

Preface

Amy Chua

After the fall of the Berlin Wall, a consensus emerged, not only in the United States, but also to a considerable extent around the world. Markets and democracy, working hand in hand, would transform the world into a community of modernized, productive, peace-loving nations. In the process, ethnic hatred, religious zealotry, and other 'backward' aspects of underdevelopment would be swept away.¹ Unfortunately, something very different has happened. Since 1989, we have seen the proliferation of ethnic conflict, intensifying fundamentalism and anti-Americanism, wars and war crimes, two genocides of magnitudes unprecedented since the Nazi Holocaust, and a rising tide of worldwide terrorism.²

Sometimes, states respond to these problems with massive force. Other times, they are unwilling or unable to respond at all. Either way, these new and often horrific challenges are too important and too complex for states alone to address. Even when states do get involved, they usually leave instability and festering wounds in their wake. Social entrepreneurship, an emerging theme in global political, economic, development, and cultural issues, helps fill this crucial gap.

Some have argued that the twenty-first century needs an 'American Empire' to deal with rogue states and spreading violence.³ Others believe that American unilateralism and militarism have fueled global turbulence.⁴ Whatever one's politics, this book has refreshingly demonstrated that civil society – including young people with big ideas and a lot of heart – has great potential to address atrocities, often in ways states, international institutions, or large foundations can't or won't.

'Social entrepreneurship' is difficult to define. In his Introduction to this book, Dr. Zachary Kaufman, both a thinker on and practitioner of social entrepreneurship, has offered a helpful theoretical definition, while the subsequent case study chapters illustrate the concept in practice. Whether by building libraries for post-genocide societies, supporting orphans in developing countries, or empowering young Americans to address global issues, social entrepreneurship is an exciting and diverse field of research and work that is changing the way we think about the relationship between small-group initiatives and large-scale problems that were once under the exclusive purview of

government. My own experience in the field is partially based on my service on the Advisory Board of Americans for Informed Democracy, which Seth Green and Leah Maloney profile in this book.⁵ It has become clear to me – and to many others – that social entrepreneurship, properly structured and harnessed, can help attack critical and persistent problems in new and successful ways while engaging stakeholders that may have otherwise been excluded from the process.

Contrary to the view of many proponents of globalization, the spread of markets and democracy has had the unintended consequence of aggravating ethnic conflict and violence in many parts of the developing world.⁶ But globalization offers solutions as well as problems. Social entrepreneurship, often engaging providers, recipients, and foreign and local partners across national boundaries using modern communication, transportation, and technology, is a form of globalization capable of mitigating and counteracting some of these unintended consequences.

Specifically, social entrepreneurship can help bring necessary material, medical, educational, technological, or other assistance to desperate communities. By aiding these communities in their development, social entrepreneurship can ease the economic hardships and disparities that can heighten ethnic conflict. In particular, resentment and violence directed against what I have called ‘market-dominant minorities’⁷ might be avoided or reduced if members of those wealthy minority communities initiate or participate in social entrepreneurship, visibly benefiting and demonstrating their concern for the larger, poorer portions of the population. Social entrepreneurship goes beyond philanthropy, aligning incentives and capitalizing on generosity and common interests. Moreover, when engaged in by Westerners, such as the bright, young, motivated individuals featured in this book, social entrepreneurship can be a way of allaying anti-Westernism, including global anti-Americanism.

In a recent book, I wrote about the rise and fall of history’s ‘hyperpowers’: the strikingly few societies in history that amassed such economic and military might that they basically dominated the world.⁸ I argued that the secret to world dominance has been, surprisingly, *tolerance* – defined not in the modern, human rights sense, but simply as the willingness to let people of different ethnicities, religions, and backgrounds live, work, and prosper in society. To be globally (not just regionally or locally) dominant, a society must be at the forefront of the world’s technological, military, and economic frontiers. And at any given moment, the most valuable human capital the world has to offer – whether in terms of intelligence, skills, networks, creativity, or drive – is never found within any one ethnic or religious group. To be world dominant, a society must be able to pull in and motivate the *world’s* ‘best and brightest.’

In my view, a similar notion of tolerance underlies the social entrepreneurship described in this book – and gives it tremendous creative, global, on-the-ground potential. Essentially, international social entrepreneurship draws on and derives its energy from diverse people working together across vast distances, involving local communities, government, foundations, and corporations. In that sense, social entrepreneurship is globalization as tolerance in the best sense.

This book offers a wise and wide-ranging reflection on the past and present of social entrepreneurship, providing a guide for its future. Given the repeated failure of states to address some of the world's most urgent problems, it would be worthwhile for us all to take to heart the inspiring successes described in this book.

NOTES

1. *See, e.g.*, THOMAS L. FRIEDMAN, *THE LEXUS AND THE OLIVE TREE: UNDERSTANDING GLOBALIZATION* (2000); FRANCIS FUKUYAMA, *THE END OF HISTORY AND THE LAST MAN* (1992).
2. *See generally* AMY CHUA, *WORLD ON FIRE: HOW EXPORTING FREE MARKET DEMOCRACY BREEDS ETHNIC HATRED AND GLOBAL INSTABILITY* (2004) [hereinafter CHUA, *WORLD ON FIRE*].
3. *See, e.g.*, NIALL FERGUSON, *COLOSSUS: THE PRICE OF AMERICA'S EMPIRE* 301–02 (2004).
4. *See, e.g.*, NOAM CHOMSKY, *HEGEMONY OR SURVIVAL: AMERICA'S QUEST FOR GLOBAL DOMINANCE* (2003); PATRICE L. R. HIGONNET, *ATTENDANT CRUELITIES: NATIONAL AND NATIONALISM IN AMERICAN HISTORY* (2007).
5. *See* Chapter 8.
6. CHUA, *WORLD ON FIRE*, *supra* note 2, at 9.
7. *Id.* at 6.
8. *See* AMY CHUA, *DAY OF EMPIRE: HOW HYPERPOWERS RISE TO GLOBAL DOMINANCE – AND WHY THEY FALL* (2007).

