

This volume represents an important new direction for our Springer SBM book series on *Cultural and International Psychology*, and also an important new direction for psychology, in general. The realities of our global era have resulted in an increased awareness of the diversities of people and cultures across the world. This has led to growing efforts to understand, appreciate, and respect the diverse psychologies that we are encountering. The challenge, therefore, is no longer to simply study these differences using theories and methodology of cross-cultural psychology, cultural psychology, minority psychology, or even the current approaches to indigenous psychology, but rather, to approach a group's unique and distinct "construction of reality," shaped as this might be across time and circumstance. And with this we are witnessing the struggles to resist the Western-lead homogenization of national, cultural, and individual identities.

This resistance is good! This resistance is right! This resistance is needed. Heterogeneity should and must trump homogeneity, because differences are a defining characteristic of life. Thus, each psychology that exists -- regardless of whether it is a psychology of a nation, a minority group, or an embattled indigenous people striving for survival -- offers us a unique and distinct template for understanding an alternative view of behavior and experience. Exposure and appreciation of these differences opens our minds to the relativity of our own views, and also to the myriad of alternatives that have evolved across the world. While some may resist the often conflicting and contrary views they are now being compelled to encounter, it is clear that each psychology opens our minds to the endless possibilities for pursuing different human purposes and meanings. Differences offer us choices, choices offer us freedoms, and freedoms offer us the possibility to move beyond limited views of who we are, and what we can become, to new horizons of thought and being.

With the publication of this volume, Professor Dharma Bhawuk, must be credited with helping to move psychology, as a science and profession, toward new horizons of possibility for understanding human behavior. With his publication, Western psychology has gained access to the complexities of the Asian Indian mind and behavior. For so many in the West, the Asian Indian is seen through a limited prism of stereotypes shaped by encounters with media and popular culture (i.e., movies, food, attire). These superficialities, though valuable, do little to reveal complexities of the historical, religious, cultural, and lived circumstances that have shaped the minds of Asian Indians. And here, it must be noted, that India as a nation, is home to hundreds of different cultural traditions and world-views. India is a study of diversity in itself, and Professor Bhawuk introduces us to a spectrum of ideas and values specific to certain Asian Indian population sectors.

The fact that India, as a nation, has emerged today as a global economic, political, and cultural power, makes Professor Bhawuk's volume particularly valuable for our current time, for his volume captures a world view -- a culturally shaped reality -- that offers insights into a land, history, and people shaped across millennia. One has only to read the more than 4000 year old *Bhagavad-Gita*, to grasp the wisdom of ages that has been honed by suffering, survival, and also an imaginative and creative quest for meaning and purpose by India's people. Welcome, then, to pages that are sure to delight, to enlighten, and to expand one's insights regarding a wondrous people, a complex culture, and an enduring heritage.

Anthony J. Marsella, Ph.D., Series Editor, *Cultural and International Psychology*, Springer
SBM Publications: New York, NY.