

International Development Policy
Revue internationale de politique de développement

Call for Papers - "Religion and Development"

About the series

The *International Development Policy* series is a key reference source on international cooperation and development policies. It is published in both English by Palgrave Macmillan and French by the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies in Geneva. It offers a diverse range of academic views from industrialised as well as developing countries. Each issue presents in-depth coverage of a chosen theme, the latest trends in finance, trade and development policies, in addition to infographics illustrating these issues with relevant research. <http://poldev.revues.org>

The 2013 issue of the *International Development Policy* will focus on the interactions between religion and development. It will address the meaning and importance of religion for development theory, policy and practice.

Call for Papers

We seek papers from researchers and scholars to be presented in a conference in Geneva early 2012 and then published in this special issue of the *International Development Policy* on religion and development.

We call for papers covering one of these four distinct, yet partly overlapping, research themes:

1. *Religions and development concepts and theories*
2. *Religiously inspired actors and faith-based organisations in development cooperation and practice*
3. *Religions and the impediments and opportunities for development policy and practice*
4. *Religions, worldviews, cosmologies and the limits of development studies as a naturalistic discipline*

Planning

- Deadline for Draft papers: 1 October 2011
- Conference: February 2012
- Final papers: April 2012 (max. 7'000 words)

Special Issue 2013: Religion and Development

Religions as a key concept in the study and practice of development would have seemed counter-intuitive only one or two decades ago. Being closely linked to the enlightenment project and modernity, the very ideas and theories making up the foundations of development sought emancipation from the influence of religion and from the dominance of the Church over politics. With the emergence of modern development, religion has therefore been perceived as an obstacle to progress, as best illustrated in Auguste Comte's vision of a positivist society.

This might explain the reluctance to include religion in development studies, even if Weber's sociology had already shown how religious beliefs are intricately linked to both the rational, capitalistic organisation of (formally) non-coercive labour and the occidental form of legal-rational rule. Despite a few exceptions it is only in the last decade that larger research programmes on religion and development have been launched (e.g. DFID and Dutch MFA funding, the reflection process launched by the SDC and Swiss NGOs since 2002, and the research programme of the Ecumenical Institute for Andean Theology (ISEAT) in La Paz). Thereby, as the field of religious studies has shown, religions as subjects of analysis have proven very fruitful, be they considered as social facts, worldviews, institutions, or as inter-subjective social structures. The lack of attention to religions and faiths belies the role religions play in the lives of most people, notably of those living in those regions that are most affected by international development cooperation. Against this background, the *International Development Policy* series opens a special dossier on religion and development contributing to this crucial but under-investigated area.

We seek contributions covering four distinct, yet partly overlapping, research themes. The following explications serve mainly as an illustration of the different themes. This indicative list should not prevent contributors from suggesting other approaches to the religion-development nexus.

1) *Religions and development concepts and theories:*

The first theme seeks contributions on the relationships between religious canons (i.e. rules, laws, values) and the core concepts of development such as economic growth, human development and sustainable development, capitalism and free markets, trade, democratisation, good governance, human rights, empowerment, etc.

2) *Religiously inspired actors and faith-based organisations in development practice:*

This theme should be understood in very broad terms and is open to contributions focusing both on current dynamics or looking at the role of religious actors in development in a historical perspective. For example, some work has been conducted on the role of missionaries as active forces in the colonisation process, but their links with the then emerging paradigm of colonial development remains an area largely under-researched. Similarly, research on the emergence and evolution of faith-based organisations as development agents is mostly limited to the history of individual organisations, but hardly looks at them in a broader perspective. A comparative approach between countries and regions on the historical emergence or current practices of faith-based organisations would be welcome. In the same vein, we would be

interested in comparative approaches providing important insights into the policies and practices of religiously inspired actors/organisations from different faith communities. In sum, the *International Development Policy* looks forward to papers specifically addressing the role of religiously inspired actors in development.

3) *Religions and the impediments and opportunities for development policy and practice:* One of the crucial questions raised by the religion-development nexus is if religions, beliefs and cosmologies constitute an obstacle for development policy and practice as the secularism characterising development studies tacitly suggests. Or do, in contrast, religions have the potential to be 'Drivers of Change' (see DFID) for truly pro-poor development policies. May the lack of awareness and knowledge about religions as inter-subjective structures of their own (or at least blended with other normative sources, i.e. customs, languages, laws, etc.) be one of the main obstacles to designing effective development policies and programmes? Conversely, the question of the impact of development practices and beliefs on religions and religious communities should not be ignored. Could or do religions in certain contexts represent counter-forces to neo-liberalism? How do religions stand with regard to globalization and the surge of conservative, protectionist forces in the West that tend to restrict migration and export opportunities?

4) *Religions, worldviews, cosmologies and the limits of development studies as a naturalistic discipline:*

The fourth theme directs its attention at religion and development as a research paradigm. What is its value added in improving our knowledge on development issues? Has the inclusion of religions, as analytical concepts, the potential to grasp meanings across worldviews? Has research that incorporated the religion dimension been able to provide new insights into, or a solid critique of, mainstream development studies?

Process of Participation

1. Draft paper (deadline 1 October 2011): Authors who want to participate in the call for papers have to submit a draft paper at the latest by the 15th of October 2011. Papers should be between 5,000 and 7,000 words. The paper should be accompanied by a brief information about the author, 5-10 key-words and an abstract.
Please note that we do NOT accept ONLY abstracts or outlines as draft papers.
2. Conference (February 2012): Authors selected to participate in the conference will be notified by the end of November 2011. About 10 papers will be chosen for a presentation at a conference where papers will not only be discussed, but will also receive written comments from peer reviewers. The conference is scheduled for February 2012.
3. Final version (deadline April 2012): Based on the comments, the peer reviews and guidelines from the editors, the final set of papers will be selected for the special edition. Selected authors will have to submit the final version by April 2012.
4. Should the final paper not take into account the comments or not correspond to the technical standards, the board reserves the right to refuse its publication.

Other practical information

- Draft and final papers can be written both in English and in French.
- The final version of the paper should not be longer than 7'000 words (references and summary included). Technical guidelines for authors online at <http://poldev.revues.org/71>
- There is a (very) limited budget for financial assistance with accommodation and travel expenses for those who need it.

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