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Book Notes: Raising the Bar: The Emerging Legal Profession in East Asia, by William P. Alford (ed)

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Book Note

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RAISING THE BAR: THE EMERGING LEGAL PROFESSION IN EAST ASIA, EDITED BY WILLIAM P. ALFORD. CAMBRIDGE: HARVARD UNIVERSITY PRESS, 2007. Pp. 436. Index. USD \$19.95 paper.

BY ZOHAR LEVY

In this collection of essays, the authors consider the changing face of the legal profession in East Asia. The book is arranged geographically, with a series of essays preceded by a thought-provoking introduction by William P. Alford. Alford identifies some general trends in the region, including an increase in the number of lawyers, and a shift in the work they do as they venture beyond traditional litigation into broader areas such as business planning and government lobbying.

The question of legal education is the focus of the first essay on Korea, by Sang-Hyun Song, who provides an overview of the education system and current efforts to reform it. Education is raised again in the subsequent essay by JaeWon Kim, which provides a broader perspective on the role of law in Korean society, and describes the historical and contemporary activities of human rights lawyers in that country. Finally, Yves Dezalay and Bryant Garth provide a preliminary survey of lawyers' perceptions of themselves in Korea.

Unlike Korea, Japan has already begun to implement reforms to its legal education system, the history and details of which are discussed by Setsuo Miyazawa. Ryo Hamano then depicts the future for these new lawyers, as he considers the context for and the development of corporate law firms in Japan. In a similar vein, Toshimitsu Kitagawa and Luke Nottage seek to provide a snapshot of Japanese corporate law departments and their development.

Next, Alford contributes to his collection of essays, material pertaining to the evolution of the legal profession in the People's Republic of China over the past twenty years and criticizing misconceptions (held primarily by American scholars) regarding this development. In the same section, Benjamin Liebman takes the opportunity to raise some novel questions about the availability, effectiveness, and relevance of legal aid in China.

Furthermore, Jane Kaufman Winn considers how the increased number of lawyers in Taiwan will affect that particular society, while in the final essay, Daniel Lev considers the relationship between lawyers and political authority in Malaysia and Indonesia.

