





The idea that Western models are perfect in all areas, including social, cultural and economic, leads to the dominant role of foreign expert advisors in development. These experts need to know nothing about local conditions, customs, traditions, because all of these are just obstacles in the path to progress. They come to a country knowing the solutions in advance, and give advice on how to move from existing patterns to Western ones in the shortest possible time. The havoc wrecked by this disregard and ignorance of local issues has been very well documented by Mitchell in *The Rule of Experts*. Studies of successful models for development (post-war Germany, Japan, communist Russia, East Asian Tigers) show that the strategies used there were often in opposition to those recommended by conventional economics. World Bank economists writing about *The East Asian Miracle* admit that in most of these economies, the government intervened systematically, through multiple channels, to foster development. Despite these systematic violations of neoclassical prescriptions for development, these countries achieved the highest rates of productivity growth and fastest development seen at that time in the historical record.

Lessons from studies of successful development strategies are abundantly clear. Each such country has developed by disregarding foreign advice, and developing their own strategies. Self-reliance, self confidence, trust, cooperation and methods adapted to local conditions and culture have been crucial to success. Slavish imitation of Western models and an inferiority complex are the biggest obstacles to progress. Cultural conflicts due to modernization, created by one segment of society opting for Western ways and another holding to traditions, have prevented the social harmony and unity necessary for progress.