

Preface

Since the end of the Cold War and, to a lesser extent, even a long time before, a series of global and regional economic issues have been puzzling both theorists and practitioners. They include such important problems as: Why have nations with same or similar natural endowments and political contexts had so different economic performances? Why have trade and economic cooperation been efficient between some nations but more and more difficult between the others? These issues are very crucial to contemporary policymakers and practitioners, and many nice theories have been constructed in order to assess them. Unfortunately, it is argued that most existing theories cannot be used to deal with the above issues satisfactorily.

This book sets out to present an introduction to the analysis of intercultural economic issues that could be misinterpreted by existing theories. It identifies various cultural conditions under which economic policies can (or cannot) be optimized and/or optimally implemented during the process of economic globalization. Another target of this book is to develop new methods and techniques by which to improve the efficiency of intercultural trade and economic cooperation.

This book is an updated excerpt of my larger research project on intercultural economics. The complete version of this research can be found in the book entitled *Intercultural Economic Analysis—Theory and Method* (Springer New York, 2009). Its on-line version can be previewed at the publisher's website:

<http://www.springerlink.com/content/978-1-4419-0848-3>

I have benefited from many experts and reviewers. They are Chalongsob Sussangkarn (Thailand Development Research Institute and EADN Coordinator), Chia Siow Yue (Singapore Institute for International Affairs), Shigeyuki Abe (Doshisha University), Eui-Gak Hwang (Korea University), David Lim (Griffith University), Steven Pressman (Monmouth University), Ammar Siamwalla (Thailand Development Research Institute), Josef T. Yap (Philippines Institute for Development Studies), Zhang Yunling (Chinese Academy of Social Sciences) as well as a number of anonymous reviewers.

Publishing with Springer has definitely become an integral part of my on-going research on intercultural economics. I have benefited from the innovative jobs done by editors, reviewers and readers at Springer's Beijing, Heidelberg and New York offices during the period when the manuscript was prepared and revised. Toby Chai (Publishing Editor), Barbara Fess (Editor of Economics and Business) and Jon Gurstelle (Senior Editor of Economics and Policy) merit particular mention. Without their help and encouragement, this project could not have been accomplished—at least not in its present form. But all views, drawbacks and errors in this book certainly are mine.

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