

## Religions And Development Carole Rakodi Gov

The need to reassess the discourse of sustainable development in terms of equity and justice has grown rapidly in the last decade. This book explores renewed and distinctive approaches to the sustainability and justice debate, integrating a range of perspectives that include moral philosophy, sociology and law. By bringing together young and senior scholars from the field of global environmental law and governance from around the world, this work is divided into three sections, covering sustainable development and justice, sustainable development in context, and sustainable development and judiciaries. This book will appeal to academics, law practitioners and policy-makers interested in shaping future socio-legal research on global environmental law and governance.

Religion has been excluded from development studies for decades. Religious traditions have contributed greatly towards development work, yet major international players have tended to ignore its role. Recent years have shown a noticeable shift in development policy, practice and research to recognize religion as a relevant factor. This text provides a comprehensive insight into different approaches towards the understanding the relationships between religions and development studies, policy and practice. It guides readers through current debates, presenting, explaining and critically evaluating a broad range of literature and locating it within a theoretical context. The text explores the role of religion within development, from positive contributions, such as the important role that many 'faith-based organizations' play in education or health care, to more complicated and contested notions of impact, such as religiously inspired violence or gender inequality. The book begins with three background chapters, outlining the relevance of religions for development studies, policy and practice, and introducing the reader to the study of 'development' and of 'religions'. Following these, the focus then shifts to examine a number of thematic areas, including religion, gender and development, and the implications of the 'rise of religion' for mainstream development studies, policy and practice in the 21st century. Each chapter contains a range of features to assist undergraduate learning, including learning objectives for each chapter, discussion of key concepts, summaries, discussion questions, further reading and websites. The book also contains over sixty boxed case studies to provide further definition, explanation, and examples of the interactions between religions and development globally. This innovative text presents religions as something that can both obstruct and aid development, encouraging readers to engage critically with the multiple ways that religion impacts on both the conceptualization of development as well the resulting project interventions. This will be of interest to undergraduate, postgraduate students and scholars interested in religious studies, development studies, and the broader study of societies and cultures.

This comprehensive Handbook examines the relationship between religion and international relations, mainly focusing on several world religions – Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, and Judaism. Providing a timely update on this understudied topic, it evaluates how this complex relationship has evolved over the last four decades, looking at a variety of political contexts, regions and countries.

'This groundbreaking volume makes a significant contribution to an emerging field in Development Studies. Drawing from a variety of disciplines, its wide-ranging and original set of essays demonstrates the centrality of religious ideas and practices - Traditional, Christian and Islamic - to contemporary African popular culture and their capacity to shape public life and politics. Focusing on the beliefs and passions of ordinary religious adherents, the essays make a compelling case for a holistic human centred model of development and highlight the inadequacy of hitherto dominant western secular models. The collection is required reading for policy makers, practitioners and researchers working in development.'---David Maxwell, Professor of African History, Keele University, UK --

Community development is most effective and efficient when it is situated and led at the local level and considers the social behaviours, needs and worldviews of local communities. With more than eight out of ten people globally self-reporting religious belief, *Religion and Development in the Asia-Pacific: Sacred places as development spaces* argues that the role and impact of religions on community development needs to be better understood. It also calls for greater attention to be given to the role of sacred places as sites for development activities, and for a deeper appreciation of the way in which sacred stories and teachings inspire people to work for the benefit of others in particular locations. The book considers theories of 'place' as a component of successful development interventions and expands this analysis to consider the specific role that sacred places – buildings and social networks – have in planning, implementing and promoting sustainable development. A series of case studies examine various sacred places as sites for development activities. These case studies include Christian churches and disaster relief in Vanuatu; Muslim shrines and welfare provision in Pakistan; a women's Buddhist monastery in Thailand advancing gender equity; a Jewish aid organisation providing language training to Muslim Women in Australia; and Hawaiian sacred sites located within a holistic retreat centre committed to ecological sustainability. *Religion and Development in the Asia-Pacific* demonstrates the important role that sacred spaces can play in development interventions, covering diverse major world religions, interfaith and spiritual contexts, and as such will be of considerable interest for postgraduate students and researchers in development studies, religious studies, sociology of religion and geography. This volume presents findings from recent research focusing on young people and the way they relate to religion in their education and upbringing. The essays are diverse and multidisciplinary - in terms of the religions they discuss (including Christianity, Islam and Sikhism); the settings where young people reflect on religion (the classroom, youth club, peer group, families, respective religious communities and wider society); the different perspectives which relate to religious education and socialisation (the teaching of RE, the role of teachers in pupils' lives, the way teachers' personal lives shape their approach to teaching, school ethos and social context, and the place and rationale of RE); the contexts within which the authors work (different national settings and various academic disciplines); and the methodology used (qualitative, quantitative and mixed-method approaches). The authors make important contributions to the debate about the role of religious education in the curriculum. They demonstrate the crucially important formative influence of religious education in young people's lives which reaches well into their adulthood, shaping religious and other identities, and attitudes towards the 'other' - whatever that 'other' may be. This book was originally published as a special issue of the *Journal of Beliefs & Values*.

This collection adds to a burgeoning literature concerned with the roles played by religions in development. The authors do not assume that religion and religious organisations can be 'used' to achieve development objectives, or that religiously inspired development work is more holistic, transformative and authentic. Instead, they subject such assumptions to critical and (as far as possible) objective scrutiny, focusing on how adherents of several religious traditions and a variety of organisations affiliated with different religions perceive the idea of development and attempt to contribute to its objectives. Geographically, chapters in the volume encompass Africa, South Asia and the Asia-Pacific. Four of the papers have an international focus: providing a preliminary framework for analysing the role of religion in development, considering the roles played by faith-inspired organisations in two regions (the Asia Pacific and Sub-Saharan Africa) and analysing transnational Muslim NGOs. The individual case studies focus on nine countries (India, Kenya, Pakistan, Nigeria, Tanzania, Sudan, Malawi, Sri Lanka, South Africa), consider four religions (Islam, Hinduism, Christianity, Buddhism), and can be grouped under four themes: they consider religion, wellbeing and inequality; the roles of religious NGOs in development; whether and how religious organisations influence, respond to

or resist social change; and whether religious service providers reach the poor. Finally, practice notes show how three religious development organisations try to put their principles into practice. This book was published as a special double issue of *Development in Practice*. This volume examines the different and sometimes contradictory approaches of four UN human rights committees to the concept of religion. Drawing on critical perspectives from religious studies, the book combines a genealogical assessment of the role of religion in international law with a detailed textual study of the reporting practice of the committees monitoring racial discrimination, civil and political rights, women's rights, and children's rights. Årsheim argues that the role of religion within the rights traditions monitored by the committees varies to the extent that their recommendations risk contradicting one another, thereby undermining their credibility and potential to bring about real change on the ground: Where some committees view religion singularly as a core individual right, others see religion partly as an inherent threat to the realization of other rights, but also as a potent social force to be reckoned with. In order to remedy this situation, Årsheim proposes the publication of a joint general comment by all the committees, spelling out their approach to the role of religion in the implementation of human rights.

This book provides a critical and decolonial analysis of gender and development theory and practice in religious societies through the presentation of a detailed ethnographic study of conjugal violence in Ethiopia. Responding to recent consensus that gender mainstreaming approaches have failed to produce their intended structural changes, Romina Istratii explains that gender and development analytical and theoretical frameworks are often constructed through western Euro-centric lenses ill-equipped to understand gender-related realities and human behaviour in non-western religious contexts and knowledge systems. Instead, Istratii argues for an approach to gender-sensitive research and practice which is embedded in insiders' conceptual understandings as a basis to theorise about gender, assess the possible gendered underpinnings of local issues and design appropriate alleviation strategies. Drawing on a detailed study of conjugal abuse realities and attitudes in two villages and the city of Aksum in Northern Ethiopia, she demonstrates how religious knowledge can be engaged in the design and implementation of remedial interventions. This book carefully evidences the importance of integrating religious traditions and spirituality in current discussions of sustainable development in Africa, and speaks to researchers and practitioners of gender, religion and development in Africa, scholars of non-western Christianities and Ethiopian studies, and domestic violence researchers and practitioners.

This book illuminates the intersection of religion and gender within the development sector, exposing challenges in both policy and practice and suggesting implementable solutions. This book argues that a better understanding of the religion–gender nexus is needed by development sector practitioners, especially at a time when religious arguments are being used

around the world to justify gender inequality and violence against women. The book draws on extensive qualitative research with senior gender personnel, religion advisors, and implementation partners from across the largest bilateral development agencies. The nexus is considered from the grassroots level up to donor country politics and across key themes, such as gender-based violence, reproductive rights, unpaid care and domestic work, and women's participation in leadership roles. The book concludes by offering implementable solutions for practitioners to address the religion-gender nexus in a more meaningful way. Bridging the gap between academic theory and day-to-day development practice, this book is an important reference for development practitioners, and for researchers from across development studies, gender studies, and religious studies.

Understanding the Roles of Religions in Development  
The Approach of the RaD Programme  
Religion, Religious Organisations and Development  
Scrutinising religious perceptions and organisations  
Routledge

The Oxford Handbook of Transnational Feminist Movements explores the historical, political, economic and social contexts in which transnational feminist movements have emerged and spread, and the contributions they have made to global knowledge, power and social change over the past half century. The publication of the handbook in 2015 marks the fortieth anniversary of the United Nations International Women's Year, the thirtieth anniversary of the Third World Conference on Women held in Nairobi, the twentieth anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, and the fifteenth anniversaries of the Millennium Development Goals and of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on 'women, peace and security'. The editors and contributors critically interrogate transnational feminist movements from a broad spectrum of locations in the global South and North: feminist organizations and networks at all levels (local, national, regional, global and 'glocal'); wider civil society organizations and networks; governmental and multilateral agencies; and academic and research institutions, among others. The handbook reflects candidly on what we have learned about transnational feminist movements. What are the different spaces from which transnational feminisms have operated and in what ways? How have they contributed to our understanding of the myriad formal and informal ways in which gendered power relations define and inform everyday life? To what extent have they destabilized or transformed the global hegemonic systems that constitute patriarchy? From a position of fifty years of knowledge production, activism, working with institutions, and critical reflection, the handbook recognizes that transnational feminist movements form a key epistemic community that can inspire and provide leadership in shaping political spaces and institutions at all levels, and transforming international political economy, development and peace processes. The handbook is organized into ten sections, each beginning with an introduction by the editors. The sections explore the main themes that have emerged from transnational feminist movements: knowledge,

theory and praxis; organizing for change; body politics, health and well-being; human rights and human security; economic and social justice; citizenship and statebuilding; militarism and religious fundamentalisms; peace movements, UNSCR 1325 and postconflict rebuilding; feminist political ecology; and digital-age transformations and future trajectories.

*Religion, Welfare, and Social Service Provision: Common Ground* delves deeply into the partnerships forged between religious communities, government agencies and nonprofits to deliver social services to the needy. These pages offer a considered examination of how local faith entities have served those in their midst, and how the provision of those services has been impacted by evolving social policies. This foundational volume brings together the work of more than two dozen leading researchers, each providing long overdue scholarly inquiry into religiously affiliated helping and the many possibilities that it holds for effective cooperation.

The intersection of religion and development has for some decades been considered contentious, with scholars of both disciplines inhibited by the constraints of either the religious or the secular paradigm they primarily inhabit. *Development Beyond the Secular* aims to provide a new resource for those interested in the study of religions and development (primarily postgraduate and academic), and for those development practitioners wishing to contextualize their discipline within a religious frame. Using the work of Christian Aid as its primary lens, this book examines and critiques the theological underpinnings of development work and questions how Christian values are manifest through day-to-day work in the world of poverty eradication.

This is the first book dedicated exclusively to the question of the relationships between sustainability and the capability approach. It is rather astonishing that the issue of sustainability first posed by the Brundtland commission in 1987 has gained so little attention from capability scholars despite the approach's focus on human well-being. This book starts with a seminal contribution by Sen on the "Ends and Means of Sustainability" delivered as a keynote in 2000. All contributions to the book focus on the difficulties that arise from a freedom-oriented view of sustainability: they argue for taking note of the impact of human life on nature, they question the meaning of intergenerational justice when measured in the currency of "substantive freedoms" (capabilities), they raise the issue of collective responsibility and suggest ways to model and operationalize the capability approach to sustainable development. The book presents the state of the art concerning "The capability approach and sustainability" while admitting that it is only a first contribution to a growing field that deserves our attention: Defining what is to be sustained and asking how it can be sustained. This book was published as a special issue of the *Journal of Human Development and Capabilities*.

There is a growing realization that religion plays a major role in development, particularly in the Global South. Whereas theories of secularization assumed that

religion would disappear, the reality is that religion has demonstrated its tenacity. In the specific case of Zimbabwe, religion has remained a positive social force and has made a significant contribution to development, particularly through the Zimbabwe Council of Churches. This has been through political activism, contribution to health, education, women's emancipation, and ethical reconstruction. This volume analyzes the contribution of the Zimbabwe Council of Churches to development in the country.

This volume brings emerging research on religion and development into conversation with politics. Deploying innovative conceptual frameworks, and drawing on empirical research from across contemporary Asia, this collection makes an incisive contribution to the analysis of aid and development processes.

Populorum Progressio: 50 Years Volume 6, Number 1 Edited by Mari Rapela Heidt and Matthew A. Shadle Development, Nations, and "The Signs of the Times": The Historical Context of Populorum Progressio Mari Rapela Heidt The Soul of Development Clemens Sedmak The Justice Legacy of Populorum Progressio: A Jesuit Case Study Kevin Ahern The Enduring Significance of Populorum Progressio for the Social Mission of the Church in Africa Stan Chu Ilo Vulnerability and Development: Rereading Populorum Progressio in Light of Femicide Marianne Tierney FitzGerald Populorum Progressio's Vision in an Unequal World: A Theological Ethical Evaluation From the Global South Raymond Olusesan Aina, MSP Pacis Progressio: How Francis's Four New Principles Develop Catholic Social Teaching into Catholic Social Praxis Barrett Turner

Presents an introduction to mission studies - the history, theology and issues of mission. This book also offers a theological framework for mission, which applies both globally and locally, to help the reader discern the movement of the Spirit of Christ among the many other spirits of this world.

The decline of religion in the Western world used to be regarded as a direct consequence of development, and it was assumed that this would also occur in the global South once the same levels of economic development had been reached. The current flourishing of religion in the global South and the increased awareness of its significance in the global North prove that religion continues to play a crucial role. In those contexts where religion frames reality, development cannot ignore religion. This collection of essays by scholars and development practitioners from Africa, Asia, Europe and Latin and North America explores the fascinating interface between religion and development as well as the negative and positive potential of religion in development. With contributions by Karel Th. August, Michael Biehl, Carlos Bonilla, Theresa Carino, Andreas Heuser, Eberhard Hitzler, Lindora Howard-Diawara, Martin Junge, Rebecca Larson, Michael Martin, Madipoane Masenya (ngwan'a Mphahlele), Johnson Mbillah, Ambrose Moyo, Kenneth Mtata, Samuel Ngun Ling, Kjell Nordstokke, Muriel Orevillo-Montenegro, Claudia Warning and Vitor Westhelle.

Identifies the critical influence of religious practices and power relations in the

transnational peacebuilding and development work of faith-based organisations. Since the end of the Cold War, religion has become an ever more explicit and systematic focus of US foreign policy across multiple domains. US foreign policymakers, for instance, have been increasingly tasked with monitoring religious freedom and promoting it globally, delivering humanitarian and development aid abroad by drawing on faith-based organizations, fighting global terrorism by seeking to reform Muslim societies and Islamic theologies, and advancing American interests and values more broadly worldwide by engaging with religious actors and dynamics. Simply put, religion has become a major subject and object of American foreign policy in ways that were unimaginable just a few decades ago. In *Finding Faith in Foreign Policy*, Gregorio Bettiza explains the causes and consequences of this shift by developing an original theoretical framework and drawing upon extensive empirical research and interviews. He argues that American foreign policy and religious forces have become ever more inextricably entangled in an age witnessing a global resurgence of religion and the emergence of a postsecular world society. He further shows how the boundaries between faith and state have been redefined through processes of desecularization in the context of American foreign policy, leading the most powerful state in the international system to intervene and reshape in increasingly sustained ways sacred and secular landscapes around the globe. Drawing from a rich evidentiary base spanning twenty-five years, *Finding Faith in Foreign Policy* details how a wave of religious enthusiasm has transformed not just American foreign policy, but the entire international system.

The study of Islam since the advent of 9/11 has made a significant resurgence. However, much of the work produced since then has tended to focus on the movements that not only provide aid to their fellow Muslims, but also have political and at times violent agendas. This tendency has led to a dearth of research on the wider Muslim aid and development scene. Focusing on the role and impact of Islam and Islamic Faith Based Organisations (FBOs), an arena that has come to be regarded by some as the 'invisible aid economy', *Islam and Development* considers Islamic theology and its application to development and how Islamic teaching is actualized in case studies of Muslim FBOs. It brings together contributions from the disciplines of theology, sociology, politics and economics, aiming both to raise awareness and to function as a corrective step within the development studies literature.

By making religious community a relevant category for discussing development deficit, the Sachar Committee Report (that was submitted to the Prime Minister of India in 2007) initiated a new political discourse in India. While the liberal secular framework privileged the individual over the community and was more inclined to use the category of class rather than the identity of religion, the Sachar Committee differentiated citizens on the basis of their religious identity. Its conclusions reinforced the necessity of approaching issues of development through the optic of religious community. This volume focuses on this shift in

public policy. The articles in this collection examine the nature and implications of this new approach to the Indian social reality. Taking a close look at the findings of the Sachar Committee Report (SCR) they highlight the challenges posed by inter-community comparisons. At another level the articles supplement the debate initiated by the SCR by constructing a profile of religious communities in India so as to factor in their concerns of development into the present discourse and to nuance and modify the simple indicators to which development is often reduced. As most religious communities are themselves engaged in development-related activities the volume also examines some of these initiatives in order to see what development connotes to the members themselves and what receives attention by the community. Students of social sciences and development studies as well as those dealing with issues of marginalization will find this collection an invaluable resource for understanding contemporary India and for undertaking further theoretical and empirical research.

Development was founded on the belief that religion was not important to development processes. The contributors call this assumption into question and explore the practical impacts of religion by looking at the developmental consequences of Pentecostal Christianity in Africa, and by contrasting Pentecostal and secular models of change.

In the wake of 9/11 and the 'War on Terror', transnational Muslim NGOs have too often been perceived as illegitimate fronts for global militant networks such as al-Qaeda or as backers of national political parties and resistance groups in Palestine, Afghanistan and elsewhere. Yet clearly there is more to transnational Muslim NGOs. Most are legitimate providers of aid to the world's poor, although their assistance may sometimes differ substantially from that of secular NGOs in the West. Seeking to broaden our understanding of these organisations, Marie Juul Petersen explores how Muslim NGOs conceptualise their provision of aid and the role Islam plays in this. Her book not only offers insights into a new kind of NGO in the global field of aid provision; it also contributes more broadly to understanding 'public Islam' as something more and other than political Islam. The book is based on empirical case studies of four of the biggest transnational Muslim NGOs, and draws on extensive research in Britain, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Lebanon, Jordan and Bangladesh, and more than 100 interviews with those involved in such organisations.

This book investigates the substantial and growing contribution which African Independent and Pentecostal Churches are making to sustainable development in all its manifold forms. Moreover, this volume seeks to elucidate how these churches reshape the very notion of sustainable development and contribute to the decolonisation of development. Fostering both overarching and comparative perspectives, the book includes chapters on West Africa (Nigeria, Ghana, and Burkina Faso) and Southern Africa (Zimbabwe and South Africa). It aims to open up a subfield focused on African Initiated Christianity within the religion and development discourse, substantially broadening the scope of the existing



literature. Written predominantly by scholars from the African continent, the chapters in this volume illuminate potentials and perspectives of African Initiated Christianity, combining theoretical contributions, essays by renowned church leaders, and case studies focusing on particular churches or regional contexts. While the contributions in this book focus on the African continent, the notion of development underlying the concept of the volume is deliberately wide and multidimensional, covering economic, social, ecological, political, and cultural dimensions. Therefore, the book will be useful for the community of scholars interested in religion and development as well as researchers within African studies, anthropology, development studies, political science, religious studies, sociology of religion, and theology. It will also be a key resource for development policymakers and practitioners.

This book argues that relationships between religion and development in faith-based development work are constructed through repeated processes of negotiation. Rather than being a neat and tidy relationship, faith-based development work is complex and multifaceted: an ongoing series of negotiations between theological interpretations and theories of human development; between identities as professional practitioners and as believers; between different religious traditions at local, regional and international levels; and between institutional structures and individual agency. In particular, the book draws on a deep ethnographic study of Christian faith-based development work in the Bolivian Andes. The case study highlights the importance of seeing theological interpretations as being firmly embedded in local religious and cultural systems involved in a constant process of identity construction. Overall, the book argues that religion should not be seen as homogeneous, or either 'good' or 'bad' for development; instead, we must recognise that institutional faith-based identities are constructed in many ways, formal, theological and interpersonal, and any tensions between 'religious' and 'development' goals must be worked through in an ongoing recognition of that complexity. This book will be of interest to researchers working in development studies and religious studies, as well as to practitioners and policymakers with an interest in faith-based development work.

This book examines the contributions, both intentional and unintentional, of Nigerian Pentecostal churches and NGOs to development, studying their development practices broadly in relation to the intersecting spheres of politics, economics, health, education, human rights, and peacebuilding. In sub-Saharan Africa, Pentecostalism is fast becoming the dominant expression of Christianity, but while the growth and civic engagement of these churches has been well documented, their role in development has received less attention. The Nigerian Pentecostal landscape is one of the most vibrant in Africa. Churches are increasingly assuming more prominent roles as they seek to address the social and moral ills of contemporary society, often in fierce competition with Islam for dominance in Nigerian public space. Some scholars suggest that the combination of an enchanted worldview, an emphasis on miracles and prosperity teaching, and a preoccupation with evangelism discourages effective political engagement and militates against development. However, Nigerian Pentecostalism and Development argues that there is an emerging movement within contemporary Nigerian Pentecostalism which is becoming increasingly active in development

practices. This book goes on to explore the increasingly transnational approach that churches take, often seeking to build multicultural congregations around the globe, for instance in Britain and the United States. *Nigerian Pentecostalism and Development: Spirit, Power, and Transformation* will be of considerable interest to scholars and students concerned with the intersection between religion and development, and to development practitioners and policy-makers working in the region.

Western ideas, worldviews, actors, tools, models, and frameworks have long dominated development theory and practice in Africa. The resulting development interventions are too rarely locally rooted, locally driven, or resonant with local context. At the same time, theories and practices from developing countries rarely travel to the Western agencies dominating development, undermining the possibility of a beneficial synergy that could be obtained from the best of both worlds. There are many reasons why the experiences of locally driven development are not communicated back to global development actors, including, but not limited to, the marginal role of Southern voices in global forums. This volume gives a platform to authentic African voices and non-African collaborators, to explore what endogenous development means, how it can be implemented, and how an endogenous development approach can shape local, national and global policies. This book was originally published as a special issue of *Development in Practice*.

This Handbook provides a cutting-edge survey of the state of research on religions and global development. Part one highlights critical debates that have emerged within research on religions and development, particularly with respect to theoretical, conceptual and methodological considerations, from the perspective of development studies and its associated disciplines. Parts two to six look at different regional and national development contexts and the place of religion within these. These parts integrate and examine the critical debates raised in part one within empirical case studies from a range of religions and regions. Different religions are situated within actual locations and case studies thus allowing a detailed and contextual understanding of their relationships to development to emerge. Part seven examines the links between some important areas within development policy and practice where religion is now being considered, including: Faith-Based Organisations and Development Public Health, Religion and Development Human rights, Religion and Development Sustainable Development, Climate Change and Religion Global Institutions and Religious Engagement in Development Economic Development and Religion Religion, Development and Fragile States Development and Faith-Based Education Taking a global approach, the Handbook covers Africa, Latin America, South Asia, East and South-East Asia, and the Middle East. It is essential reading for students and researchers in development studies and religious studies, and is highly relevant to those working in area studies, as well as a range of disciplines, from theology, anthropology and economics to geography, international relations, politics and sociology.

This book analyses how religion is entangled in people's lives in Sub-Saharan Africa and southern Asia. It provides an introduction to the teachings, practices and values promoted by the main religious traditions in these regions and an overview of the evidence on what religion means to people in terms of their beliefs and religious practices and how it influences their values, attitudes and day-to-day relationships with others, especially their families. Over the course of the book Carole Rakodi explores similarities and differences between and within religious traditions and identifies some of the key factors that influence and explain the roles played by religion in people's personal lives and social relationships. A separate companion volume will go on to focus on the social and political roles and relationships of religious groups and organisations. This book will be of great interest to academics and students working in a range of disciplines, especially sociology, religious studies and development studies but also anthropology, geography and area studies.

In this book, Julia Berger examines internal meaning-making structures and processes driving NGO behavior, identifying constructs from within a religious tradition that forge new ways of pursuing social change. She evaluates the operation of a distinct rationality, arguing that action is guided not simply by beliefs and values, but also by a combination of elements so intrinsic as to constitute an “organizational DNA.” These hidden structures and rationalities manifest themselves in new modes of engagement and agency; they help us to see the pivotal role of religion in shaping notions of peace, progress, and modernity. To demonstrate the operation and salience of such a rationality, Berger draws on the example of the worldwide Baha'i community. Emerging in 19th century Iran, the community's theological engagement with questions of justice, the unity of humankind, and the emerging global order, constitute one of the most distinct and compelling, yet least-researched examples of religious engagement with the pressing questions of our time. Analyzing events spanning a 75-year period from 1945-2020, this book provides a unique historical and contemporary perspective on the evolving role of religion and civil society in the modern world.

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