

## FOREWORD

We are living in an age of omnipresent globalization, but we can only understand this very complex phenomenon by breaking it down into a step-by-step process. Ironically, as this process moves forward there is a corresponding increase in regional economic activities. Among the global strategies of multinational corporations, for instance, we find self-contained regional production networks. Consequently, globalization not only means a global convolution of economies, but also a spatial concentration of economic activity. Clusters of specific economic activities that arise within an international division of labour take on important functions for production and trading in a global context. The editors of this book, René Haak and Dennis S. Tachiki, have compiled research that addresses these seemingly contradictory forces.

By focusing on East Asia they present a case study on the activities of multinational corporations (MNCs) on a regional level. All through the 1990s and from the beginning of the new century East Asia has undergone numerous structural changes that distinguish it from other regions of the world. The World Bank study on the “East Asian Miracle” underscores good macro-economic planning, export-oriented policies, and other structural factors in the economic rise of the region. Considering the global economic importance of Japan and other East Asian countries, some crucial questions arise: what are the corporate strategies in the different and sometimes risky national markets in the region? What changes in the MNC strategies can be seen in this important region? In which directions are Japanese, American, East Asian and European enterprises moving in this dynamic business region in the global economy?

To answer these questions, the contributors to this volume on “Regional Strategies in a Global Economy – Multinational Corporations in East Asia” take a closer look at how structural features of the East Asia economy affect the corporate and business strategies of MNCs. The editors draw particular attention to the global-regional nexus, subregional strategies, technology transfer, and human resource management of MNCs in East Asia based on the latest research by European, Australian and Japanese scholars. Bringing together scholars from all over the world to address issues and close gaps in social science and humanities research is a major function of the German Institute for Japanese Studies (DIJ) in Tōkyō.

Founded in 1988, it is one of Germany’s foreign research institutes and is concerned with research on contemporary Japan. The Institute repre-

sents an awareness in Germany of the need to obtain a better understanding of Asia and, in particular, Japan. To this end, the DIJ conducts research in the fields of the humanities, the social sciences and the economy of modern Japan, as well as in the area of Japanese-German relations ([www.dijtokyo.org](http://www.dijtokyo.org)). In July 2002, the DIJ organized, in co-operation with Tamagawa University, Tōkyō, a research project entitled “Regional Strategies in a Global Economy – Multinational Corporations in East Asia”. The results of this joint effort are presented in this volume. The majority of contributions are based on empirical research in East Asia.

Special thanks are due to Dennis S. Tachiki, former Senior Researcher at the Fujitsu Research Institute, now Professor on the Faculty of Business Administration at Tamagawa University, Tōkyō, and René Haak, Deputy Director and Head of the Business and Economics Section of the German Institute for Japanese Studies who conceived the original idea for this book and who have efficiently overseen the editing. This book will become a useful, if not an essential, tool for students, scholars and managers interested in East Asia.

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