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## **CHALLENGES AND PERSPECTIVES OF INTERCULTURAL ETHICS IN THE THEORY OF GLOBAL MANAGEMENT**

**Ernesta Molotkienė**  
*Klaipėda University*

### **Abstract**

The development of the global market has created a need for global management ideas that can be overcome in practice by solving complex problems. The formation and development of global management ideas is strongly influenced by different cultural traditions and values of Eastern and Western cultures, which determine different management methods. The ability to organize production and manage processes on a global platform is critical to creating and maintaining high living standards. The vital foundation on which sustainable decisions in the field of management are based can have a strong impact on the fulfilment of humanity's expectations for well-being and prosperity. The reasonable question therefore is: what value system could become the universal ethical framework that integrates different cultural traditions and worldviews and underpins the field of global management? Intercultural ethics is one of the most recent research projects to analyze a wide range of ethical issues arising from the multidisciplinary perspective of societies and cultures. Intercultural ethics seeks to identify the existing different cultural, value beliefs, to define universal ethical principles on the basis of which intercultural decisions and agreements on the development, implementation, management and use of digital technologies are made. Different cultures disagree on common universal moral decisions because they are based on unique worldviews and value systems, and there is no universally accepted epistemically sound way to resolve such moral disagreements. The question is, what are the basic assumptions underpinning the impact of intercultural ethics on the theory of global management that would enable the common development and application of a system of universal ethical principles governing the development of global management processes in different regions and cultures of the world? The article hypothesizes that a synthesis of classical Aristotelian virtue ethics, Confucian ethics, and African *ubuntu* philosophical ethics could underpin intercultural ethics, embodying the universal ethical values of Western and Eastern cultures in global management theory.

KEY WORDS: intercultural ethics; global management; ethics of virtues; *ubuntu* philosophy; Confucianism.

### **Introduction**

Global management has never been more important than it is today, but the concept of global management is not a unique phenomenon of our time. Ancient trade routes that enabled international trade, dialogue between cultures and civilizations connected various regions of the world, stretching from the Baltic Sea to the Mediterranean Sea, Central Asia, and China. However, in the 20th century in the second half, the development of informational digital technologies had a significant impact on the formation of the global market today (Zolfaghari, Madjdi, 2022; Tavoletti et al., 2022; Cao et al., 2018). In the context of international and intercultural processes taking place at the macro level and individual changes taking place at the micro level, which shape the global concept of management, the question of the possibility of a universal value base becomes important (Gomes et al., 2022; Steenkamp, 2021; Kirkman et al., 2017). The significance of intercultural ethics as a source of worldview and value attitudes becomes unquestionable in the face of the challenges of the global world, when one of the most important tasks of individual individuals and societies becomes the pursuit of sustainable well-being, success, and prosperity (Kantar, Bynum, 2021; Barmeyer, Mayer, 2020). In this regard, the synergy of global management, as a practical art of organizing life, and intercultural ethics, as a theory that shapes worldviews and values, enables individuals and societies to formulate and achieve long-term goals that

ensure sustainable well-being and prosperity (Schragehttps, Rasche, 2022). Intercultural ethics includes and analyses wide-ranging ethical problems arising from various globalization-induced processes for human consciousness, societies and cultures from a multidisciplinary perspective, with the aim of identifying existing different cultural and value beliefs and adopting intercultural agreements on the universal application of relevant ethical principles (Capurro, 2008; Ess, 2008; Nakada, Tamura, 2005; Himma, 2008, etc.) One of the most reasonable possibilities for the justification of universal intercultural ethics is the synthesis of classical Aristotelian virtue ethics, Confucian ethics and African *ubuntu* philosophical ethics, which would enable the universal ethical values of Western and Eastern cultures in global management theory (Ess, 2021; Ess, 2020a; Ess, 2020b; Lehner et al., 2022).

The article presents and defends the thesis that intercultural ethics aims to identify existing different cultural and value beliefs, define universal ethical principles, based on which intercultural decisions and agreements would be made in the field of global management theory. The article analyzes the universal possibility of intercultural ethics in global management theory based on the synergy of theoretical perspectives of Aristotle, Confucius and the African *ubuntu* philosophy. The main aim of the article is to reveal the possibility and significance of cross-cultural ethics justification in the context of global management theory. Analyzed problem / object of the research: how and in what way is it possible

to establish intercultural ethics, which could become a universal value basis for the concept of global management? An object is the analysis of meta-theoretical assumptions of the implementation of intercultural ethics at the global management level. Objectives of the research: 1) to analyze the conceptual foundations of global management theory; 2) to explore and reveal the possibility of intercultural ethics justification based on the synergy of the main principles of Aristotle's virtue ethics, Confucian ethics and African *ubuntu* philosophical ethics; 3) to analyze and reveal the fundamental challenges and perspectives of implementing intercultural ethics in the conditions of globalization. The main findings: In this article the major findings and the theoretical contribution of this analysis and identify areas for future research. First, the issues of intercultural ethics are revisited and evaluated the effectiveness of the theoretical orientation in addressing these questions. Second, the key research findings are analyzed in relationship to the literature and the contributions the investigation makes to the theory of global management. Finally, article discuss the limitations and examine the implications of the intercultural ethics for future research and practice in the global management contexts, reminding us of the need for strengthened linkages between ethical values systems of East and West in the global management practice. The main scientific results of this article are to be found in the diversity of ways in which theoretical research of intercultural ethics is understood, shaped by the universal ethical systems of Aristotle, Confucius and Africa's *ubuntu* conception, and which can be applied in the field of global management theory. This theoretical study contributes to the development of the scientific philosophical discourse on the relationship between intercultural ethics and the theory of global management.

## Theoretical background

Intercultural ethics is one of the current research projects dedicated to the analysis of wide-ranging ethical issues arising from the impact of digital technologies on human consciousness, societies and cultures from a multidisciplinary perspective. Intercultural ethics seeks to identify existing different cultural and value beliefs, to define universal ethical principles on the basis of which intercultural decisions and agreements would be made regarding the development, implementation, management and use of digital technologies. Intercultural ethics cannot be treated only as philosophical theories, because the problematic field of this ethics consists not only of metaphysical or metaethical questions, but also of specific technical problems, so the general goal and tasks of research in this field are not always clear. R. Capurro (2008), C. Ess (2021; 2019; 2020a; 2020b), L. Floridi (2012); M. Coeckelbergh (2020); B. Cantwell Smith (2019); M. Rozkwitalska, M. Chmielecki, S. Przytula, L. Sulkowski, and B. L. Basinska (2017); N. Kantar, and T. W. Bynum (2021). The arguments of the authors are presented in the article, analyzing the significance of

intercultural ethics for global management theory.

In the global world, there is a need for innovative management strategies that correlate with the ethical systems of various cultures. The research of these authors provides strong arguments in this area: G. Josep and A. Hashmi (2018); E. M. Steenkamp, Jan-Benedict (2021); C. Barmeyer, and Claude-Hélène Mayer, (2020); L. A. de Vasconcelos Gomes, M. G. Santos, A. L. F. Facin (2022). On the other hand, it is not easy to define exactly what normative ethical or philosophical assumptions could become one common theoretical basis for the concept of intercultural ethics. The diversity of theoretical approaches raises the issue of cross-cultural ethical justification, which is revealed in this article by such authors: A. Bounfour (2018); F. Nansubuga, and J. C. Munene, (2020); K. Asamoah, and E. Yeboah-Assiamah (2019); G. Verhoef (2021); F. O. Ogola (2018); K. Ogunyemi, O. Ogunyemi, and A. Anozie (2022); L. Zhu, O. Kara, and X. Zhu (2019); Y. Jiang, Z. Ma, and X. Wang (2022); X. Tang, Y. Gu, R. Weng, and K. Ho (2022); T.-C. Ma, and L. Ouyang (2020); L. Lin, P. Li, and H. Roelfsema (2018).

The context of global management theory in this article is based on new theoretical research: V. Navickas, P. Simonavičiūtė (2022); E. Tavoletti, N. Kazemargi, C. Cerruti, C. Grieco and A. Appolloni (2022); S. Schragehttps, A. Rasche (2022). Research claims that in the context of global processes, it is very important to consider whether the ethical standards that have dominated so far can be adapted to global management strategies in different cultures. Given the hybridity of cultures, a direct correlation between global management theory and intercultural ethics can be established by comparing and identifying value systems. The search for common values and ideals could lead to a universal ethical frame of reference. A significant obstacle to building trust between Eastern and Western cultures in the context of global management is worldview differences that are based on different values, which ultimately lead to different views on what ethical management should be in an organization. In order to ensure sustainable intercultural cooperation in the field of management, it is first necessary to reveal false cultural stereotypes and unfounded assessments, the unmasking of which would allow for greater intercultural trust and influence the selection and application of effective management methods. To achieve this goal, the article relies on the tuyrim of the following authors: M. E. Mogapi, M. M. Sutherland, A. Wilson-Prangley (2019); B. L. Louie, and M. Wang (2021); S. Chen, Y. Ye, K. Jebran, and M. A. Majeed (2020); N. A. Volgina, and Y. Wang (2022). On the basis of intercultural ethics, the article describes and discusses ethical principles of Aristotle's, Confucius and Africa's *ubuntu* philosophy contributing to the global management organizational structures such as intercultural tandems and negotiated processes in global management contexts.

## Methodology

The methodology of the article consists of theoretical research methods. This design of the methodology was determined by the topic analyzed in the article. The main research methods used in the article: analysis of scientific sources, comparative and systematic text analysis, text interpretation and logical deduction research methods, based on which the main assumptions and arguments underlying intercultural ethics were analyzed.

The methods of systematic text analysis and text interpretation enabled a systematic approach to the research object, establishing the logical connections and interaction of the theoretical assumptions of intercultural ethics with the global management theory, in order to reveal the context of the investigated problem, to interpret the results of research conducted by other authors, different concepts or theoretical assumptions. The method of systematic text analysis explains and process for identifying and critically appraising relevant research, as well as for collecting and analyzing data from said research (Snyder et al., 2016). This method in the article enables to compare global management and intercultural ethics research and highlights the challenges of conducting a systematic review in contemporary interdisciplinary research.

The method of comparative analysis enables to define different ethical systems of Eastern and Western cultures and allows to compare them in the context of global management theory. There are several advantages and potential contributions of conducting a comparative analysis method. In this article we determine whether an effect is constant across studies and discover what future studies are required to be conducted to demonstrate the effect, and discover which study-level or sample characteristics have an effect on the phenomenon being studied, such as whether studies conducted in one cultural context show significantly different results from those conducted in other cultural contexts (Davis et al., 2014). Methods of systematic text analysis and interpretation, and methods of logical deduction enable the comparison and generalization of different theories and arguments in the global management and intercultural ethics research field.

## Theoretical assumptions of the concept of global management

The metatheoretical field of global management is shaped by various interrelated perspectives: culture, economics, finance, technology, marketing, ethical decision-making, politics, strategic planning, and human resource development. On a practical level, global management is related to international, multicultural corporations, projects, processes, technologies, human resources, etc. management and control, therefore, intercultural problems are inevitably encountered at various levels and the need to better understand local communities, traditional cultures, value systems and worldviews, looking for opportunities for dialogue and consensus (Coombs, Laufer, 2018). The classical concept of management is understood as a system of collective

planning, organization, management, and control of organizational resources at the national level to effectively achieve specific organizational goals (Gooderham et al., 2022). The concept of global management is synonymous with the concept of international management, which defines any organizational activity carried out outside the borders of its national state to exploit the potential development of the countries of the growing economic zone and obtain greater profits by using the unique skills and competences of other cultures (Josep and Hashmi, 2018; Morschett, Schramm-Klein, Zentes, 2013; Lumineau, Hanisch, Wurtz, 2021). Global management can be understood by considering and evaluating various functions performed by international organizations, including specific operations and created production, marketing, management of production processes, finance, human resources, development strategies, market research, legal framework, etc. From a global perspective, the regulation and management of each of these functional areas at the international level poses far more complex problems compared to the management of the functions of local organizations. The global market has a huge impact on the development of management theories and their noticeable convergence into one common global management theory (Nishii; Khattab; Shemla; Paluch, 2018).

Global management practices related to planning, organizing, directing, and controlling must be viewed from a cross-cultural perspective if organizations are to maintain their productivity both within and outside the countries and cultures they belong to. Global management theory seeks to understand intercultural conflicts, the interaction of international corporations, global prospects for technological development, global politics, etc. factors that affect managerial decision-making (Stahl; Tung; Kostova; Zellmer-Bruhn, 2016). Today's economy is multicultural per se. Therefore, in the context of global management, not only the basic competencies necessary for business are considered important, but also the need for new knowledge and skills necessary to operate and work successfully in the international business arena is recognized (Stahl; Miska; Lee; de Luque, 2017). Global management seeks to enable the planning, organization, management and control of employees and other resources to achieve organizational goals across unique local cultural differences and the operational boundaries of traditional value beliefs (Tavoletti et al., 2022). However we constantly encounter different cultures and worldviews, whose ethical, religious beliefs and worldview attitudes are ignored, or the purposefully artificially implemented corporate values can cause many unwanted tensions and conflicts. In this context, the significance of intercultural ethics as a source of worldview and value attitudes becomes unquestionable in the face of the challenges of the global world, when one of the most important tasks of individual individuals and societies becomes the pursuit of sustainable well-being, success, and prosperity (Lumineau, Hanisch, 2021). In this regard, the synergy of global management, as a practical art of organizing life, and intercultural ethics, as a theory that shapes worldviews and values, enables individuals and societies

to formulate and achieve long-term goals that ensure sustainable well-being and prosperity.

Global management theory should be based on universal ethical values that integrate different cultural traditions and worldview systems (Verbeke, Puck and van Tulder, 2018). Therefore, all theories of business ethics and corporate governance, including social contract and stakeholder theories, that are based on individualistic philosophical systems should be rejected. The main premise of global management theory is the belief that people are by nature communal and not individualistic, accordingly, all traditional cultures are communal cultures, based on a sustainable, ethical global management theory can be developed and implemented (Stahl, Miska, Lee and de Luque, 2017).

The African concept of *ubuntu* can make a significant contribution to the ethical justification of global management theory, as this concept is based on the fundamental notion that we truly become human only through interaction with other individuals (Barmeyer, Mayer, 2020; Karsten, Illa, 2005). It seems that the Aristotelian tradition of management, which is of great importance in Western culture, the Confucian tradition of management that is widespread in Asia, and the African *ubuntu* philosophical tradition correlate with each other and can become an important basis for intercultural ethics, normatively conditioning global management theory (de Gomes et al., 2022; Buble, 2015).

### **The possibility of intercultural ethics justification based on the African *ubuntu* philosophical ethics, Aristotelian virtue ethics and Confucian ethics**

Discussions about the intercultural basis of ethics are noticeably taking place from a dominant Western ethical perspective conditioned by certain Western sociocultural attitudes, values, and interests (Capurro, 2008; Hongladarom, 2007; Buchanan and Ess, 2008; Floridi, 2007; Ess, 2021; 2019; 2020a; 2020b). The lack of sufficient value balance between various ethical perspectives often leads to a certain negative attitude towards the development of global processes and complicates management processes. Is it possible to create universal ethical guidelines that are compatible with the existing ethical values of different cultures and can be overcome at the international level?

Intercultural ethics is essentially pluralistic ethics, which has a diversity of different ethical systems, but there is no relativism, emphasizes the principle of objective equality of ethical systems, rejecting benefits, power, various political or various political interests depends on the existence of various ethical systems (Coeckelbergh, 2020; Kantar, Bynum, 2021). On the other hand, for example, to incorporate such value-based worldview systems as, for example, Islam, Buddhism and Confucianism into the project of pluralism? A very important challenge is the possibility of compatibility between different ethical perspectives, emphasizing the positive perspectives included in various value systems

(De Gomes et al., 2022; Steenkamp, 2021). Ethical compatibility in this case preserves the existence of fundamental identity-defining differences in cultural systems that are not hindered by agreements on essential guidelines for ethical behavior.

In Western culture, the ethical pluralism proposed by Aristotle offers ways to overcome the fundamental differences between Western and Eastern value systems. Aristotle uses the concept of "relation to" which marks the difference between homogeneous concepts, which have only one meaning, and pure concepts, which have many meanings that are not necessarily like each other. One of Aristotle's most common examples is the analysis of the concept of being, which reveals that there are many ways of saying that something "is", but all of these ways are "connected to" the same and self-contradictory essence of "being" (Aristotle, 1003a33). Such an Aristotelian structure between different ways of being and the connection with the essence of being that unites all different meanings, which does not lose its identity due to different meanings, directly correlates with the pluralism of interpretations of the meaning of Plato's idea in the epistemological and ontological sense. Aristotle's position on the possibility of the existence of pluralism fully substantiates unity and diversity. There are also examples of this type of pluralism in the philosophies of Thomas Aquinas and Immanuel Kant, which seek to justify the coherence between the one and the many. The pluralism of interpretations in Aristotle's philosophies is closely connected with the concept of *phronesis* about the activity of the practical mind and the art of decision-making. The solution allows you to cover, generalize and draw specific conclusions in ethically controversial situations. This form of interpretive pluralism leads to the very essence of the decision being made, inseparable from the existing differences. Pluralism of interpretations and practical judgment are important components of virtue ethics, which allow us to accept humanly wise (*phronesis*) practical decisions with universal legitimacy in complex and uncertain situations.

The model of Western ethical pluralism formed in Antiquity significantly contributed to the development of the project of intercultural ethics and made it possible to consolidate important principles of coherence and decision-making, which are like the essential ethical principles found in one of the oldest philosophical traditions of the East: the philosophy of Confucius. X. Tang, Y. Gu, R. Weng and K. Ho (2022) take the position that in Confucian philosophy, the concept of *ren* means authoritative humanity, a kind of inter-humanity (Tang et al., 2022). Although a pluralism of different or even conflicting ethical judgments can be observed in Confucianism, Confucius, like Plato and Aristotle, adheres to the same system of ethical standards: *ren*, which can be understood, interpreted, and applied in many different ways. According to Confucius if two people, after a careful and conscious discussion, adhere to two different or even contradictory decisions, then both should be respected (Tang et al., 2022). This association of the possible diversity of decisions with one and the same ethical standard directly correlates with Plato and

Aristotle's concept of practical decision: *phronesis*. In this case, one can talk about the "meta pluralism" of these two ethical traditions, because they both recognize the ethical pluralism of interpretations, which enables the diversity of interpretations of essential ethical standards.

An important principle of Aristotle's ethics of virtues: harmony correlates with Confucian concept of harmony: *he*. Harmony in both cultures is understood as the harmony of various musical components, which eventually becomes an important principle of the social plane, especially in the cases of education and harmonizing human relationships. In the ideal case of Confucian ethics, the harmonious life of individual people should fully meet or harmonize with the requirements of the general social order, and eventually this harmony would pass into a perfect resonance between heaven and earth (Chen et al., 2020; Wong, 2020). Similar notions of pluralistic harmony and resonance can be found in the ethical systems of Taoism and Buddhism.

Confucianism as a humanistic philosophy strongly influences many aspects of contemporary Chinese life, including management theory (Volgina; Wang, 2022; Jiang et al., 2022; Tang et al., 2022). On the other hand, Buddhism and Western capitalism also play a significant role in Chinese business practices (Zhu et al., 2019; Chen et al., 2020). In traditional Chinese ethics, as in traditional African ethics, great importance is attached to the institution of the family (Lin et al., 2018; Zhu et al., 2019). Confucius defines the hierarchically organized family as the most important foundation of society (Chen et al., 2020; Ma et al., 2020). Confucian ethics are also virtue ethics (Wong, 2020). The main virtues (*de*) in Confucian ethics: humanity (*ren*), loyalty (*zhong*), filial piety (*xiao*), honesty (*xin*), justice (*yi*), reciprocity (*shu*), respect (*rang*), courage (*yong*) and goodness (*shan*) (Ma, 2020). According to Kam-hon Lee, implementing Confucian ethics in management requires: 1) being honest with others (i.e., not deceiving and always seeking mutual benefits); 2) be reliable in processing transactions; 3) accept justice as profit (i.e., value justice more than profit); 4) being benevolent (i.e., not taking advantage when others are in crisis) (Lee; McCann; Yuen, 2011). Confucianism forms the philosophical foundation of the culture not only of China, but also of Japan, Korea, Vietnam, Singapore, and other East Asian nations, because the values formulated in Confucian ethics are important not only for China, but also for the entire culture of the Far East (Tang et al., 2022). Confucian ethics as ethics based on communality and universal virtues correlates with traditional African and Western ethical concepts.

The foundation of intercultural ethics in global management theory is significantly influenced by the concept of human nature analyzed in the philosophies of Aristotle and Confucius. Aristotle and Confucius describe people as a community of closely related members. In politics, Aristotle states that a person is a political animal (Aristotle, 1253a2-3), and such a person who is unable to live in society or feels self-sufficient and therefore does not need society is simply not part of the government (Aristotle, 54f./1253a). A similar position is expressed by Confucius, thinking about the place of man

in society and emphasizing that the essence of man is defined by the actions, functions, and roles he performs in society, therefore man is a social being by nature. Western ethics of concern include human and ecological problems, while Confucian ethics focuses on human responsibility, which begins in the family and eventually grows into responsibility for the whole world (Jiang et al., 2022). Is such ethical pluralism possible, which would ensure the existence of universal ethical values without ignoring cultural and worldview differences?

A constructive suggestion is provided by the traditional African philosophical concept of *ubuntu*, whose most important feature is community. Community is the cornerstone of African thought and life. An African is not an autonomous individual but a person in a community (Nansubuga and Munene, 2020; Asamoah and Yeboah-Assiamah, 2019). The African mentality operates in a communal mode, according to which: "I am because we are and since we are, therefore I am" (Ogunyemi, Ogunyemi and Anozie, 2022). In a true community, the individual seeks the individual good while approaching the common good. In South Africa, the traditional understanding that a person becomes a real person only by being a member of a community is expressed in the concept of *ubuntu* (Asamoah and Yeboah-Assiamah, 2019; Bounfour, 2018). *Ubuntu* is central to African philosophy and communal cultural life (Nansubuga and Munene, 2020). The concept of *ubuntu* is difficult to translate literally into the languages common in Western culture because this concept defines the very essence of being human (Asamoah and Yeboah-Assiamah, 2019). Traditional African ethics are virtue ethics. Virtues such as patience, optimism, mutual sympathy, and empathy are highly characteristic of the African way of life and definitely indicate a distinctive existence that expands the realm of individual possibilities to include the lives and concerns of others (Nansubuga and Munene, 2020). The success of one person is highly dependent on the success of the whole community (Ogunyemi et al., 2022). K. Ogunyemi et al., distinguished the main concept of the *ubuntu* concept, according to which any action is right only to the extent that it creates harmony and reduces discord, and accordingly, any action is wrong if it does not contribute to the prosperity of the community (Ogunyemi et al., 2022). It is this interpretation of *ubuntu* that is the most promising theoretical formulation of African ethics. Anglo-American or continental normative ethical theories rarely recognize that interpersonal relationships have universal moral status (Ess, 2021; Coeckelbergh, 2020). However, the traditional European normative tradition of ethics, especially Aristotle's ethics of virtues, is inseparable from intersubjective intercultural morality (Ess, 2019). Aristotle justified the position that a person achieves self-realization through interpersonal relationships. Such a position correlates with the basic concept of *ubuntu*, according to which one becomes human only when and only to the extent that one is involved in meaningful relationships with other people (Ogunyemi et al., 2022; Asamoah and Yeboah-Assiamah, 2019). Aristotle's ethics is not essentially a materialist theory. If material goods were the only goods, then the good of one person would constantly conflict with the

good of others. However, if immaterial goods exist, it is possible to reconcile the ethics of self-realization and the ethics of interpersonal relationships.

Philosophers analyzing the concept of *ubuntu* also recognize that this concept embraces intangibles (Nansubuga and Munene, 2020; Asamoah and Yeboah-Assiamah, 2019). Being a good member of the community is a hallmark of Afrocentric philosophy (Verhoef, 2021; Mogapi et al., 2019). Actions that create harmony, reduce discord, and foster community also represent the valuable nature of man as a social being. Combining self-actualization and communality is important because it solves the problem of moral motivation. Modern Western ethical theories face the question, but struggle to answer it: why should I behave ethically if it does not benefit me to do so? However, if the position is followed that by behaving ethically, one gets more for the community and at the same time for oneself, then there is a motive to behave ethically.

There is a discrepancy between traditional African cultures and management theory applied in Africa, which does not differ in its content from the Anglo-American concept of management. Theories developed in and for individualistic cultures cannot be effectively applied to communitarian cultures (Mogapi, 2019). Africa should adopt a management theory that is in line with the traditional African communal culture, where the enterprise is understood as a community and not as a structure of individual individuals. *Ubuntu* provides a strong philosophical basis for the concept of community management (Ogunyemi et al., 2022). A central tenet of Afrocentric leadership is collectivism (Ogola, 2018). Classical western management theories are fundamentally opposed to management theories focused on the pursuit of the good of the community. However, the integration of *ubuntu* into Western management theories could enrich them with values such as humanity, care, sharing, respect, and compassion (Ess, 2021).

Although some features of *ubuntu* are uniquely African, the core values of this philosophy are universal, co-human (Verhoef, 2021). However, in today's postmodern Western culture, belief in human nature or universal values has become a matter of dubious significance. The *ubuntu* philosophy asserts that the common ground of humanity is greater and more enduring than the differences that divide us (Mandela, 2006). Classical Chinese and Greek philosophical theories have much in common with traditional African philosophy (Ess, 2019).

## Future discussion and perspectives

The article issue sought contributions on a range of questions relevant to the theme of intercultural ethics impact on theory of global management. Amongst these: why is a pluralistic ethical approach important in understanding the impact of global management? (Schragehttps; Rasche, 2022). How do global management theories impact different cultural and social groups differently? (Barmeyer; Mayer, 2020). How do

these communities view issues in intercultural ethics such as privacy, consent, security and identity differently? (de Vasconcelos; Santos; Facin, 2022). Can we design governance frameworks for global management theories that are tailored to the ethical values of different cultures, whilst also harmonizing these frameworks at the international level? (Kantar; Bynum, 2021). Do digital global management theories represent a new form of colonialism and exploitation? (Ess, 2021).

When comparing traditional African philosophy with modern European philosophy, the contrast is truly striking. However, when traditional African philosophy is compared with traditional European philosophy, the differences diminish (Rozkwitalska et al., 20147). In classical Western philosophy, from the ancient Greeks and Romans to the philosophy of the Enlightenment, man was understood as a political (communal) animal by nature (Aristotle, 1984: 1253a2-3). In other words, it is natural for humans to live in community with other humans. According to Plato, the main ethical virtues of social life are justice, moderation, courage, and wisdom (Plato, 1974: 504a. 50; *ibid.*, 343c, 357b). However, overcoming the ethics of *ubuntu* raises several key issues.

One of them is nepotism, when following the collective attitudes of the family, ethnic or social group, and in some cases also tribal ideology, the interests of the clan or tribe are often put before the interests of the organization, and often this can mean the inclusion of close relatives in the organization, regardless of their suitability for the respective positions to hold office (Ogunyemi et al., 2022). The second problem is tribalism, when the interests of relatives or members of one's ethnic group are put before the interests of the nation (Ogola, 2018). The third problem is group thinking, when collectivist attitudes do not allow individuals to act without group consensus (Ess, 2021; Asamoah, 2019). In this case, various alliances are formed in organizations: groups and subgroups, whose members must adhere to a position acceptable to a certain group or subgroup. In such a situation, it is difficult for individuals to act independently based on their personal position. Such practices can complicate the processes of initiation of negotiations, changes, or development, and therefore are not effective (Ogunyemi et al., 2022).

In this aspect, the revision and addition of the concept of *ubuntu*, the integration of Aristotle's virtues of universal practical wisdom and Confucius' values of human harmony can enrich and strengthen the overall project of intercultural ethics. Ethical theories that claim that we must choose between selfishness and altruism, between self-love and love of others, between individual good and common good, are essentially individualist ethical theories. *Ubuntu* can be compared with the Western philosophical concept of solidarity (Ess, 2021; Asamoah Yeboah-Assiamah, 2019). John Paul II defines solidarity as a firm and persistent determination to commit ourselves to the common good, because we are all responsible for everyone (Paul II, 1987). When the company is understood as a community, then the goal of its management is to promote community good. Organizing a large multicultural corporation as a

harmoniously functioning community requires decentralization of management and the principle of solidarity, according to which each group with greater power should help smaller groups to achieve common goals (Steenkamp, 2021; Gomes et al., 2022).

The position of developing a theory of business management based on natural human rights and virtue ethics is quite difficult to achieve. Western moral philosophy is complex, involving changes in metaphysics, epistemology, theology, politics, economics, and more. David Hume's *Treatise on Human Nature* was one step towards the popular belief today that there is no such thing as human nature (Hume, 1967). Still, it's hard to deny that ethics can spring from our shared human nature. Kant rejected human nature as a starting point for moral philosophy and attempted to derive an ethical theory from pure practical reason that would apply not only to humans but to all rational beings in general (Kant, 1981). Moral metaphysics should not be identified with anthropology (ibid.). However, Kant's ethical theory is unable to distinguish between ethical and unethical actions.

It is obvious that in the traditions of Western and Eastern cultures, the concept of pluralism is deeply rooted and is associated with the most frequent variety of interpretations of one and the same thing - idea, system, ethical standards, when different interpretations, attitudes, perspectives ultimately lead to the understanding of one and the same thing. Pluralism of interpretations is superior to other types of pluralisms: firstly, this type of pluralism can reduce radical differences to one harmonious understanding of some subject, secondly, pluralism of interpretations connects the ancient cultures of the East and West and becomes a sustainable basis for ethical dialogue (Ibeh; Eyong; Amaeshi, 2021). It can be argued that some classical Western and Eastern ethical theories, such as Aristotle's virtue ethics, Confucianism, Buddhism, African *ubuntu* philosophy, Confucianism, etc. provides sufficient theoretical foundations to develop a global management theory based on universal values, which enables intercultural dialogue based on pragmatic agreements and minimal value consensus, while preserving individual and cultural differences.

An intercultural ethics also establishes common ground with and among others (it will stress relationality and reciprocity), envisioning ways of creating networks of significance that can simultaneously draw from particular cultures and also establish similarities or commonalities for the benefit of transformative praxis in the field of global management. An intercultural ethics draws from the fluid and dynamic notion of culture, one that allows the otherness of others as a shared identity: a culture of excluded, resistant, resilient, and ultimately empowered human beings, willing to engage in transformation. If cultures allow us to inhabit a meaningful world, an intercultural ethics that fosters dialogical deliberation and symmetric participation might allow us to envision a world in which, as human beings, we are linked (but not trapped) to each other. It will also encourage us to engage in dialogue so that we can listen, learn, and live together as vulnerable, interdependent human beings.

## Conclusions

Recent advances in the capability of global processes in the field of management have invigorated the debate on the ethical issues surrounding their use. However, this debate has often been dominated by 'Western' ethical perspectives, values and interests, to the exclusion of broader ethical and socio-cultural perspectives. This imbalance carries the risk that global management produces ethical harms and lack social acceptance, when the ethical norms and values designed into the field of management collide with those of the communities in which they are delivered and deployed. This article takes a step towards broadening the approach of intercultural ethics, by bringing together a range of cultural, social and structural perspectives on the ethical issues relating to the theory of global management. To avoid a homogenous global culture based on minimal pragmatic economic interests focused on efficient consumption, a universal ethics is necessary, which allows the preservation of cultural differences. In the context of global processes, it is very important to consider whether the ethical standards that have dominated so far can be adapted to different cultures. Given the hybridity of cultures, a direct correlation in intercultural ethics can be found by comparing and identifying value systems. The search for common values and ideals could lead to a universal ethical frame of reference. Recognizing existing multicultural differences, it is possible to identify certain cultural contexts that can be a sufficient basis for intercultural dialogue.

An intercultural ethics that seeks to avoid imperialistic homogenization must conjoin shared norms while simultaneously preserving the irreducible differences between cultures and peoples. An intercultural ethics may fulfill these requirements by taking up an ethical pluralism – specifically Aristotle's, Confucius and Africa's *ubuntu* ethical systems. This ethical pluralism figures centrally in both classical and contemporary Western ethics and further offers important connections with the major Eastern ethical tradition of Confucian thought. Both traditions understand ethical judgment to lead to and thus require ethical pluralism – i.e., an acceptance of more than one judgment regarding the interpretation and application of a shared ethical norm. Both traditions invoke notions of resonance and harmony to articulate pluralistic structures of connection alongside irreducible differences. After reviewing further resonances and radical differences between Western and Eastern views emerging pluralism thus fulfills the requirement for a theory of global management that holds shared norms alongside the irreducible differences between cultures and peoples.

The project of intercultural ethics in the context of global management theory should correspond to the traditional cultures of Africa, Asia and Europe and be based on common human values. A theory of global management should integrate such ethical values as solidarity, community, common good. The African philosophy of *ubuntu*, together with the traditional philosophies of China, Greece, and other cultures, can

play an important role in strengthening the axiological basis of global management theory. Confucian ethical pluralism, based on Confucius's concept of *ren*, whereby different but equally tolerable ethical decisions are made by different participants. Confucius's ethical pluralism is compatible with Aristotle's *phronesis*, the concept of practical reasoning that accommodates a variety of different interpretations about something. The *pros hen* concept formed in Aristotle's *Metaphysics* substantiates the idea that more than one ethical decision conditioned by different interpretations is possible, associated with universal ethical norms. Due to the implementation of the *pros hen* concept, the connection of universalism with multiculturalism becomes possible. The integration of *ubuntu* into Western management theories could enrich them with values such as humanity, care, sharing, respect, and compassion.

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**Assoc. prof. dr. Ernesta Molotkienė**, Doctor of Philosophy. Main research interests: philosophy of management, contemporary ethics, logics. Working as a Head of Department of Philosophy, Communication and Arts at Klaipeda university. Address: Herkus Mantas str. 84., Klaipeda, LT-92294 Klaipeda. Email: [ernesta.molotkiene@ltvk.lt](mailto:ernesta.molotkiene@ltvk.lt)