
In this edited work, Managing across diverse cultures in East Asia: Issues and challenges in a changing globalized world, Malcolm Warner (who is a Professor and Fellow Emeritus, Wolfson College and Judge Business School, University of Cambridge, UK) and his contributors connect culture and management throughout the region. With the recent social, political, and economic changes East Asian countries have experienced, this book is timely in its exploration of issues that face one of the most important regions in the world. While the majority of the book’s content focuses on China, Japan and South Korea, other areas like Hong Kong SAR, Macao and Taiwan are included in the discussion as well.

The complexities of East Asia warrant consideration for international management scholars and practitioners. The goals of the work include showcasing and exploring the rise of East Asia by updating readers’ knowledge and understanding about its achievements and challenges.

The book is divided into five parts: Introduction, Themes, Societal case studies, Issues and Challenges in East Asian management and the Future and Conclusions. The well-written introduction provides the context for the work. It highlights the interrelationships between the region’s most dominant force, China [with a fifth of the world’s population], and its neighboring countries. Warner discusses the shift in economic power that has occurred, moving from the West to the East. As have a number of other scholars, Warner acknowledges that the Western world now must include the Eastern world as the latter’s global economic influence expands. As the two worlds interact, the concepts of convergence and divergence are mentioned. Convergence, occurring when managerial ideas are transmitted from developed, industrial societies to emerging, indigenous societies; and Divergence, happening when cultures retain their own national characteristics are mentioned throughout the work as contributors consider the complex cultural histories and present situations of the respective countries.

One would be remiss not to include Confucianism in the conversation surrounding East Asia; however, Warner and his colleagues caution solely considering the philosophy that has influenced the region for centuries. At the beginning of each section of the work, a Confucian quote is provided that connects with that section’s content. For instance, in Part IV: Issues and challenges in East Asian management, the quote: "Riches and honours are what [people] desire. If [they] cannot be obtained in a proper way, they should not be held" (p. 151) introduces the section and speaks to the ethics of management practices.

Warner guides the reader by providing a list of questions that correspond to each section of the book, including questions such as, “What are the underpinning influences at the macro (-economy) level, as well as the micro (-firm) level, which are related to the economy, culture and management in these economies?” and “How may we evaluate positive and negative aspects of traditional value-systems, as well as their impact on management thinking and behavior in East Asia?” (p. 7). These questions, among others, give the reader an idea of the overall content of the book.

In Part II: Themes, contributors provide overviews of the East Asian economy (chapter 2), culture (chapter 3) and management (chapter 4). Although East Asia was impacted by financial crises between 2007 and...
managed across diverse cultures in East Asia, although not without minor shortcomings, provides a useful context for addressing issues and challenges in the region. The world is changing and these changes are relevant to East Asian countries. The work seamlessly transitions from providing an overview of East Asia to the management of the region. The world is changing and these changes are relevant to East Asian countries. The work seamlessly transitions from providing an overview of East Asia to specific case studies and challenges to future directions. Both MBA students as well as academic readers will, hopefully, walk away with a well-rounded understanding of East Asia socially, politically, economically and culturally, which all have implications for international management. They may also gain a true sense of why
China matters to the region and to the world. As one of the BRICS nations, its ascendance is undeniable and influential. As with any comprehensive work, this book cannot cover everything and readers might be interested in more details, in more diverse forms, nonetheless, it serves as an up-to-date foundation for future work on the region.

Candice Matthews,
The George Washington University (GWU)
Washington DC 20052
USA
E-mail: cmatthew@gwmail.gwu.edu.