



Small Countries, Big Lessons: Governance and the Rise of East Asia

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Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, Vol. 559, The
Changing Educational Quality of the Workforce. (Sep., 1998), pp. 203-204.

Stable URL:

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WILLIAMS, VERNON J., JR. 1996. *Rethinking Race: Franz Boas and His Contemporaries*. Pp. ix, 152. Lexington: University Press of Kentucky. \$34.95. Paperbound, \$15.95.

Recently, President Clinton called on the American people to engage in a serious and lengthy examination and dialogue on race relations in the United States. This text could be a valuable component of that dialogue.

Williams correctly points out that for much of the twentieth century the subject of race has been in the academic purview of social scientists and intellectual historians, many of whom were caught in a web of cultural and historical racial bias. Others, such as Franz Boas, attempted to extricate some of the racial-determinist assumptions of the prevailing social sciences.

Commonly referred to as the father of modern American anthropology, Boas was no philosophical egalitarian. Yet his empirical research allowed him, at least partially, to escape being a prisoner of his times. Certainly he provided the American conscience with a scientific antiracist foundation.

Most intriguing in this work is Williams's demonstration of the impact that Boas had on African American intellectuals, including Booker T. Washington, W.E.B. DuBois, Carter G. Woodson, and others. Also of note are the substantive chapters on the thought of Washington, DuBois, and Robert Ezra Park. Williams enlightens the reader as to the gulf that still remains between the myths that are utilized to support claims of African American racial inferiority (whether in academic circles or in our popular culture) and the true complexity of this topic as revealed by scholars like Franz Boas. Thus the current, or at least pending, dialogue would be served extraordinarily well by the inclusion of this work.

In regards to structure and style, I would give the text high marks for clarity and substance. The work flows smoothly, although some segues seem a bit abrupt. The appendix on ecumenical myth history is fascinating; the bibliography is first-rate.

In conclusion, I would imagine that the reader of this book would be best served if he or she had some prior knowledge of African American historiography or sociological research in this subfield. Without this background, a reader might be hard-pressed to appreciate fully Williams's reference to an extensive list of theories on race and race relations.

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ECONOMICS

ROOT, HILTON L. 1996. *Small Countries, Big Lessons: Governance and the Rise of East Asia*. Pp. xxi, 246. New York: Oxford University Press. \$19.95.

This slim volume seeks the sources of East and Southeast Asia's spectacular economic success over the last several decades. Hilton Root, senior research fellow at the Hoover Institution working under the sponsorship of the Asian Development Bank, argues that the key to riding the international market to higher rates of growth and positive social development is to be found in state behavior. Those that succeed promote bureaucratic competence and incorruptibility, apply consistent, predictable legal and administrative rules of the economic game, develop lines of communication between the state and important economic sectors, and make decision makers somehow accountable. Sketches of Korea, Taiwan,

Singapore, Hong Kong, Malaysia, Indonesia, and the Philippines show the variations on this theme.

Root sees his main target as the overweening faith in the free market that blinds its advocates to the importance of getting governance right in the first place if those markets are to work. He disagrees with their insistence on democracy and state nonintervention, and instead makes the case that authoritarian regimes can open and manage markets at least as well as democratic ones and that some degree of state intervention is essential to launching and sustaining market-driven growth. If there is one consistent variable, it is, Root contends, not democracy or nonintervention but social equality, which figures in the Asian cases as both a precondition and an outcome of successful economic strategies.

Those with some knowledge of the region will wonder how Root would fit China and Vietnam into the generalizations offered here. Both have climbed into the high-growth range in the face of formidable obstacles and under the control of an intrusive Communist party. Moreover, while Root is right to draw attention to the political dimensions of development, he shies away from probing more deeply—into the stubborn societal and cultural patterns and the subtle influence of historical experience that may render the lessons drawn here less uniform and universally applicable. The most successful cases with the brightest outlook seem to have an ethnically or culturally homogeneous population where a consensus on economic goals most easily emerges. Those cases also operate under the long shadow of Confucius and the constellation of values associated with him. South Asia, sub-Saharan Africa, and Latin America may, as Root contends, need to practice market-friendly governance, but before that is possible they may need to find a way to

address something much tougher—deep societal divisions and sturdy systems of class predation.

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SAPPINGTON, DAVID E. M. and DENNIS L. WEISMAN. 1996. *Designing Incentive Regulation for the Telecommunications Industry*. Pp. xvi, 388. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press; Washington, DC: AEI Press. No price.

This book is part of the American Enterprise Institute's new Studies in Telecommunications Deregulation series. This series of books covers a wide range of important topics in the rapidly changing telecommunications industry, and they are written to be accessible to a wide range of readers outside of the industry, particularly policymakers, public officials, and other members of the interested public. This book by Sappington and Weisman will surely stand as one of the more thoughtful and academically rigorous, yet still easily accessible, volumes in the series.

Sappington and Weisman have written about a fundamental change that has taken place in the regulation of telecommunications, both at the Federal Communications Commission for the regulation of interstate telephone service, and at state public service commissions for the regulation of local and in-state telephone service. Over the past few years, there has been a major shift away from the traditional regulation of profits, accomplished by the regulation of costs and a fair rate of return on investment, and to incentive or price regulation, which focuses on the prices that customers must pay for telephone service. This regulatory change has been