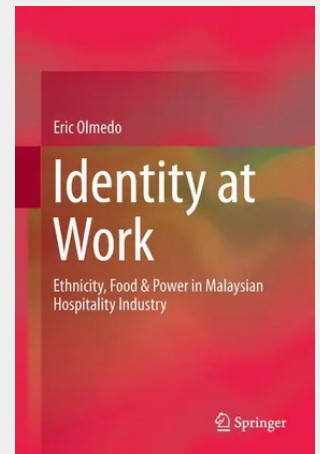


Identity at Work

Ethnicity, Food & Power in Malaysian Hospitality Industry

This book investigates the interface of ethnicity with occupation, empirically observed in luxury international hotels in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. It employs the two main disciplines of anthropology and sociology in order to understand the root causes and meaning of ethnicity at work within the hospitality industry sector. More specifically, it observes social change in a multi-ethnic and non-secular society through an ethnographic study located in a micro organisation: the Grand Hotel. At the individual level, this research shows how identity shifts and transformation can be mediated through the consumption and manipulation of food at the workplace. In addition, it combines an ambitious theoretical discussion on the concept of ethnicity together with empirical data that highlights how ethnicity is lived on an everyday basis at a workplace manifesting the dynamics of cultural, religious and ethnic diversity. The book presents the quantitative and qualitative findings of two complementary surveys and pursues an interdisciplinary approach, as it integrates methodologies from the sociology of organisations with classic fieldwork methods borrowed from ethnology, while combining French and Anglo-Saxon schools of thoughts on questions of identity and ethnicity. The results of the cultural contact occurring in a westernised pocket of the global labour market – in which social practices derive from the headquarters located in a society where ethnicity is self-ascribed – with Malaysian social actors to whom ethnicity is assigned will be of particular interest for social scientists and general readers alike.

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