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# 1 Global Human Resource Development

## Landscaping the Anatomy of An Evolving Field

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Alma M. McCarthy and  
Michael J. Morley*

### INTRODUCTION AND THE ORIGIN OF THE VOLUME

This volume is the culmination of a substantial cooperative effort by a global team of individuals with whom we have had the pleasure of collaborating with over the past several years. As co-editors, we have had the good fortune to have a sustained and mutually rewarding research collaboration stretching back over a considerable number of years. This volume is vested partly in this historical engagement, along with an on-going professional interest in the evolving field of human resource development from a comparative and cross-cultural perspective.

Beyond our own immediate academic relationship, we have also had the good fortune to encounter and connect with all of the chapter contributors, either individually or as an editorial team, as part of our own academic journeys over several years. In so doing, we became enthusiastic about the possibility and the prospect of creating a platform for the gathering and articulating of a collective set of ideas that underscore the field of human resource development (HRD) from a comparative perspective. In particular, we were excited about the prospect of augmenting our “Western” thinking with insights and lessons from emerging economies and territories previously underrepresented in the HRD literature but which offered the prospect of providing fresh insights on the field of HRD and its evolving nature.

That said, our initial collective enthusiasm inevitably gave way to periods of doubt about our enterprise, most likely because there is something slightly unnerving about the preparation of a volume, no matter what the topic, worthy of being labeled a “global perspective”. It has the connotation of seeking to provide an all-encompassing, grand view vested in a vision perhaps somehow broader than that offered by others and possessed of a deeper insight on each quarter and territory that the volume focuses on. In light of this, it is important at the very outset to set the record straight on this front regarding the genesis of this volume and our underlying motivation for

preparing it. Far from starting from the perspective that we as an editorial team were somehow possessed of more privileged insight than others, rather the opposite point of departure was the order of the day and served as our basic motivation. We were gradually becoming aware of gaps in our knowledge of the basic elemental building blocks of HRD in many territories that were on a significant developmental trajectory, territories that are marked by distinct institutional and cultural tenets, and that have witnessed a growth in indigenous enterprise along with emerging as important locations for foreign direct investment. This dearth of knowledge, insights, and research in the extant literature on many of these locations and territories persuaded us of the importance of a volume which might garner diverse contextual insights on HRD from a range of countries and territories, many of which were historically underrepresented in the existing literature, but all of which offered the prospect of generating insights on unique idiosyncratic elements governing the HRD system in different territories and countries. These insights, which of necessity might span the national level, along with organizational-level policy, practice, and preferred approaches could, we felt, when set opposite each other, allow the reader to judge what they would consider to be elements of commonality and difference at play in each territory and system, elements of stability and change in response to internal or external forces, along with elements of adaptation and transition, depending on the genesis of the forces for change and the manner in which HRD and institutional systems change being brought about.

Adopting this basic comparative approach as the architecture for the volume would, we felt, have a number of advantages. First, it would allow for a basic landscaping of regions and territories, some documented in the HRD literature heretofore, but many that are also undergoing deep change, such as, for example, in the major emerging markets, but which remain significantly underrepresented in the literature, relative to their counterparts in Western developed economies. Akbar (2006) highlights that, from an academic perspective, the emerging markets, as a heterogeneous group of societies, offer an important testing ground for our existing theories, models, and concepts. They also represent a potential source of new theories and new approaches, which call into question the value and sustainability of simply imposing Western approaches and solutions in these territories (Horwitz, Budhwar, and Morley, 2015). The HRD literature has to date been very USA and Euro centric. Second, allied to this, we were persuaded by the view that such dynamic contexts provided an important opportunity for scholars not just to observe the nature and shape of the HRD system in the territory being examined but also to observe whether and how core tenets of HRD are unfolding as part of the broader developmental trajectory being experienced by that location. Third, it would, we felt, afford us the opportunity to at least speculate as to the antecedents of similarities and differences between territories and allow the reader to make a judgment about the explanatory power of different factors at different levels of analysis as the likely root

source of differences or indeed similarities. Fourth, implicitly or otherwise, the exercise would also allow for a further explication of the convergence thesis found in the organization and management literatures (see for example, McGaughey and DeCieri, 1999; Guillén, 2001; Brewster et al., 2004; Mayrhofer et al., 2011) in terms of whether HRD systems were becoming more similar as a result of globalization or indeed remaining different and embedded in distinct institutional, socio-cultural, economic, and labor market idiosyncratic elements. Finally, given that much of the effort to date has been focused on more micro- or meso-level perspectives on the field, we set ourselves the task of establishing a more macro, regio-comparative perspective as our initial point of departure for the book, although in addition to such regional clusters forming the comparative architecture of the majority of the chapter contributions, on occasion we also do include single country accounts of the prevailing national HRD system. We do so on the basis of the degree of dynamism characterizing those countries and the inherent lessons for other countries and territories that may be garnered from a deeper contextual account of their particular experience.

Of necessity, the ground that we cover is diverse and variable, covering HRD as a field of policy and practice and crossing different levels of analysis. Importantly though, despite the breadth of our endeavor, in as much as is practicable when commissioning chapters that have an inherent contextualism underlying their preparation, we sought to ensure that each chapter had a similar basic structure. Here we invited authors to provide an account of the historical, political, economic, institutional, social, and cultural context of the territory under consideration. This was followed by an outline of the general vocational and educational base for HRD, including consideration of key actors, such as government and government agencies, employer bodies, labor unions, nongovernmental agencies, etc., in addition to the legislative and policy context within the territory, including how regulated, integrated, and coherent the HRD system is. We also encouraged contributors to provide an account of HRD systems and practices at the organizational level. In the situation where the chapter was covering a number of countries, we asked for a discussion of the strengths and weaknesses of HRD in that region, along with similarities and differences between countries within the region. Finally, we encouraged authors to speculate about potential future challenges that HRD was likely to encounter in that territory, region, or country. Importantly, given the varying conceptualizations of HRD across the diverse territories covered, along with significant variations both in the level of maturity of the field along with the actual research base from a scientific point of view that authors in each territory could utilize, we had of course to allow a degree of flexibility on how the overall chapter framework was interpreted and developed in order to ensure that the authors were afforded the opportunity to provide coverage of contextually important elements.

In the remainder of this overarching chapter, we briefly introduce the field of HRD, we call attention to its evolving nature, its growth as a field

of investigation, and we discuss several contiguous themes underscoring the development and promulgation of a more global understanding of HRD. First, we call attention to the importance of bringing certainty to the research trajectory or route that one embarks on and that serves to position the line of inquiry one pursues. Allied to this, we highlight the importance of the overarching paradigm or archetype guiding the research effort and the ongoing debate on convergence and divergence. We also call attention to emerging patterns of global mobility, talent development, and human capital accumulation as potential drivers of fresh conceptualizations and a novel discourse in HRD. Additionally, we point to the reemergence of the social role of HRD, an emphasis that had partially waned in the field in recent years in favor of a more rational economic perspective. Finally, we provide an introduction to each of the contributions in the volume.

## HRD AS AN ACADEMIC FIELD

McGuire (2014) in explicating the origins of the field proposes that HRD has three major concerns: the development and enhancement of human potential, the enhancement of organizational effectiveness, and overall societal development. The combination of these concerns emphasizes the multidisciplinary nature of HRD (Swanson and Holton, 2001; Chalofsky, 2004) and despite variations in emphases in early scholarly contributions from different countries, these three basic tenets of the field have been largely consistent. Heretofore, scholarship has been most significantly influenced by US and UK discourse, with European and Asian contributions being more visible in recent times. Such traditions have inevitably led to variations in how HRD is conceptualized, what level of analysis is emphasized, the nature of whom it is it serves and whether HRD is good for organizations and society. Early writings in the US in particular (e.g., Nadler 1970; Knowles, 1998) proposed a conceptualization of HRD focused on individual development and betterment with a strong emphasis on education as an instrument toward achieving those outcomes. In contrast, a retrospective examination of the origins of the field of HRD in the UK yields an account vested in the role and value of training to the primacy of learning as an underlying process of HRD (Tjepkema, Stewart, Sambrook, Mulder, and Schwerens, 2002). A particularly strong feature of European approaches is their espousal of humanistic and philosophically rooted notions of HRD (Kenney, Donnelly and Reid, 1979) and the use of training to develop the job skills required to achieve economic growth. This early emphasis was to eventually culminate in the opening of a new line of inquiry on the strategic value and import of a best practice approach to HRD (Garavan, 1991). Subsequent European contributions were to emphasize a composite blend of individual, organizational, and national systems concerns.

In the early writings, the primary focus was on the individual. This level of analysis was reflected in writings about motivation to learn, learner readiness, personal development, and skills development. This subsequently shifted to an organizational level of analysis with an emphasis on the business contribution of HRD and in particular the performance contribution. More laterally, community, national, and societal concerns have been emphasized (Garavan, McGuire, and O'Donnell, 2004). There has also been a significant evolution in the field in recent years toward examining different systemic approaches to HRD and engaging in a discourse on preferred national models and approaches (Cho and McLean, 2004), although it is of relatively recent vintage. Allied to this, there is the debate on globalization as a driving force for the spread of ideas and practices, which, as a phenomenon, has acted as a trajectory for the promotion of international and global HRD as a field of inquiry (Wang and McLean, 2007; Garavan and Carbery, 2012). Arising from the unique set of conditions that gave rise to the recent global financial crisis, a line of inquiry has commenced on whether HRD has indeed contributed to its emergence (MacKenzie, Garavan, and Carbery, 2012), and regardless of what we conclude on that matter, there are those who suggest that the crisis has resulted in a shift in emphasis in the field whereby it has disengaged from its earlier roots in humanistic social science to a new found overemphasis on economic pressures and concerns (Ardichvili, 2013). Finally, providing evidence of the growing maturity of the field is the emergence of critical perspectives on HRD (Fenwick, 2005; Lawless, Sambrook, and Stewart, 2012; Fenwick, 2013). These critical perspectives question the purpose of HRD, its underpinning ideologies, its representationalist organization perspectives, and its humanistic assumptions. They suggest that there is an inherent tension between the needs of individuals and organizations. The emergence of critical perspectives is a signal that the field has reached a point of maturity whereby it can engage with its foundations, assumptions, and practices in a critical way.

## **GLOBAL HRD AS AN EMERGING FIELD OF INVESTIGATION**

As noted above, global perspectives, vested in more macro comparative approaches to HRD are less common, although growing in popularity. The literature contains a small number of contributions that take as their starting point the 'global' view of HRD through the lens of globalization and internationalization (Garavan and Carbery, 2012; Kim and McLean, 2012). There are several reasons underscoring the emergence of a global perspective on HRD. Morley (2007) describes three distinct, but overlapping, research trajectories that are helpful to positioning lines of inquiry in management research that span national boundaries, namely an

international, a comparative, and a cross-cultural trajectory, a classification that has been utilized to understand the construct of global HRD (Garavan and Carbery, 2012). In this approach, the concept of 'trajectory' is used to denote the existence of a distinctive line of inquiry. This distinctiveness may be observed both in terms of differing points of departure in the original research effort and consequently unique developmental paths for the major themes investigated.

It is suggested that *international* can be conceptualized as a field of inquiry dedicated to charting the anatomy of practice in the multinational corporation (MNC) and the unearthing of the strategies, systems, and practices pursued in the context of internationalization. The overlapping *comparative* trajectory, it is suggested, shows a preference for exploring the context, systems and content, and national patterns as a result of the distinctive developmental paths of different countries and their subsequently idiosyncratic institutional and economic regimes. A long-established tradition, it is based on the premise that many relevant insights into organizational processes and systems in a global era will come from studying them in a comparative context (Poole, 1993; Strauss, 1998; Evans et al., 2002). New locations, especially in the emerging markets that are on a significant development trajectory through the securing of significant foreign direct investments, are now proving fertile ground for generating insights in this comparative tradition. Within this comparative trajectory in the HRD field, there is a focus on national systems elements (Cho and McLean, 2002) as a basis for legitimate comparison and, as indicated earlier, whereas the focus until relatively recently has largely been on economically successful and developed economies, there is a growing emphasis in recent years on emerging economies as a testing ground for existing concepts or theories or indeed as a source of new theories (Horwitz et al., 2015). The final trajectory, labeled as *cross cultural*, is conceived of as a research tradition dedicated to explicating tenets of national culture as the dominant paradigm for conditioning what is acceptable organizational practice in that socio-cultural context. In this genre, significant explanatory power is accorded to tenets of societal culture in accounting for similarities and differences in the conceptualization and practice of management. Much of the empirical effort in this trajectory has been focused on the issue of dimensionalizing these cultural tenets and replicating inquiry in an array of contexts. And, as with the other trajectories outlined earlier, the range of contexts is continuously expanding with the relationship-rich cultures in the emerging markets once again proving especially fruitful locations for opening up new lines of inquiry (Akbar, 2006; Gammeltoft, et al., 2010; Horwitz, et al., 2015).

Against the backdrop of these distinct trajectories, which may prove instructive in determining and pursuing a research agenda within the field, we also want to summarily present a number of additional background themes that may help in explicating the contemporary nature of the field of HRD. First, there is the fundamental question of the appropriate paradigm

necessary to conceptualize and understand the field. Mayrhofer et al. (2000), among others, identify two paradigms, namely a universalist and a contextual paradigm, that are a mainstay of the human resources management (HRM) field and which can be considered relevant to the HRD field, although they have received considerably less attention in the latter domain. The universalist paradigm dominant in theorizing in the US, but also widely used in other countries, is essentially, they argue, a nomothetic approach using evidence to test generalizations of an abstract character. Research conducted within this perspective contributes significantly to theory development. The contextual paradigm, Mayrhofer et al. argue, stands in contrast and offers an alternative perspective that is essentially idiographic in nature. It stresses the importance of understanding what is contextually unique in explaining and understanding phenomena under investigation. In the context of HRD, this will involve understanding what is different between and within HRD systems and practices in various contexts and understanding the antecedents of those differences in practices.

Second, the debate on convergence and divergence is relevant (McGaughey and DeCieri, 1999; Woodall, 2005). The questions of whether HRD globally is subject to convergence or ongoing and enduring divergence provides an important backdrop to debates on the evolving nature of the field and in particular notions of global HRD. Convergence-divergence is a well-established debate in the management literature, although it has not crossed over to the extent that one may expect to HRD. Those who argue for convergence propose that the effects of increasing internationalization in general will eventually give rise to an increasing similarity of systems, approaches, and practices. At the organization level, this will be manifest in a common set of strategic requirements resulting in a convergence of approaches regardless of cultural or national institutional differences (McGaughey and DeCieri, 1999; Mayrhofer et al., 2011). The logic of this argument is that the impact of the national origin on HRD practices will progressively decline due to globalization and lead to more generic, standardized HRD practices, irrespective of the cultural and institutional context. Divergence theorists reject the notion of convergence. They argue that national, institutional, cultural, and in some cases regional contexts are slow to change, because they have their foundations in deep-seated beliefs and value systems and are subject to ongoing ideational legacies. The consequence for HRD is that practices within different countries will have unique, idiosyncratic elements.

A third cross-cutting theme that has relevance in explaining the emergence of a global HRD perspective can be found in debates on global mobility and global talent management (Kim and McLean, 2012; Cascio, 2014). Increasingly, labor markets are viewed as global in nature and organizations, irrespective of their geographic location, need access to a skilled workforce and talent pool (Morley et al., 2015). The emergence of global labor markets combined with significant shifts in global mobility resulted in many emerging and developed economies striving to ensure that they have



the appropriate mix of skills in their national talent pool. This theme has its antecedents in trends such as shifting patterns of foreign direct investment; growing international mobility and increasing workforce flux; an increased emphasis on global talent sourcing, development, and utilization; the development of global competencies and mind-sets; and the importance of international human capital. Global HRD, therefore, plays a key role in the development of cross-cultural competencies, diverse cognitive perspectives to facilitate decision making in different cultural contexts, and specialized knowledge about international markets (Kim, Pathak, and Werner, 2015). A well-developed talent pool helps organizations to operate in different time zones and achieve international competitiveness.

A fourth cross-cutting theme of particular relevance here concerns the reemergence of the social role of HRD. This theme has reemerged as a response to commentators who have argued that HRD has departed from its humanistic and developmental focus. The argument goes that HRD has a major role to play in strengthening state institutions, dealing with major social problems such as poverty, the strengthening of anticorruption regimes, capacity building, and enhancing the work of nongovernmental organizations (Berman, 2015). HRD is increasingly viewed as a set of practices that can benefit society as a whole (Kania and Kramer, 2011); facilitate large-scale social change through bringing together multiple social actors; and prevent, reduce, and alleviate poverty. Global HRD in this context is a fundamentally positive phenomenon that generates benefits for society.

## **INTRODUCING THE CONTRIBUTIONS IN THIS VOLUME**

We landscape the nature and state of human resource development from a regio-comparative perspective. Such a perspective as our basic platform for analysis, we are conscious that several trade-offs relating to breadth and depth had to be made in pursuing this approach. There is little doubt that a within-country systems perspective with a sharp focus on national HRD would clearly have afforded more treatment of actors, interactions, and developments within the context of the country or system under examination. There is a long history within business and social science literature of this country comparative perspective, which “shows a preference for exploring the landscape, contours and national patterns of management as a result of the distinctive developmental paths of different countries and their subsequently idiosyncratic institutional and economic regimes” (Morley, Heraty, and Michailova, 2009: 5). On this occasion, we opt not for this well-trodden path as the point of departure of our analysis, but rather we opt for a regio-comparative perspective, realizing that adopting this approach is underscored by trading ‘within-systems’ depth for ‘across-systems’ scope and coverage. Importantly, however, our regional perspective also affords us the opportunity to cast particular light on different aspects

of HRD less emphasized in scholarship heretofore. In particular, it allows for the calling of attention to the unique characteristics of regions, the emergence of clusters of countries with similar approaches to HRD, and the development of a cross-regional perspective on HRD. Regio-comparative perspectives are also valuable in developing theory about HRD that takes a broader, societally embedded approach and the development of new theories and models of HRD using inductive approaches that are cognizant of institutional and sociopolitical contexts and relationships.

Each of the chapters that follow is presented as a contextual account that may be read individually in order to provide insights into developments in the territory under study or comparatively in order to elucidate commonalities and differences between territories in a particular region or indeed more globally in order to judge the extent of globalization and its shaping influence on HRD from a policy and practice perspective.

## SECTION 1: HRD IN ASIA AND OCEANIA

Turning to the chapter contributions, our first set of five chapters is focused on providing contextual insights from Asia and Oceania, along with the significant impact of state of development and dynamic pressures on the emergence and sedimentation of the HRD system.

In the chapter on Australia and New Zealand, McGraw and Kramar call attention to the parallel development of HRD and the economic and social development of both countries. They highlight the emergence of an Australasian HRD system, which is closely connected to underlying institutional processes, including social, political, and economic concerns. In both countries, they observe a profound historical shift from state models based on government invention to a more liberal, economic model.

The East Asia chapter by Rasdi and Ismail, focusing on Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan, notes the unifying impact of a strong foundation of human development and resultant high growth. Although late developers as capitalist economies, they note that they represent among the first Asian success stories in terms of their economic development. An important unifying theme in these countries is their collective commitment to investment in human capital and the expansion in vocational education and training.

The chapter on South Asia, including India, by Pandey, Hewapathirana, and Pestonjee focuses on a group of countries that are significantly less developed than their Asian Tiger economies and are characterized by political uncertainty, poor governance, poor investment climate, and underlying poverty and inequality. Against this backdrop, the authors argue that HRD is multifaceted and multilayered and heavily dependent on the state of economic development. They note that whereas they share many similarities, they also display unique features, which must be appreciated as part of the conceptualization of HRD.

In our chapter on China and North Korea, Sun and Wang provide a unique insight into contrasting economies in vastly different stages of their transition to more market-oriented socialist economies. While China has featured significantly in recent literatures in HRD, the insights here on North Korea and the misinterpretations of elements of its development in Western literature are especially valuable. They note that both countries have adopted similar institutional policies in developing their human resources (framed as *hukou* in China and *songbun* in North Korea) whereby development and career choices are not governed by personal decision making but by state regulation and intervention.

The contribution on Malaysia and Singapore by Ismail and Rasdi highlights the role of HRD in achieving and sustaining a growth trajectory. In this way, HRD has been used as a conduit to transformation, something that was recognized early in the development of these economies. The chapter also calls attention to the central role of government in planning education and investment in HRD, along with strong leadership and administration of HRD institutions. They also note that both countries have realized that the rich cultural context that pertains must be given expression to in the conceptualization of HRD in order to ensure its legitimacy.

## SECTION 2: HRD IN AFRICA AND THE MIDDLE EAST

In the next section, we turn to Africa and the Middle East. Here we offer three chapters that call attention to the role of deep cultural traditions, strongly held religious beliefs, and a distinctly localized and unique conceptualization of HRD, often arising from the preponderance of family-owned enterprises and the significance of network relationships.

The chapter on sub-Saharan Africa by Nafukho and Muyia locates HRD within the broader debate on nation building and the important role of education and training as fundamental drivers of social, economic, and health development. Capacity building is a central leitmotif in this chapter. Nafukho and Muyia note the diversity of the region under consideration and move to focus on the Southern African Development Community Region in order to illuminate the role of HRD in enhancing employment and labor mobility, education and skills development, science and innovation, and children and youth. In this way, they underscore the significant social role of HRD.

The second chapter in this section stands in contrast to the other two contributions within the North Africa and Middle East section. In their treatise of the Middle East, Alhejji and Garavan focus on six countries that are part of the Gulf Cooperation Council, which acts as a unique supranational-shaping influence on country-level developments. In combination, these countries rely heavily on natural resources and the use of

a largely expatriate talent pool to sustain growth and development. Their significant youthful population and high unemployment among the youth, especially among females, serve as particular challenges for the relative HRD systems.

Our final chapter in this section landscapes HRD in North Africa with a focus on Algeria, Morocco, and Tunisia. Here Alhejji and Garavan note that whereas these countries have different political systems, they are unified by a relatively underdeveloped HRD system, a youthful population, significant gender imbalances in society and the workplace, the predominance of Islamic law, and the power of tribes. They share a highly centralized approach to the management of the HRD system. Importantly, these countries have acted as hosts for foreign direct investment from outside multinationals, but the majority of enterprises are family-owned enterprises, which results in a significant role for networks and personal relationships as inputs to understanding HRD.

### SECTION 3: HRD IN THE AMERICAS

Turning to the Americas, we offer insights on Canada and the USA, Latin America, and Brazil.

The chapter on the USA and Canada by McLean and Budhwani explores how each of these countries differs in the HRD domain, even though they share one of the longest international borders in the world. Often conceived of as the cradle of the discipline of HRD, the influence of the US system on the Canadian system is less than might be expected. McLean and Budhwani note particular differences in the role of stakeholders. For example, in Canada, the strong role of unions is noted, the variations between provinces is highlighted, and the unifying role of adult education in developing the profession of HRD is emphasized. Conversely, in the US context, they call attention to the role of HRD specific programs as drivers of the growth of the profession, as well as the prominent role of individuals investing in their own HRD or indeed corporate universities in taking responsibility and in funding HRD activity.

Our chapter on Latin America by Waight, Rangel Delgado, and Lopez commences by calling attention to key influences on HRD in Latin America, such as inequality, political ideologies, divergent economic policies, and major social challenges. The vocational and technical education system, often the backbone of national HRD initiatives, remains fragmented and underfunded. They also highlight the shaping influence of culture and heritage in conceptualizations of HRD. Here relationships, status, hierarchy, and religion are all considered important. At the political level, they highlight the short-termism of HRD policy making as a result of political instability.

Beyond the comparative analysis of Latin America, we also have a specific chapter focused on developments in Brazil by Leitão Azevedo, Ardichvili, Casa Nova, and Cornacchione. They note that whereas it has similarities and differences with its Latin American neighbors, the HRD system does have particularly unique elements vested in its language, its racial diversity, its postcolonial status, and its very significant recent economic trajectory. Despite its power as a major economic entity, its low level of education attainment may act as a constraint on its future development. Its approach to HRD is dominated by a unique approach to getting things done referred to as *jeitinho*. The case of Brazil serves as an example of a relationship-rich culture.

#### **SECTION 4: HRD IN CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE, RUSSIA AND THE FORMER SOVIET UNION**

Our analysis of developments in Central and Eastern Europe (CEE), Russia and the former Soviet Union proceeds in two chapters. One chapter focuses on Central and Eastern Europe, with an emphasis on the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia, and Slovenia. The second chapter focuses on Russia and the former Soviet Union. One area that has recently received increasing attention covers the ex-communist states of Central and Eastern Europe; the “transition economies” (Stark and Bruszt, 1998; Morley et al., 2009). Whereas it is clear what they are transitioning from, it is not clear exactly what they are transitioning to or whether, in fact, they represent a new Variety of Capitalism (Amable, 2003). This geographic territory is not historically well documented in the literature, and contemporary developments occur against the backdrop of large-scale political, economic, and socio-cultural shifts. In our chapter on CEE, Sheehan and Buchelt argue that these countries are the most transformed of these economies in transition and that the significant influence of joining the EU cannot be underemphasized in bringing much of this about. Nonetheless, the historical legacy of communism has resulted in them lagging somewhat behind their Western European neighbors. They note that these eight countries in particular illustrate the nuanced interaction of historical, social, political, and economic factors in shaping preferred approaches to HRD.

In our chapter on Russia and the former Soviet Union by Ardichvili, Zavyalova, and Tkachenko, consideration is given to the development of HRD in the post-socialist context and its importance as an ideational legacy in governing contemporary arrangements in Russia, Ukraine, Azerbaijan, and Kazakhstan. All four countries have experienced radical restructuring. They also suffer from significant underinvestment in education, and their vocational education and training system is considered unresponsive to the requirements of the market. At the firm level, HRD is confined to the large national resource industries and to the banking and high-tech sectors. There

appears to be lack of a tradition of HRD as a profession, although this is changing.

## SECTION 5: HRD IN WESTERN EUROPE

In our treatise on Western Europe, we offer four chapters based on regional/cultural clusters. We offer significant coverage to the Western European context on the basis of what can be perceived as an underlying socio-cultural and institutional heterogeneity that characterizes this geographic space and that results in distinct ideational legacies and different business traditions at the cultural level, which outlive individual leaders, technological changes, and dominant product lifecycles.

McCarthy focuses on the HRD systems in operation in the Republic of Ireland and the UK (England, Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland). Geographic neighbors, with a shared Anglo-Saxon tradition, they are characterized by a slowly evolving liberal political system and a concern for the social and the economic as complementary dual paths to development and its sustainability. The VET system in the Republic of Ireland developed in a similar way to that in the UK with a shared emphasis on HRD for competitiveness and development. Whereas there are, however, major sectoral variations with the result that there is a manifest unevenness in the provision of HRD, importantly a good balance is struck between state and private HRD provision.

Our chapter on the Nordic countries by Heidl and Dusoye highlights the uniqueness of the Nordic countries as among the top 20 most affluent in the world. The role of the Nordic Council in the HRD landscape is highlighted. The five countries under consideration enjoy strong contemporary cooperation vested in deep historical ties. Highly developed education systems characterize this cluster along with sophisticated HRD systems serving as inputs to their sustained levels of innovation. In this sense, they are often highlighted as exemplars on the HRD front.

Our chapter dealing with the Germanic countries in Europe by Mulder and Nieuwenhuis analyzes HRD in Germany, Austria, the Netherlands, and Switzerland. Among the most developed economies in the world, they comprise highly developed VET systems, both at corporate and state level.

Turning to Southern Europe, the chapter by Tomé calls attention to the explanatory power of culture in this Latin cluster comprising France, Greece, Italy, Portugal, and Spain. He notes that, in recent years, several have found themselves in a uniquely challenging position vis-à-vis their emergence from the global economic crisis and their post-crisis relationship with the EU. Referring to them as the “South of the North” based on their particular attitudes and values, France stands out in the cluster due to its “French singularity,” resulting in a greater focus on HRD as part of a sustained competitiveness drive.

## SECTION 6: HRD IN THE EMERGING MARKETS

Our final chapter in the volume focuses on a comparison of the CIVETS countries, which include Colombia, Indonesia, Vietnam, Egypt, Turkey, and South Africa. Our logic here is governed not by the explanatory power of similarities between systems lying in cultural or institutional determinants but rather by whether aspects of explanation may be unearthed in the level of economic development of the countries and their associated economic trajectories. Horwitz, Budhwar, and Morley (2015) argue that the very notion of the emerging markets represents something of a portmanteau term built on a series of layered insights garnered from several academic fields and multiple levels of analysis. In the final chapter landscaping HRD in this volume, Garavan and Akdere explore the complexities of HRD and the extent of similarity and difference they reveal in CIVETS, a group of emerging economies. They note that how HRD has developed is largely in response to the aggressive developmental trajectory and to their positioning as significant hosts for foreign direct investment. In addition, they share a conceptualization of HRD that focuses significantly on the individual and the capacity for HRD to eliminate inequality and poverty. Nonetheless, their HRD systems are embryonic, highly fragmented, and under-resourced. In addition, waves of political instability in some quarters have resulted in questions being raised about their likely capacity to sustain a growth trajectory.

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