Komisarof, Zhu Hua, and their contributors avoid the politically correct self-absorption that too often accompanies explorations of cultural identity, instead showing us how various concepts of cultural adaptation can bring meaning to the profoundly liminal experience of becoming intercultural.

Milton J. Bennett
Executive Director,
Intercultural Development Research Institute, US

Crossing Boundaries and Weaving Intercultural Work, Life, and Scholarship in Globalizing Universities

This book generates a fresh, complex view of the process of globalization by examining how work, scholarship and life inform each other among intercultural scholars as they navigate their interpersonal relationships and cross boundaries physically and metaphorically. Divided into three parts, the book examines: 1) the socio-psychological process of crossing boundaries constructed around nations and work organizations; 2) the negotiation of multiple aspects of identities; and 3) the role of language in intercultural encounters, in particular, adjustment taking place at linguistic and interactional levels. The authors reflect upon and give meaning and structure to their own intercultural experiences through theoretical frameworks and concepts – many of which they themselves have proposed and developed in their own research. They also provide invaluable advice for transnational scholars and those who aspire to work and live abroad to improve organizational participation and mutual intercultural engagement when working in a globalizing workplace. Researchers and practitioners of intercultural communication, applied linguistics, communication studies and higher education in many regions of the world will find this book an insightful resource.

Adam Komisarof is Professor of Intercultural Communication and Acculturation in Reitaku University's Department of Economic Studies and Business Administration in Chiba Prefecture, Japan.

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Crossing Boundaries and Weaving Intercultural Work, Life, and Scholarship in Globalizing Universities

Edited by Adam Komisarof and Zhu Hua

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To my parents (爸爸和妈妈) for making me who I am today

Zhu Hua

To Kimi and Anna for their love, support, and inspiration

Adam Komisarof

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Foreword

The pleasure of peeking behind the curtains...

Fred Dervin

At a recent event for master's students planning on pursuing a PhD, I was asked to talk about my career and how I came to be the researcher I am today. One student wanted to know if my work had had any influence on my personal life and if my life had, in a way, inspired my work. I replied the usual, "I wouldn't be the researcher I am today without the life I have had and I wouldn't be the person I am without my research." In other words, like many other scholars, *I live my work*. A colleague who had been also invited to the event found it very difficult to answer this question. For her, her work was *her work* and her life *her life*. She did not come from any field related to the intercultural, but from a discipline where, she claimed, reflexivity is unfamiliar to its scholars.

Born in a multicultural family, where people used to fight over and with their identities, languages, and cultures (and even with their passports!), I used to be convinced that I had to have a clear identity *for* other people. In my early twenties, I would become very annoyed (and somewhat demoralized) when people asked me repeatedly about my origin (note the singular), and I would often prefer not to meet new people so as not to have to face a situation which, to me, resembled what I perceived to be a police inquiry into my genealogical tree. When I started reading critical work about hypermodernity, identity, and interculturality and came to do discourse analysis, I felt relieved and born again. I understood, like author Taiye Selasi (2015), that "*that* question, innocent as it often is in the hearts and the mouths of the questioner, [I think] has become code for a lot of other conversations that are a lot more difficult to have" (also see Zhu Hua's captivating Chapter 11). I also realized that it is *normal* to have plural identities and to adapt my discourses on who I am to different people and different contexts and situations. I then started developing strategies to avoid such situations if I felt uncomfortable or to orient the discussion in a different direction. Without my research, I probably would not be the person I am today.

When the editors of *Crossing boundaries and weaving intercultural work, life, and scholarship in globalizing universities* asked me to write a foreword for their excellent interdisciplinary volume, I did not hesitate a minute.

In his coming-of-age epistolary novel, *The perks of being a wallflower*, American writer Stephen Chbosky (2013, p. 28) makes one of his characters write: "It's strange because sometimes, I read a book, and I think I am the people in the book." This is precisely how I felt when I read through the excellent chapters that compose this volume. I consider these chapters to be a blending of travelogues, memoirs, reflexive essays, and theoretical discussions. While reading them, I was transported back to Claude Levi-Strauss's (1955) *Tristes tropiques* (*The Sad Tropics*) or Roland Barthes's (2011) accounts of his travels in China in 1974, which had contributed to showing these French intellectuals' more personal and human sides. For example, Barthes's book revealed different facets of the writer which are not exhibited in his other writings. In the China book, he appears to be bored most of the time and is not shy about his gay feelings towards young Chinese men.

With every page I turned that the reader has now before her eyes, I became excited; I was peeking behind the curtains of international academia, and it all had to do with my interests in interculturality, identity, language, mobility-migration, and integration. What I was reading was also mirroring very much my own experiences. I knew many of the authors either personally or by name, and it was fascinating to see beyond their scholarly tags, to see humans.

The editors asked these inspiring *homo viators* to analyze their successes and challenges by using their own or others' concepts, theories, and methodological tools. Although I may not agree with all the theoretical and methodological elements present in the chapters, I feel strongly that the reader will appreciate and learn from the richness of analysis, criticality, and reflexivity. Some of the concepts and theories used include, amongst others: *acculturation dynamics, culture shock, cultural adaption, identity making, the ritual theory, and theories of encounter*. Another important aspect of the book is represented by the fact that the authors have very different profiles, some have always worked abroad but never in their country of birth, while some moved abroad at a later stage in life. Besides, some of the authors found themselves in awkward positions when they moved to the country where they were residing when they wrote their chapters because of the bad political relations between their country of origin and the host country (see Chapter 8, Maryam Borjian, from Iran to the USA).

Regardless of the diversity of characteristics and profiles, what the authors all reveal is that working abroad as a scholar can arouse ambivalent sentiments in oneself and in others (*deception, liminality, shock,* and *frustration*, but also *pleasure, belonging, happiness,* and*self-actualization*). It is clear in the different chapters that institutions of higher education around the world, though extremely diverse, witness both mixophilia and mixophobia, the appreciation or fear of *mélanges* (Bauman, 2003). The academic world can be harsh and not as global as we would like it to be. In some of the chapters, one clearly sees that some authors felt less privileged than others in their host institution because of their first language(s), skin color, and/or national origin. Yet all of the authors have had to "walk a tightrope high above the ground without

the net afforded a person by the country where he has his [sic] family, colleagues, and friends, and where he can easily say what he has to say in a language he has known from childhood" (Kundera, 1984, p. 71). I like the way Elif Shafak (2012, p. 8) puts it in her novel *Honor*: "Adapting to their ways was like trying to embrace a hedgehog. There might be a secret tenderness, a gentle core underneath, but you couldn't pass the sharp needles to tap into it." The metaphors of the *tightrope* and the *hedgehog* symbolize well the chapter authors' challenges and successes, be they cultural and/or linguistic (see Chapter 9, Bönisch-Brednich, and Chapters 12, Ahn, and 4, Liu-Farrer, in this volume). Some authors even report experiences of laissez-faire and symbolic racism, while others have felt frustrated by how their foreignness is often seen as a sin (Rushdie, 2012) (also see Machart's thought-provoking Chapter 7, and Dewaele's Chapter 10).

The other side of the coin relates to the fact that our worlds (note the plural to emphasize their complexities) are so densely textured and interlocking that the differences between "the normal and the abnormal, the expectable and the unexpected, the ordinary and the bizarre, domesticated and wild" are blurred, as are those between "the familiar and the strange, 'us' and the strangers." (Bauman, 1997, p. 25) In their accounts and analyses, the authors show that they represent a "union of contraries," like any other postmodern subject (Maffesoli, 2014). This is why I enjoyed reading David L. Sam's research in Chapter 5 on the experiences of university students in Norway and how he compared both domestic and international students' experiences, claiming, "The assumption was that these domestic students in a way were also 'international' students because they had moved from another part of the country to Bergen." This is a very laudable approach, which I have been promoting through my work, too (Dervin, 2011). In a similar vein, Adam Komisarof's Chapter 2, on him "breaking the rice-paper ceiling" in a Japanese university, questions and minimizes the often held but unfounded view that the Japanese are xenophobic—at least more than "us." Finally, what many chapters show is that experiences and feelings of otherness and strangeness not only fluctuate with time, but also with the relations we create and the authority we have. Deepa Oommen, for example in Chapter 6, explains how her shift from life as a graduate student in the USA to faculty member has led to a major difference in her sense of integration.

Before we let the actors onstage and raise the curtain, I would like to commend the authors' and editors' valuable efforts to reveal some secrets and share very useful advice with the reader. As such, I discovered the potential of Anita Mak's sociocultural competence training program for academic expatriates in Australia in Chapter 3. I am also positively intrigued to see, for instance, that "critical self-analysis" is often recommended as a way of easing one's way into a host institution, different academic tribes, and larger contexts. Critical (intercultural) self-analysis is a skill and a privilege that exceeds all others in the experiences of strangeness in today's global academia.

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Preface

It was in that liminal period between spring and winter, 2013, in Pret A Manger on Baker Street, London, that the idea for this book originated. We had met at a presentation Adam gave at Zhu Hua's institution, Birkbeck College, University of London, the previous year. Although we approached our intercultural research from distinct academic perspectives (Zhu Hua from applied linguistics and Adam from intercultural communication and acculturation psychology), we seemed to share common values—including an interest in each other's approaches to intercultural studies, and our experience of living and working as transnational academics. It was this common ground, as well as our differences, which made collaboration promising and potentially exciting.

But the question remained, on what exactly did we want to collaborate? As we munched our sandwiches and reached for another sip of tea, we sketched out the rough details that would become the foundation for this book. Adam was returning shortly to Tokyo after a one-year sabbatical in Oxford, so we knew that we would need to work virtually. Email and Skype became our faithful allies. Many times over the next two years on his computer screen, Adam could see the morning sun (or more likely clouds) over London through Zhu Hua's window while she watched the setting sun in his.

What is true about the editors also extends to our chapter authors. We have communicated with them over the past two years mainly via the Internet—only rarely through the old-fashioned means of face-to-face conversation. Our goal, however, has been to gather people from varied perspectives within the broad field of intercultural studies—academics whose approaches are sufficiently diverse to illuminate broadly our field of inquiry: the nexus between the lives and work of transnational academics. We see this book as an alliance of often disparate disciplines, with researchers joining together who do not usually find each other at the same conferences or LinkedIn networks. So our team of scholars includes those in cross-cultural and acculturation psychology, communication, sociology, cultural anthropology, applied linguistics, language teaching, and multilingualism studies. Thus, as the title of the book reflects, this constitutes a crossing of boundaries—both national (enabled by modern technology) and disciplinary ones.

On that cold day in London we envisioned a detailed rendering of the layered relationship between scholarship, life, and work. Each contributor would reflect upon this connection, i.e. both how their intercultural experience has drawn them to specific theories, methodologies, and models, and how their scholarly work has supplied fresh insight into their lives abroad, informed their collegial relationships, and engendered new personal meanings which have, in turn, further propelled their research. This last form of boundary crossing implied in the book's title refers to a traversing of periods and domains in one's life, as transnational academics create meaning from the transformative journey of being a faculty member abroad.

Overall, this volume aims at scholars, students, or anyone with a strong interest in disciplines in which culture serves as an important consideration. It offers an opportunity—in many ways, similar to a backstage tour—to further understand: a) the reflexive relationship between intercultural experience and scholars' work; and b) at a more applied level, the journey of working and living in a new culture. We hope that this book will serve as a useful reference for transnational academics and those contemplating academic careers abroad alike—giving them new tools to seek deeper meaning embedded in their experiences, to analyze their work relationships and to thrive within them. Faculty working with such scholars can use this book as a resource to develop greater intercultural sensitivity for themselves and their colleagues. The book also offers rich insights about internationalization in higher education and the broad themes of migration and mobility through the lens of intercultural scholars. It could thus be used as a text in a wide variety of courses, including those related to the professional development of foreign students and researchers, acculturation studies, intercultural research methods, and the nexus between language/culture learning and identity.

Finally, we would like to thank all of the people at our publisher, Routledge, who have supported us—especially, Christina Low, our commissioning editor. This book would not have been possible without the chapter authors who devoted themselves to the demanding yet rewarding tasks of self-reflection and articulation of the meaning which permeates their research, work, and personal lives abroad. As joint editors, we would also like to express appreciation to each other for being a pleasure to work with throughout the collaborative process that created this book. Thanks to everyone, we believe that this book is more than the sum of its parts; it is a synergistic volume that will benefit transnational academics, and those who endeavor to become one, wherever they live.

Adam Komisarof (Tokyo) and Zhu Hua (London)

1 Introduction

Adam Komisarof and Zhu Hua

Globalization is a compelling force in universities worldwide. With the flow of migrants continuing unabated, even intensifying across national borders, many universities are hosts to communities boasting unprecedented cultural diversity—evident in their faculties, administrations, and student bodies. These changes have brought the concomitant challenge of forging inclusive multicultural spaces in an institution—that of higher learning—which is often expected to lead the broader society in similarly humanistic endeavors. In this volume, we hope to gain a bird's eye view as to how such efforts are progressing.

Globalization, and the flow of people across national borders which it has engendered, is viewed by many as a hallmark of the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries. Migration and intercultural contact, however, are not new (Giddens, 2001); vestiges abound of such interaction throughout human history, whether captured in Marco Polo's tales of his travels or embodied in the remnants of China's Great Wall (which was constructed to keep invading forces at bay). Adventure, trade, missionary work, exploitation, and/or the promise of opportunity have motivated people for millennia to venture beyond their native borders. What differentiates the present is that such migration is occurring now on an unprecedented scale. According to Sam and Berry (2006), at the start of the twenty-first century, there were 175 million people living in countries different from their birthplace, which constituted a doubling from just 25 years earlier. More recently, International Migration Report (2013) states that the total number of migrants worldwide had ballooned to 232 million in 2013.

Simply stated, globalization refers to the increased mobility of products, services, ideas, labor, technology, and capital throughout the world (Hamada, 2008; Vogt and Achenbach, 2012). Globalization can also be conceived as a social process which involves material, political, and symbolic exchanges (Hamada, 2008) as human resources cross national borders, thus having a profound effect upon social space, which is, in the words of sociologist Jan Aart Scholte, becoming "deterritorialized" (Vogt and Achenbach, 2012).

To better understand the impact of globalization and be responsive to their own changing demographic composition, universities are re-examining their curricula, teaching methods, student recruitment, and much more. The very fabric of institutional life and experience is in the process of transformation, and university faculties are no exception. In striving to achieve the elusive ideal of a truly international university, hiring the best scholars and educators in their fields, regardless of nationality, is a central objective at most top-flight institutions. Even universities of more modest means are looking increasingly beyond their own national borders when hiring new faculty. Consequently, the world's academics have never been more mobile. However, employing a culturally diverse staff of scholars is only the beginning; namely, these new members need to be integrated into their organizations to make them feel a sense of participation and fully leverage their professional contributions.

The purpose of this book is to generate a fresh, complex view of the process of globalization by examining how work, life, and scholarship inform each other among university faculty members, specifically as they navigate their interpersonal relationships at work and beyond. This will be accomplished by investigating the experience of transnational, intercultural scholars: *transnational* in the sense that they have worked and lived in countries different from those of their heritage/home cultures and crossed (in)visible national, social, cultural, professional, and/or organizational boundaries physically and metaphorically, while *intercultural* in the sense that these scholars, with their different research orientations and connections, all work in the field of intercultural communication, which is broadly defined as a study of interactions between people of different cultures.

In this volume our authors analyze their successes and challenges in establishing a sense of belonging in their organizations. Many reference the broader context of globalization among universities in their country of residence (and in the process highlight globalization's localized impact), but their focus is upon the relational and interactional dynamics as they negotiate their social and professional participation within their organizational networks, i.e. with other faculty members, students, departmental/university managers, and administrators. In the process, the authors explore the reflexive relationship between work, life, and scholarship—demonstrating their professional *and* personal investment in faculty globalization.

As expressed in the title, the notion of crossing boundaries is central to this endeavor. Boundaries can imply both visible and fixed national borders and those invisible, perceptual, and shifting ones, e.g. psychological barriers, cultural/linguistic differences, and disciplinary orientations. The weaving in the title also reflects an important theme. We are interested in how scholars working in the field of intercultural communication (and therefore, veterans and insiders in the discipline) manage intercultural transitions, participation, and inclusion, and how their interest and expertise in the field inform their choices in everyday workplace practice, and vice versa.

The centrality of inclusion and belonging

One inherent assumption in this volume is that inclusion and belonging are key themes in globalization. Importing diversity is not enough to make a university faculty truly global. It is also essential to socially and professionally integrate diverse members into the group—in the sense that newcomers can develop relational and communication dynamics with their coworkers, which empower them to advance and actualize their skills as scholars, administrators, and educators (the, so-called, three pillars of academic work). Only once this occurs can universities fully leverage the benefits of such diversity.

When such benchmarks are not reached, the consequences can be dire. According to social psychologists, the experience of exclusion results in negative outcomes, both affective (i.e. feelings of misery, frustration, and/or anger) and performance related (i.e. perceived inability in one's capacity to act and achieve) (Abrams, Hogg, and Marques, 2005). Those excluded can experience the erosion of valued social and psychological resources, including prestige, esteem, respect, independence, and self-determination.

Likewise, research strongly indicates that connectedness and belonging are necessary to function optimally in terms of health, adjustment, and well-being (Pickett and Brewer, 2005). For migrants, such acceptance usually comes with sustained host culture involvement, which has been shown to reduce sojourner stress and promote positive affect towards host culture members (Berry, Kim, Minde, and Mok, 1987; Inoue and Ito, 1993; Komisarof, 2004a; Sanchez and Fernandez, 1993; Ward, 1996). University faculty members are no different in this regard. Therefore, one of the aims of this book is to discover how to promote socio-professional acceptance more effectively so that faculties can be more inclusive of international cultural diversity and globalize beyond the merely cosmetic act of importing foreign nationals.

Acculturation

Another shared theme in the experiences of faculty crossing national and organizational boundaries is that they frequently undergo *acculturation*, which Berry, Kim, Power, Young, and Bujaki (1989) define as the process which "occurs when two independent cultural groups come into continuous first-hand contact over an extended period of time, resulting in changes in either or both cultural groups" (p. 186). For groups, acculturation usually refers to changes in social structure, economic base, and/or political organization (Berry, Kim, and Boski, 1988; Castro, 2003), while individual acculturation is a process that, as Chirkov (2009) writes, "emerges within the context of interactions, both physical and symbolic," (p. 178) between someone who has entered a cultural community different from where s/he was initially socialized and members of that community. It involves psychological acculturation, which brings with it changes in attitudes, values, identity, and behaviors (Castro, 2003; Sam, 2006).

During the process of acculturation, individuals also make adjustments in the ways they use language(s), but to be able to speak the language(s) of the host society is itself not enough. Many studies (for a summary, see Zhu, 2014) have identified areas that may cause problems in interacting with others from a different linguistic and cultural background, for example, inappropriately transferring social-pragmatic rules of their first language(s) into the new language, clashes of different styles of communication, mismatches in cultural schemas, or a lack of understanding of professional and institutional discourses.

Acculturation is complex—shaped by social, political, economic, cultural and linguistic factors in the societies of origin and settlement as well as individuals' stress levels; skill deficits; affective, behavioral, and cognitive responses; and demographic factors such as age, socioeconomic class, and gender (van Selm, Sam, and van Oudenhoven, 1997; Ward, 1996). Individual characteristics (e.g. personality, language fluency, training and experience, and acculturation attitudes), as well as situational ones (e.g. length and amount of cultural contact, cultural distance, degree of social support, and extent of life changes), influence the process (Castro, 2003). In the forthcoming chapters, we will see numerous concrete examples demonstrating both the richness and profundity of acculturation as it changes people's lives forever.

A shared understanding of culture?!

As this book examines acculturation and the process of crossing cultural boundaries, a shared understanding of *culture*, i.e. the entity whose boundaries are being crossed, is desirable. Establishing a working definition of culture, however, is easier said than done, as this is a highly contentious issue among both academics and practitioners in fields concerned with culture and cultural change (Waldram, 2009).

We can, however, summarize some of the major issues of contention and attempt to resolve them sufficiently to move forward with our analysis. Zhu Hua (2014) identifies four schools of thought regarding the conceptualization and application of culture in intercultural communication studies. The first, the *compositional approach*, presents culture as abstract, yet relatively boundaried in terms of time, space, and its effects on individual psychology and behavior, as Triandis (1996) describes: "Culture consists of *shared* elements that provide the standards for perceiving, believing, evaluating, communicating, and acting among those who share a language, a historic period, and a geographic location." (p. 408)

Similarly, Hofstede (2001) famously coined culture as "the collective programming of the mind which distinguishes the members of one human group from another" (pp. 9–10). His cultural dimensions of individualism/collectivism, power distance, masculinity/femininity, uncertainty avoidance, and long/short-term orientation, along with Hall's (1976) theories of high/low context, polychronic/monochronic time, and proxemics (how

personal space differs between cultures), are widely seen as outgrowths of the compositional approach to intercultural communication research and application. Specifically, they stress the centrality of values and verbal and nonverbal communication styles in defining relatively independent, coherent, and stable cultural groups, which are usually conceived and operationalized as national cultures.

This view of culture has been criticized by scholars from other schools of thought (e.g. Hermans and Kempen, 1998; Ikeda, 2008; Rudmin, 2004; Waldram, 2009). Longstanding controversies include the debate over whether nations have distinct, identifiable cultures, and whether cultural regularity or patterns even exist. As Weinreich (2009) asserts, "Culture is not static; it is not a given entity, but is maintained ... and reformulated in part as a set of complex socio-psychological processes in which people are to varying extents active agents." (p. 126) Another dispute has raged over whether grouping people into cultural groups unjustly promotes stereotypes, exclusion of cultural "outsiders," and exclusiveness among "insiders"—as Komisarof (2014) argues specifically about *Nihonjinron* (i.e. an ideology which endows Japanese culture and identity with a set of qualities that separate Japanese people from other national and ethnic groups)—or whether culture can actually be a useful tool for understanding one's social environment when employed carefully in light of nuanced research findings (as contended in Komisarof, 2004b). Criticisms of the compositional approach likewise extend to scholarship of identity. Weinreich (1999) stresses that the assumptions of unambiguous, boundaried ingroup and outgroup identification "do not take account of the social realities of varying degrees of cross-ethnic identification, the situated contexts of modulations in these identifications, [and] the differences in cultural orientation within an ethnicity" (p. 147).

Other schools of thought about culture

The compositional approach to culture is the oldest and has probably spawned the most debate regarding its perceived foibles, which other schools of thought have attempted to redress. For example, Geertz (1973) objects to reducing culture to specific, quantifiable, and classifiable traits; relatively sparse, thin descriptions that double as cultural analysis; and experimental approaches in search of universal principles, coherence, or unified patterns of a culture. His semiotic, or *interpretive approach*, emphasizes thick description of "webs" of meaning which are revealed when behaviors are detailed in context.

Geertz's work helped spawn two other schools of thought (Zhu, 2014). The *action approach* embraces culture not as an *entity*, but as a *process*. For example, Adrian Holliday's (2011) notion of *small culture* "emphasizes the dynamic and changing nature of culture, recognizes the role of people in culture-making and acknowledges commonalities that can be identified among

people of the same age, occupation, ability, common experience, other than nationalities and ethnicities" (pp. 193–4). Similarly, Moore (2005) argues that culture is

> a common repertoire of ideas which is reworked in ways which are systematic, but not predictable. Culture is seen, not as a bounded, unified entity, containing distinct national and organizational forms, but as subject to continuous negotiation as different groups overlap, come together, and move apart. (p. 5)

For Street (1993), the action approach carries the implicit view that culture is "an active process of meaning-making" which "accentuates differences and boundaries between different groups." (p. 25) Rudmin (2006) explains the implications of this approach for how we conceive acculturation:

> Cultural groups select features by which to differentiate themselves and semiotically mark their inter-cultural boundaries. Thus, acculturation is not about cultural values, practices, and traits per se, but about encountering and reacting to social constructs created and maintained as perceptual boundaries between cultures. Similar cultures, such as Japan and Korea, or Canada and the USA, will still be bounded and semiotically marked by their respective communities, even though they have large cultural intersections and little cultural distance. (p. 27)

By extension, group identity is ascribed by symbolically, simultaneously constructing difference between groups, and similarity within them—whether or not such similarity actually exists (Barth, 1969; Jenkins, 1996).

What motivates such constructions of group identity and boundaries? Self-interest is one factor. Moore (2005) demonstrates that individuals strategically select between, and even combine, expressions of allegiance in order to maximize social benefits, with different group allegiances prioritized according to those which actors feel best suit their situational aims. And Kondo (1990) illustrates similarly shifting demarcations of cultural identity as not only individual, but also group interests clash among Japanese, concluding that collective identities, for instance "the Japanese," are not fixed essences; such groups are actually rife with differences, tensions, and contradictions, and their boundaries are in flux.

Zhu Hua's (2014) final school of thought is the *critical approach:*

> Similar to the action approach, it advocates the agency of participants and believes that through "doing" culture, people create and are limited by culture as well. However, different from the action approach, it positions culture as a part of macro social practice, contributing to and influenced by power and ideological struggle. (p. 195)

In this approach, cultures embody *discourses*, which, according to Hall (1997a), give us guideposts for constructing knowledge and provide very specific, limiting ways of talking about ideas, practices, activities, and institutions. He elaborates:

> [Discourses] define what is and is not appropriate in our formulation of, and our practices in relation to, a particular subject or site of social activity; what knowledge is considered useful, relevant and "true" in that contact; and what sorts of persons or "subjects" embody its characteristics. (p. 6)

Such discursive formations can "naturalize"—or fix differences and power relations between groups—when they submit to the culture's dominant discourses and the implicit *subject positions* from which those dominant discourses make the "most sense" (Hall, 1997b, p. 56).

Zhu Hua (2014) neatly summarizes the features of these four schools of thought about culture:

> The compositional approach sees culture as a collection of things; the interpretive approach regards culture as symbols that can only be captured through thick description; the action approach views culture as a meaning-making process; and the critical approach places culture as a site of power and ideological structure. Each approach has its own epistemological and ontological foundation—resulting in different ideas as to what is and is not culture—and stemming from such assumptions, their lines of enquiry and methodologies also diverge. (p. 196)

Therefore, the term culture is a sticking point when it comes to interdisciplinary collaboration, partly because the scale of multiplicity and diversity in definitions of culture has been unrivaled, and partly because each perspective has such divergent epistemological, ontological, and methodological orientations.

Towards a tentative resolution of competing schools of thought

As alternative approaches towards culture have developed, those embracing the compositional approach have also re-evaluated their own epistemological, ontological, and methodological assumptions. In recent years, it is fair to say that most scholars of culture have agreed on the following points: first, cultural groups exist at many different levels—including, but not limited to, gender, ethnicity, social class, religious groups, sexual orientation, organizations, specific professions, and nationality; second, a cultural group can co-exist with another group (e.g. children who have been raised with relatively equal influence from two different national cultures, or co-cultures) or

be embedded in another culture (i.e. subculture), and people can belong to different co- and/or subcultures simultaneously.

Finally, cultures can be conceived dialectically and paradoxically (Hampden-Turner and Trompenaars, 2000; Martin, Nakayama and Flores, 2002). In other words, members of a culture can be described in terms of seemingly contradictory, coexistent values and norms; people can enact different values on a situational and relationship-dependent basis; and cultures are dynamic—not static—so they may change at any moment. Even the most vociferous proponents of the compositional approach generally agree that each cultural group can demonstrate diverse values among its members (as there are individual outliers to widespread cultural patterns in every group), and that a person's values and behaviors can vary with context (Komisarof, 2004b; Matsumoto, 2000; Matsumoto *et al.*, 1997; Triandis, 1996, 1998; Yashiro, Machi, Koike, and Isogai, 1998). While this evolving consensus has not completely resolved the aforementioned debates, it has given scholars of culture more common ground from which to approach the studies of intercultural communication and acculturation.

We share the concern that the compositional approach may be misemployed; scholarship which tries to identify differences in values, communication style, and other factors that impede the development of positive relationships may promote stereotypes when interpreted too broadly. But we also believe these findings can be a valuable source of information about cultural groups and can be utilized, when interpreted cautiously, to promote better intercultural relationships. In other words, describing ecological-level cultural patterns and stating that people in a culture *tend to* follow such patterns is not the same as claiming group homogeneity or making deterministic predictions about individual thought or behavior, since such generalizations implicitly allow for divergence from the mainstream. Moreover, we assume that cultural differences may be understood and adapted to, thus engendering better intercultural relationships. So, whenever national cultures are discussed in this book, the underlying assumption is that not everyone in those cultural groups is the same, but that meaningful generalizations *can* be made about group-level cultural patterns and that people can acculturate to different cultures—in some cases eventually becoming a member themselves.

In sum, we believe that the concept of national culture has utility in better understanding the dynamics of our rapidly globalizing world. As Komisarof (2011) argues:

> Although the proliferation of complex cultural identities in the global age is undeniable, equally powerful is the internalization of norms, values, and social expectations of the communities where people are primarily socialized. Such socialization engenders a framework of meaning, shared with other cultural group members, which is used to shape communicative messages to others and to interpret their responses (Shaules, 2007). National cultural differences are meaningful to so many of the

> sojourners who experience them because their fundamental framework of shared meaning and interpretation that underlies their conceptual reality no longer "works." This is why intercultural training and the field of intercultural communication arose in the first place. (p. 29)

So, which of the four approaches to culture is employed in this volume? As editors, we have taken the position that each approach has value in better understanding intercultural interactions and should be utilized to shed light on the interplay between the work, life, and scholarship of transnational academics. Consequently, the contributors in this volume do not all fall into one neat category; elements of each school of thought can be found in the following chapters, and sometimes the same author draws eclectically from more than one.

This orientation is an asset in pursuing the aims of this book. As Scollon, Scollon, and Jones (2012) contend, each definition of culture is useful as a heuristic tool because it draws attention to a different aspect of human behavior. For example, regarding the compositional approach, they assert, "Seeing culture as a particular way of thinking forces us to consider how the human mind is shaped and the relationship between individual cognition and collective cognition" (p. 3). Zhu (2014) elaborates on the remaining three schools of thought:

> Seeing culture as a web of symbols leads to the question: how do these symbols invoke meaning in contexts? Seeing culture as a process invites us to reflect on the role of agency of participants in human activities; and seeing culture as power and ideological struggle helps us to view the role of an individual in relation with the rest of society. We can use categories, ideas and meanings rising from definitions of culture to interpret human activity and social practice with the knowledge that what is represented by categories, ideas and meanings is in fact far more fluid, complex and open. (p. 197)

So we are delving in with an open mind—both in terms of what constitutes culture and how to utilize theories of culture to more deeply examine the human condition. Rather than becoming stuck in the dogmatic advocacy of one school of thought over the others, we are riding the intellectual currents created by our contributors to see where they will lead—ultimately culling their insights to understand better how cultures (both national and at other levels) influence interpersonal dynamics in university faculties caught in the throes of globalization, and how to facilitate smoother, more inclusive intercultural communication between transnational academics and fellow members of their university communities.

With this, a final caveat. Because culture is being employed as a heuristic tool, we also realize that not all phenomena that fall under our microscope can be analyzed exclusively through the lens of culture. In other words, intercultural

interactions take place between people of different cultural backgrounds, but not all the interactions between people of different cultural backgrounds are cultural (Zhu, 2014). Thus, the concept of culture, and the insights provided by understanding its many manifestations (whether national, organizational, ethnic, etc.), can be used to better understand the globalization process on the interpersonal level at universities, but our authors will also be using other concepts to make sense of their experiences teaching abroad. Non-cultural factors may be centrally important in some analyses, while in others, non-cultural factors may interact with culture in relevant ways.

Further key positions and conceptualizations

In summary, we have taken the position, as editors, that:

- culture exists at many different levels and means different things to different people;
- each of the four approaches to culture has value in better understanding the phenomena under scrutiny in this book. A way forward is to take a problem-solving approach and focus on using culture as an analytical lens and a resource, but not being limited to it;
- although our contributors are focused predominantly upon crossing national cultural boundaries and exploring the consequent transition between the two, they are also free to consider cultural differences at other levels which help them to make sense of their interpersonal relationships—for example, organizational, socioeconomic, ethnic, and/or domestic regional cultural differences.

Based on such assumptions, we can then establish a working model for conceptualizing other contended terms: *intercultural* (when used in reference to experience, interaction, and/or communication); *transnational* (particularly when describing scholars); and *foreign* (especially when used to refer to universities). We use intercultural to refer to the kinds of experiences in which participants from different backgrounds come into contact with each other, with the understanding that not all problems in intercultural interactions are due to cultural differences (as we argued in the previous section).

Transnational scholars and foreign universities also require elaboration. Our focus is upon intercultural interactions between people of different nationalities and cultural transitions; consequently, we consider transnational scholars to be those who cross national borders in search of employment in foreign universities, i.e. organizations run by and comprised primarily of people who originate from nations other than the author's country of origin. We consider these definitions to be merely starting points; we realize that some may be contended and, as our contributors probe the depths of their intercultural experiences, we intend to thoroughly consider such contested points when they emerge.

The transnational scholars in this book comprise a special group as members of the global academic elite. Some are immigrants, but others are long-term sojourners who, unlike immigrants, have not changed their country of citizenship yet have open-ended residency (by virtue of official permanent residency or a source of indefinite visa sponsorship). These authors have chosen their country of residence, so they are voluntary migrants, but if another country beckoned, they have the skills and resources to relocate. Therefore, our contributors enjoy high degrees of mobility, self-determination, and monetary rewards, which are often unavailable or denied to other migrants around the globe—most of whom are members of lower socioeconomic classes (van Oudenhoven, 2006). Even among academics, if we included refugees or asylum seekers (i.e. involuntary migrants), or we added indigenous peoples or ethnocultural minorities who are the descendants of previous generations of migrants (i.e. sedentary groups), then the auto-ethnographies and conclusions we draw from them would probably differ; in other words, themes of involuntary migration or sedentary existence as non-dominant ethnocultural group members would likely be salient. Thus, this book focuses on the one small socioeconomic and professional segment of voluntary, mobile migrants.

The method employed: auto-ethnography

To fit this collective effort of reflecting on our own journeys of crossing boundaries and weaving work, life, and scholarship, we looked for a methodology that allows us to engage with both personal experience and interpretation/inquiry processes in the form of narratives. Our search led to auto-ethnography, which bridges ethnography and autobiography. In this section, we outline what auto-ethnography is and what analytical perspectives and tools it offers that serve the aims and objectives of this collection.

Auto-ethnography is "an approach to research and writing that seeks to describe and systematically analyze (graphy) personal experience (auto) in order to understand cultural experience (ethno)" (Ellis *et al.*, 2011, p. 1). Originally a type of anthropological research emphasizing the interpretative role of either ethnographers or informants in the 1970s (Hayano, 1979, cited in Muncey, 2010; Heider, 1975, cited in Chang, 2008), auto-ethnography has developed into a research methodology that not only recognizes but also emphasizes the reflexive relationship between the research and the researcher, objectivity and subjectivity, process and product, self and others, and the individual and society (Ellingson and Ellis, 2008).

We believe that this reflexive analytical stance fits the purpose of the present collection, which aims to investigate, through contributors' self-accounts, how their work, lives, and scholarship intertwine and impact each other, and how that nexus has impacted their interpersonal relationships in their university communities, and vice versa. The main principles of auto-ethnography

that are relevant to the context of this collection are as follows (based on Chang, 2008; Muncey, 2010; Ellis *et al.*, 2011):

- Methodological orientation: auto-ethnography is ethnographical in its approach and therefore relies on researchers' participant observation. In ethnographical studies, the goal is to collect naturalistic data wherever possible. The data can be messy and unstructured, and take many different forms and formats. It may include interviews, observations, anecdotes, interactions, personal narratives, audio and video data, or other forms. In the case of auto-ethnography, the researcher is both the primary participant and observer of the research at the same time. Being an observer of one's own practice makes it possible to describe events either inaccessible to others or easily missed in observations, and to trace changes over time. Most importantly, it brings in the researchers' perspectives, feelings and thoughts—in other words, subjectivity—which is as important as the events themselves. For this volume, the contributors take on the dual role of being both actors and commentators in their own stories of crossing boundaries and weaving work, life, and scholarship. We invite the contributors to comment on how they feel, perceive, or evaluate their experiences of working in a university away from their home or heritage culture(s).
- Content orientation: auto-ethnography is autobiographical in its content. In doing auto-ethnography, researchers make use of self-narratives such as autobiography or memoir and retrospectively write about "epiphanies" and "remembered moments perceived to have significantly impacted the trajectory of a person's life" (Ellis *et al.*, 2011, p.3). In the context of this volume, we ask a number of general and specific questions to probe successes and struggles, perks and perils of contributors in their intercultural experience and process of acculturation—particularly with regard to workplace interactions. Questions range from the most memorable moment in one's workplace to the observed changes in "local" colleagues—for instance, in their perceptions of cultural "others."
- Interpretive orientation: different from autobiography, auto-ethnography requires a systematic approach to analyze and interpret the researcher's experience. In discovering the individual in the research process, the auto-ethnographer has the duty of connecting her personal experiences to broader socio-cultural contexts and understandings. In the context of this volume, we frame our discussion with the aims of understanding the globalization of higher education from transnational scholars' perspectives and of sharing lessons with others.

The principles of auto-ethnography bring many benefits. We are particularly drawn to its researcher- and reader-friendly nature. According to Chang (2008), auto-ethnography allows researchers to access "familiar" data and to provide a holistic, intimate, and in-depth perspective. It is also reader-friendly in that it is written engagingly, or is free from conventional scholarly writing.

The principles and benefits of auto-ethnography summarized above are the main reasons for our choice of this methodology. Although we encourage contributors to apply the main principles of auto-ethnography in their chapters, we also proceed flexibly. In other words, our central objective is to explore how work relationships are influenced by the reflexive relationship between work, life, and scholarship. While the authors primarily apply auto-ethnography, their inquiries are not limited by an orthodox adherence to it. When authors determine that their probes can be advanced outside of the conventional boundaries of auto-ethnography, we have given them license to do so, as our primary objective is not to follow the methodology for its own sake, but to use it to gain insight into the globalization process at universities—viewed from the vantage point of where authors' work, life, and scholarship intersect.

Contributors and chapters

Globalization is, at its best, a process of synergizing multiple viewpoints and, by doing so, creating new energy and perspectives. This book is also so constructed. We have invited scholars from diverse countries of origin and an array of disciplines with some bearing on intercultural experience. Manuscripts have also been solicited from contributors based in a broad array of socio-geographical contexts, including Europe (East, Central, and Southeast), Asia, North America, and Oceania. This diversity stretches current scholarship in migration studies, which traditionally has focused upon the United States, Western Europe, Canada, and Australia (van Oudenhoven, 2006). By pushing such staid boundaries, we can better understand today's trends in the globalization of human resources within university faculties.

In each chapter, contributors reflect upon their own experiences, giving them meaning and structure through theoretical frameworks, concepts, and methods common to their unique fields. The result is a multi-faceted, interdisciplinary look at the intercultural experiences of transnational academics. The first five chapters (Part I) are written by scholars of acculturation and examine the socio-psychological process of crossing boundaries constructed around nations and work organizations (e.g. acculturation dynamics, culture shock, and cultural adaption). The second part of the volume, consisting of three chapters, investigates how multiple aspects of identities (e.g. cultural and ethnic identity, professional identity, the familiar stranger, age, and gender) are ascribed, assumed, constructed, and negotiated. The third part focuses on the role of language in intercultural encounters—in particular, adjustment taking place at linguistic and interactional levels. By including these three sections, we aim to achieve a balance between disciplines and to stimulate insights drawn from multiple perspectives.

In the first chapter, Adam Komisarof challenges categorical claims in academic and popular literature that Japanese people do not accept non-Japanese as core members in work organizations. He revisits 2010–12, when he pierced

the "rice-paper ceiling" (Kopp, 1994) through his appointment as the first American to the Dean's Committee running his university department. He gives conceptual order to his interactions and relationships with other committee members with a new culture-general framework of acculturation strategies, dynamics, and outcomes. He explores the ever-expanding, retreating, and evolving boundaries constructed around concepts of national-culture group belonging and organizational membership. In the process, he not only contests widespread notions of an insular Japanese society, but also pinpoints significant challenges that traditionally mono-ethnic societies like Japan face in the struggle to fully utilize diverse human resources at work, as well as attitudinal and skill-based approaches which migrants can take to improve their sense of belonging in Japanese organizations.

Anita Mak, who hails from Hong Kong, "never dreamed" of being an academic or working in a foreign country, let alone becoming a professor of psychology and an intercultural researcher in Australia, but she has achieved all of the above. She recounts her experience as an international student and an immigrant, and how it has inspired her research and practice throughout her journey of crossing boundaries. Her desire to make sense of her personal encounters in Australia, and to help other cultural newcomers grapple with the challenges of navigating foreign social milieu, has led her to move away from her doctoral study to a new area of research, and a lifelong interest, in how to accelerate and maximize newcomers' culture learning to assist with their sociocultural and psychological adaptation.

As an expert on Chinese immigrants in Japan, Gracia Liu-Farrer shares her own initial feeling of otherness and marginality while working in a Japanese organization. The challenge is that she is not only a foreigner, but also the first faculty member in a new tenure-track system adopted by a globalizing university. Through an account of several incidents in her years as a tenure-track faculty member, she illustrates how the discordance between organizational logic and globalization has given her an alternative means (i.e other than discrimination) of understanding her experience as a non-Japanese faculty member. She also details how she gradually transformed herself, in her university and in her neighborhood community, to feel a sense of ownership as an active agent in the globalization of Japanese higher education and society.

David Sam chronicles his transformation, punctuated by critical incidents, from a self-described naïve graduate student to a professor of cross-cultural psychology and an executive council member of the largest international association in his field. He details how his culture shock after moving to Norway from Ghana 30 years ago jarred him into researching the experiences of international students in what was largely, at the time, a mono-ethnic nation. For him, living between cultures has created a unique space from which he can ask both personal and critical questions about the theoretical and philosophical underpinnings of psychology. Such inquiries have led to numerous, pivotally important, contributions to his field. In Chapter 5, he traces his development as a transnational, transcultural scholar—sharing with the

reader his front seat to a period during which he has observed, facilitated, and participated in Norway's recent infusion of ethnic diversity.

Next, Deepa Oommen divides her sojourn in the United States, from India, into two phases: life as a graduate student and then as a faculty member at her current institution. She shows how growing up in post-colonial India resulted in her internalizing a sense of inferiority about her skin color and professional competence. At first, this created perceptions of difference and feelings of disconnection with members of her host culture, but also inspired her to research mental distress and communicative behaviors in the context of cultural adaptation and conflict. Things began changing, however, when she was offered an assistant professorship in a different university where a system of social support was in place. Here, she was a valued organizational member—developing a firm sense of belonging to the organization along with strong feelings of competence and self-worth. She concludes with advice for scholars adapting to new cultural environments, especially graduate students who hope to take up jobs as regular faculty.

Regis Machart discusses the challenges of cultural identification among international foreign language lecturers (IFLL) in Malaysian universities. IFLLs very often inadvertently become de facto, first-hand cultural witnesses and experts or, in other words, tokens for the cultures or languages of their countries of origin. However, many IFLLs have rich experience in and connections with other cultures and do not necessarily perceive themselves as representatives of the culture they are assigned to. They also have to work around curricula and teaching materials that are often based on overgeneralizations and stereotypes of the target culture. To better understand the process of identification, Regis adopts the notion of "liquid modernity," drawing on his own experience as a scholar researching intercultural discourse and as a transnational academic who has been educated in France, worked in Egypt, and currently holds an academic position in a Malaysian university.

The issues of identity construction facing transnational scholars become more complex and multifaceted when one's home and host countries are enemies. This message is driven home in Maryam Borjian's chapter. Born and raised in Iran and currently working in an American university, she deconstructs her insider experience in the context of political, ideological, and religious struggles between the two nations. The central question she asks is what it means to be an Iranian professor in America, when the identity labels such as Iranian and Muslim are regarded "as an inferior other." She also vividly demonstrates the importance of balance, developing an affirmative hybrid identity and resilience in the face of adversity.

Brigitte Bönisch-Brednich applies theories of ritual and encounter to her life as an academic migrant, detailing her liminal position as a "familiar stranger" on campus. In the process, she lays bare the void between the lofty goals of the global knowledge economy and the individual agency required of academic migrants in fruitfully living mobile lives. She also recounts her own transition as a scholar and educator from a largely mono-ethnic region

of Germany to one who lives and works in New Zealand's bi-cultural higher educational system. Finally, she offers practical advice about how auto-ethnographic fieldwork can be utilized to actively improve transnational academics' self-awareness and satisfaction abroad, and how universities can better prepare themselves to successfully import scholarly excellence.

Jean-Marc Dewaele, an expert in applied linguistics and multilingualism, provides an account of his language learning, home-moving, and border-crossing experiences. He has many linguistic and cultural obstacles to overcome: first growing up as a bilingual speaker of Dutch and French in an officially Dutch-only monoglot environment, going to a school where the local Western Flemish was the language of the playground, finding his Dutch with a Western Flemish accent regarded as uncool in Brussels when he started a university degree there, navigating the tangled business of learning Spanish and theology in Northern Spain, and inferring "sociolects" in an academic institution operating in English. He demonstrates through his examples that in crossing boundaries, one not only accumulates different forms of capital (Bourdieu, 1986), but also brings one's previous linguistic experiences and social-cultural and political values into the present. The results are dynamic, unique multilingual behaviors and a hybrid self.

Linking the discussion on identity and linguistic adjustment, Zhu Hua examines the role of interactional practices in managing multiple identities. Born and educated mostly in China and currently working in a British institution, she often finds "simple" questions such as "Where you are from?" difficult to answer. This kind of talk, which she terms nationality and ethnicity talk (NET), along with names of references and address terms, constitute the focus of her chapter while she reflects on how she manages and negotiates many different aspects of identity in workplace interactions with reference to her research on interculturality. Through examples from her own experience, she argues that cultural memberships are not fixed and not always relevant to intercultural interactions, and that one can employ interactional resources to negotiate identity ascribed or constructed by others.

'"Pack lightly" and "be flexible" were the two pieces of advice given to Elise Ahn, a Korean-American, when she was leaving to take up a new post in Almaty, Kazakhstan. In her chapter, she uses the notions of *margins* and *centers* to reflect how she managed the kind of "ambient insecurity" associated with foreigners working abroad. One example of such strategies is developing contextually informed pragmatic competence. For example, how can one tell when an email request with "urgent" in its subject heading is, in fact, less urgent than it appears to be? Another is the understanding of where boundaries are located that differentiate: power; authority; group membership; and linguistic, academic, and ethnic legitimacy. She shares the incidents in which she was regarded as more Korean than American and when her English was perceived as less authentic than that of her White colleagues. What adds to the complexity of identity dynamics is the co-existence of three Korean ethnic groups in Almaty: Korean diaspora, which has a long history of

settlement and is linguistically Russified; new immigrants from South Korea; and Korean-Americans like her.

The conclusion aims to make sense of the rich complexities which emerge from our eleven auto-ethnographies. First, we consider the process of acculturation and the most significant factors in inclusion and exclusion of transnational academics in their workplaces and by local residents. Next, we explore the insights of our authors into how individuals and universities can effectively manage the challenges of being transnational academics. Third, we contemplate what can be learned about the relationship between work, life, and scholarship. Finally, we revisit our authors' approaches to researching culture and discuss what broader perspectives emerge and how our understandings of boundary crossing, literally or metaphorically, are enriched by pursuing multidisciplinary collaboration.

It is now time to begin our boundary crossing of geographic regions, academic disciplines, and realms of our authors' work and personal lives. We hope that you will experience and complete this journey as we have, intellectually stimulated and personally transformed.

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