

Foreword

Lawrence E. Harrison¹

Although I have lived a half-century longer than he, Dr. Jeremi Brewer and I share a world-view that emphasizes (1) the goal of human progress as defined by the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights: democratic governance; social justice, particularly with respect to the availability for all of health and education services; and an end to poverty; (2) the obligation of the beneficiaries of these three progressive conditions to help those who have not been as fortunate; and (3) the belief that culture matters—that at the root of underdevelopment lies a set of values, beliefs, and attitudes that block human progress.

I must mention that Dr. Brewer, who is conducting his research at Brigham Young University, is a member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints – a Mormon – a religion that promotes the values of the UN Universal Declaration but also enables its young people to see first-hand the consequences of religions/cultures that fail to promote those values. (My new book, *Jews, Confucians, and Protestants: Cultural Capital and the End of Multiculturalism*, devotes half a chapter to Mormonism to the writing of which Dr. Brewer made a major contribution.)

Dr. Brewer and I also share work experience in Latin America. I worked for the US Agency for International Development (USAID) for 20 years, including assignments in four Latin American countries (Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, Guatemala, and Nicaragua) and one African–American country, Haiti. Dr. Brewer focused on Latin America – primarily Mexico, Peru, and Brazil.

I went to my first assignment, Costa Rica, in 1964, believing that Latin Americans had essentially the same value system as we Americans. But by the time I left my second assignment, the Dominican Republic, in 1970, I had become convinced that there was a profound gap that separated essentially Anglo-Protestant American/Canadian culture from the essentially Ibero-Catholic Latin American value system.

Because of his experience in Latin America and the Philippines – so similar to Latin America after three centuries of Spanish rule – Dr. Brewer gravitated to the same conclusion that I had reached: that Latin America's

problems were principally the consequence of a value system that suppressed creativity, trust, sense of responsibility, and sense of agency – in a word, entrepreneurship – the consequence of a value system that suppresses individual initiative.

In his capacity as a social-entrepreneur, Dr. Brewer's focus has historically been to institutionalize the Academy for Creating Enterprise (the Academy); a program founded in Cebu, the Philippines, in 1999 by Stephen W. Gibson (the co-editor of this volume), and a program that Dr. Brewer has since spread throughout Latin America, Asia, and West Africa. At its very core, the Academy is specifically designed to help Latter-day Saint necessity entrepreneurs compensate for the entrepreneurial shortcomings of progress-resistant cultures, where 'necessity entrepreneurs' abound. Since 1999, the Academy has training thousands of necessity entrepreneurs in developing countries through its religious-infused entrepreneurship curricula.

In the realm of academia, however, Dr. Brewer's pursuit is find scalable solutions for radical change among 'necessity entrepreneurs' regardless of their religion. His approach to achieve a global impact has been to launch and lead the Microenterprise Education Initiative (MEI) at Brigham Young University's Ballard Center for Economic Self-Reliance, housed in the Marriott School of Management. Through MEI, Dr. Brewer has partnered with research associates at Stanford University, Harvard University, and Mexico's Tecnológico de Monterrey in an effort to develop and provide entrepreneurship and leadership training to 'necessity entrepreneurs' throughout the world.

The fundamental question Dr. Brewer seeks to answer as an academic and social-entrepreneur is: Can a hands-on training approach to 'necessity entrepreneurs' provide them with the values, attitudes, and simple business skills necessary for success – all of which are alien to the culture in which they have reached adulthood. The recent criticism of Nobel Peace Prize winner Muhammad Yunus and his Grameen Bank in Bangladesh underscore this problem.

Consequently, as Dr. Brewer openly recognizes, this book should not be viewed as prescriptive. The contributions are, rather, a highly valuable effort of description and analysis aimed at assessing the value of the 'microenterprise' dimension of economic development.

NOTE

1. Lawrence E. Harrison is the author of *Underdevelopment is a State of Mind, Who Prospers?*, *The Pan-American Dream*, *The Central Liberal Truth*, and co-editor,

with Samuel Huntington, of *Culture Matters: How Values Shape Human Progress*. Between 1965 and 1981, he directed USAID missions in the Dominican Republic, Costa Rica, Guatemala, Haiti, and Nicaragua. Harrison was associated with Harvard University's Weatherhead Center for International Affairs for eight years during the period 1981–2001. His articles have appeared in *The New York Times*, *Washington Post*, *Wall Street Journal*, *Boston Globe*, *Atlantic Monthly*, *Foreign Policy*, and *The National Interest*, among other publications.