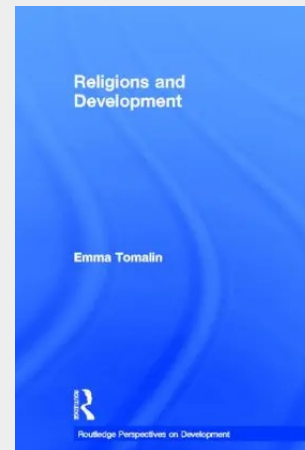


Religions and Development

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.



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