

*A Dragon Not for the Killing*

**Brendan Lovett**

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This book covers a wide range of topics particularly development, culture and the environment. Lovett employs Bernard Lonergan's Method of Theology for an analysis of authentic human development. He focuses on China, a people he sees playing a crucial evangelical role and a nation critical for the future of globalization.

For those in the social sciences who have not read him, this book will demand close reading and sustained reflection. Most readers have to work their way perseveringly and persistently to achieve what theologians refer to as an imagination-altering and mind-changing experience. Many readers may reject earlier positions after being exposed to Lovette's provocative ideas.

Lovette acknowledges that we know very little about the topic of human development. He presents a panorama of social thought from the nineteenth to the twentieth century and locates these ideas in the context of the coming millennium. The reader is frequently challenged to engage him in his interpretation of the different sources and thinkers. The analyses are not altogether new but Lovett's ideas still provoke a lot of questions and debate, especially in the context of the Asian crisis. Readers have to wrestle with the

interpretations of social thinkers from Marx to Weber, Milbank to Voegelin, Chen Yo-guang to Lin Yueh-wha and Lonergan. However, it is also meant for the general reader interested in understanding issues such as globalization.

Thus, the book is useful for understanding some of the common concerns and intentions of the social sciences, theology and philosophy. For those who consider that development is a multi-dimensional phenomenon, this book answers some of the questions of a post-modern world. It may also assist social scientists facing the task of re-theorizing a world moving into the twenty-first century.

His methodology of exposition is not to refute counter-positions. Rather, he exhibits the diversity of the topic and points to its roots. In his words: "Our deepest need is to face otherness and difference." The diversity can be distinguished in the study of development. Certainly, it has its economic base but its human face must determine it. And going to the root of the topic, Brendan proceeds with an explanatory understanding of development: What is economics; what is sustainable about it; why must it be human; what is social about it; what is authentic human social development; and what is human good?