organization Studies* 26(5).

Tikkanen, Henrikki and Jaakko Aspara (2008) *Projektimarkkinointi. Projektiliiketoiminnan asiakassuhteet, verkostot ja ansainta*. Helsinki: Talentum.

Torrington, Derek, Laura Hall and Stephen Taylor (2005) *Human Resource Management* (5th Edition). Harlow: FT Prentice Hall.

Townley, Barbara (1994) *Reframing Human Resource Management: Power, Ethics and the Subject at Work*. London: Sage.

Tung, Rosalie (1982) Selection and training procedures of US, European and Japanese Multinationals. *California Management Review* 25(1).

Tung, Rosalie (2007) The human resource challenge to outward foreign direct investment aspirations from emerging economies: The case of China. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management* 18(5).

Tuomikorpi, Sinikka (2005) *Kohti hallinnollisen ajattelukyvyn mallia*. Helsinki: Helsingin yliopisto.

Turner, Rodney, Martina Huemann, Frank Anbari and Christophe Bredilet (2010) *Perspectives on Projects*. Milton Park: Routledge.

Turner, Rodney, Martina Huemann, and Anne Keegan (2008) Human resource management in the project-oriented organization: Employee wellbeing and ethical treatment. *International Journal of Project Management* 26(5).

Turner, Victor (1974) *Dramas, Fields, and Metaphors. Symbolic Action in Human Society*. London: Cornell University Press.

Turner, Victor (1979) *Process, Performance, and Pilgrimage: A Study in Comparative Symbology*. Concept: New Delhi.

Tukiainen, Sampo and Johanna Nummelin (2003) Kulttuureissa on eroja – Kulttuuriset ja institutionaaliset erot monikansallisessa projektijohtamisessa. *Projektitoiminta* 2/03.

Van Maanen, John and Deborah Kolb (1985) The professional apprentice: Observations on fieldwork role into organizational settings. *Research in the Sociology of Organizations* 4(1).

Van Maanen, John, Jesper Søndersen and Terence Mitchell (2007) The interplay between theory and method. *Academy of Management Review* 32(4).

Vakkala, Hanna (2012) *Henkilöstö kuntauudistuksissa. Psykologinen johtamisorientaatio muutoksen ja henkilöstövoimavarojen johtamisen edellytyksenä*. Helsinki: Suomen Kuntaliitto – Finlands Kommunförbund.

Vaughan, Sarah and Irene Rafanell (2012) Interaction, consensus and unpredictability in development policy 'transfer' and practice. *Critical Policy Studies* 6(1).

Vaujany, Franocois-Xavie de and Nathalie Mitev (Eds.) (2013) *Materiality and Space: Organizations, Artefacts and Practices*. Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan.

Verheijen, Tony (1999) *Civil Service Systems in Central and Eastern Europe*. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar.

Vickers, David and Stephen Fox (2010) Towards practice-based studies of HRM: an actor-network and communities of practice informed approach. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management* 21(6).

Viitala, Riitta, Vesa Suutari and Maria Järlström (Eds.) (2011) I*kkunoita henkilöstötyön tulevaisuuteen. Tutkimuksia henkilöstöbarometrin 2010 tuloksista*. Vaasa: University of Vaasa Publications.

Virtanen, Petri (2009) *Projekti strategian toteuttajana*. Helsinki: Tietosanoma.

Virtanen, Petri and Jari Stenvall (2010) *Julkinen johtaminen*. Helsinki: Tietosanoma.

Voronov, Maxim (2008) Towards engaged critical management studies. *Organization* 15(6).

Watson, Tony (1977) *The Personnel Managers: A Study in the Sociology of Work and Employment*. London: Routledge.

Watson, Tony (2010) Critical social science, pragmatism and the realities of HRM. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management* 21(6).

Wæver, Ole and Arlene Tickner (2009) Geocultural epistemologies. In Tickner, Arlene and Ole Wæver (Eds.), *International Relations Scholarship Around the World: Worlding Beyond the West*. London: Routledge.

Weber, Max (1949) *Methodology of the Social Sciences* (selected essays originally published in 1903–1917, translated and edited by Edward Shils and Henry Finch). New York: Free Press.

Weick, Karl (1989) Theory construction as disciplined imagination. *Academy of Management Review* 14(4).

Weick, Karl (1995) *Sensemaking in Organizations*. Thousand Oaks (California): Sage.

Weick, Karl (2002) Real time reflexivity: Prods to reflection. *Organization Studies* 23(6).

Weiskopf, Richard and Iain Munro (2012) Management of human capital: Discipline, security and controlled circulation in HRM. *Organization* 19(6).

Welch, Catherine, Denise Welch and Marja Tahvanainen (2008) Managing the HR dimension of international project operations. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management* 19(2).

Welch, Denise, Adam Steen and Marja Tahvanainen (2009) All pain, little gain? Reframing the value of international assignments. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management* 20(6).

Welch, Catherine, Denice Welch and Marilyn Fenwick (2009). Independent Consultants: How International Project Operations Create New IHRM Issues and Challenges. In Paul Sparrow (Eds.), *Handbook of International Human Resources Management. Integrating People, Process and Context,* pp. 171–188. Chichester: John Wiley & Sons.

Welch, Catherine and Denice Welch (2012) What do HR managers really do? HR roles on international projects. *Management International Review* 52(4).

Wes, Harry and Chizu Nakajima (2007) Ethnocentric HRM Policies in the Asia Pacific Region: An Explanation of Host Country Resistance. *Management Revue* 18(4).

Westwood, Robert (2001) Appropriating the other in the discourses of comparative management. In Westwood, Robert and Linstead, Stephen (Eds.), *The Language of Organization*, pp. 241–282. London: Sage.

Westwood, Robert (2004) Towards a Postcolonial Research Paradigm in International Business and Comparative Management. In Rebecca Marschan-Piekkari and Catherine Welch (Eds.), *Handbook of Qualitative Research Methods for International Business*, pp. 56–83. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar.

Westwood, Robert (2006) International business and management studies as an orientalist discourse: a postcolonial critique. *Critical Perspectives on International Business* 2, 91–113.

Whitley, Richard (2006) Project-based firm: new organisation forms or variations of the theme. *Industrial and Corporate Change* 15(1).

Whittle, Andrea and André Spicer (2008) Is Actor-Network Theory critical? *Organization Studies* 29(1).

Wilemon, David and John Cicero (1970) The project manager – anomalies and ambiguities. *The Academy of Management Journal* 13(3).

Willmott, Hugh (1993) Strength is ignorance; slavery is freedom: Managing culture in modern organizations. *Journal of Management Studies* 30(4).

Winter, Mark, Charles Smith, Peter Morris and Svetlana Cicmil (2006) Directions for future research in project management: the main findings of a UK government-funded research network. *International Journal of Project Management* 24(8).

Winthrop, Robert (1991) *Dictionary of Concepts in Cultural Anthropology*. New York: Greenwood Press.

Wirick, David (2009) *Public-Sector Project Management: Meeting the Challenges and Achieving Results*. Hoboken (New Jersey): John Wiley & Sons.

Wood, Stephen and John Kelly (1978) Towards a critical management science. *Journal of Management Studies* 15(1).

Zalan, Tatiana and Geoffrey Lewis (2004) Writing About Methods in Qualitative Research: Towards a More Transparent Approach. In Rebecca Marschan-Piekkari and Catherine Welch (Eds.), *Handbook of Qualitative Research Methods for International Business*, pp. 507–528. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar.

Zald, Mayer (2002) Spinning disciplines: Critical Management Studies in the context of the transformation of management education. *Organization* 9(3).

Zanoni, Patrizia and Maddy Janssens, (2007) Minority employees engaging with (diversity) management: An analysis of control, agency, and micro-emancipation. *Journal of Management Studies* 44(8).

Zeitz, Gerald Gary Blau and Jason Fertig (2009) Boundaryless careers and institutional resources. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management* 20(2).

Zika-Victorsson, Annika, Per Sundström and Mats Engwall (2006) Project overload: An exploratory study of work and management in multi-project settings. *International Journal of Project Management* 24(5).

APPENDICES

Appendix 1. Example of interview guide

Following the interpretive interviewing approach, in this research interviews were seen as more informal social accomplishments and were thus performed in a relatively informal way. This openness of interview situation that accompanied the explorative nature of this research allowed possibilities to pursue various emerging themes during interviews, as questions were not always placed in the same form and order.

Theme 1. Background
- Information about their background and career
- Previous understanding and knowledge of IHRM
- Role of Twinning instrument and management related to Twinning projects
- Perceived combining factors between international public sector project specialists

Theme 2. Project governance
- View of Twinning projects as policy instruments
- Experiences of project management in Twinning projects
- Experiences of working in international projects
- Experiences of co-operation between stakeholders in project governance

Theme 3. International assignment
- Evaluation of elements in international project assignment(s), what worked and what did not work
- The perceived key aspects of personnel management during international assignments
- The perceived competence of Finnish public sector employees in Twinning projects
- Experiences and the perceived role of home office and support functions
- Views about how different aspects of IHRM have been integrated

Theme 4. Developing IHRM in the Finnish public sector
- Views about change in work during their public sector career
- Opinions about Finnish public sector success in harnessing the benefits of international projects
- Views about how actors in Finnish public sector understand the challenges of international project work
- Views about what kind of personnel Finnish public sector requires based on international project expertise
- Views about what aspects of IHRM will become more important in the public sector
- Perceived barriers of developing IHRM in the Finnish public sector