Religion and Secularism in Development: Trends in the Approaches of Bilateral Donors in Canada and the United Kingdom

by

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Abstract

This thesis examines the ways in which the Canadian and British bilateral donors—the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA, now Global Affairs Canada) and the Department for International Development (DFID)—have approached the intersections of religion and development. While DFID has been increasingly attentive to the topic, no significant government initiatives on religion in development have been launched by its Canadian counterpart since the early 1990s. Despite their seemingly divergent approaches to religion, the aid cultures of both donors are shaped by Western assumptions about "religion" and "the secular" that are not always shared by program communities. These assumptions, which are evident in both funding patterns and discourse, have the potential to marginalize local perspectives. Government donors exude significant influence on contemporary development practice and thus have the potential to play an important role in efforts to reform the dominant aid culture; however, given the intersecting inequalities manifest on both a global and local level, such efforts are convoluted and contentious.

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Bilateral Donor Engagement with Religion

Introduction

In recent decades, scholars have highlighted a dearth of scholarship interrogating the intersections between religion and international development. In 2000, Kurt Alan Ver Beek referred to religion and spirituality as a "development taboo," which he attributed to "a fear of imposing foreign perspectives, a dichotomizing Northern perspective, a fear of conflict, or the lack of precedent or model."[1] While it would be premature to posit that the taboo has been lifted from mainstream development scholarship and practice, observations such as Ver Beek's have inspired a number of studies devoted to religion and development.[2] This burgeoning body of literature questions the normativity of "secular" development by highlighting the inadequacies of a development paradigm that neglects to consider the role of religion in project implementation. Such research has elicited a range of responses from government aid agencies in Europe and North America. At the same time, while bilateral donors contribute substantial financial

[1] Kurt Alan Ver Beek, "Spirituality: A Development Taboo," *Development in Practice* 10, no. 1 (2000): 40.
[2] To name a few: Séverine Deneulin and Masooda Bano, *Religion in Development: Rewriting the Secular Script* (London: Zed Books, 2009); Alastair Ager and Joey Ager, *Faith, Secularism and Humanitarian Engagement: Finding the Place of Religion in the Support of Displaced Communities* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015); Gerard Clarke and Michael Jennings, *Development, Civil Society & Faith-Based Organizations: Bridging the Sacred and the Secular* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008); Gerrie Ter Haar, *Religion and Development: Ways of Transforming the World* (London: Hurst & Company, 2011); Emma Tomalin, ed., *The Routledge Handbook of Religions and Global Development* (London: Routledge, 2015).

resources to foreign assistance and play a considerable role in shaping development agendas, there has been little research that considers their approaches to religion.

The following study will address this lacuna in scholarship by interrogating the ways in which the Canadian and British bilateral development agencies—the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA)[3] and the British Department for International Development (DFID)—have approached the juncture of religion and development. Through an examination of policy, practice, and discourse, trends in both agencies' engagement with religion and religious non-governmental organizations (RNGOs) will be identified. Based on these trends, the subsequent analysis will consider how the approaches of donors might perpetuate or challenge the normativity of the dominant "secular" development system, and which development actors and perspectives are affirmed or marginalized as a result.

I argue that the aid philosophies and strategies of the bilateral donors discussed in this study limit the perspectives that are represented among federally funded development actors, and perpetuate a homogenized development vision that reflects a Western worldview. The aid culture within which the Canadian and British governments operate is rooted in a secularist and materialist interpretation of development that relies heavily on a dichotomy between "religious" and "developmental" activities. In its exclusive concern for the latter, the Western aid paradigm expects that religion can and will be compartmentalized in development practice, and privileges material wellbeing over transcendent concerns and non-material aspects of human life. As a result, development perspectives and actors that are not amenable to the compartmentalization of

[3] In 2013, under the Conservative government, CIDA was absorbed into the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAIT) which subsequently became the Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development (DFATD). With the election of Justin Trudeau and the Liberal government in 2015, the department was renamed Global Affairs Canada (GAC). As a result of this paper's historical perspective, the name CIDA will be used throughout when referring to the Canadian government's development arm.

religion are more likely to be excluded than those that share Western donors' understandings of "religion" and "the secular." Moreover, the contemporary focus on result-based programming tends to breed an instrumentalist and technocratic approach to religion—aspects of religion that contribute to the attainment of development outcomes are valued, while other elements are dismissed as counter-developmental. The instrumentalism of contemporary development practice privileges actors with the technical capacity to prepare complex funding proposals and satisfy stringent requirements for demonstrating effectiveness. The development philosophies, strategies, and priorities of organizations that fulfil such criteria do not necessarily coincide with those of program communities. Correspondingly, local and alternative interpretations of development are often underrepresented in mainstream aid provision.

The lack of scholarship on state approaches to religion and development is surprising given the influence of government donors within the global aid system and the magnitude of their official development contributions. Members of the Development Assistance Committee of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) contributed US$131.6 billion (C$172.3 billion)[4] in official development assistance (ODA) in 2015 alone.[5] The United Kingdom is one of the largest OECD donors. Its US$18.7 billion (C$24.5 billion) contribution to development assistance in 2015 was surpassed by only Germany and the United States.[6] It is one of very few countries to have met the target of allocating 0.7% of its gross national income (GNI) to ODA.[7] Canada's investment in development has been considerably smaller, equaling US$4.3 billion (C$5.6 billion) in 2015, or 0.28% of GNI. Still, the Canadian government's

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[4] Based on the Bank of Canada's nominal noon exchange rate for 28 June 2016 (rate of exchange: 1.3090).
[5] OECD-DAC, "Net Official Development Assistance from DAC and Other Donors in 2015: Preliminary Data for 2015," 2016, http://www.oecd.org/dac/stats/ODA-2015-complete-data-tables.pdf.
[6] Ibid.
[7] The only other countries to meet this target in 2015 were Norway (1.05%), Luxembourg (0.93%), Denmark (0.85%) and the Netherlands (0.76%) (Ibid.).

spending on international development surpasses that of even the largest non-governmental organizations (NGOs).[8]

Not only are donors significant in the scale of their development assistance, but they also have a great deal of influence in shaping aid agendas and constructing the development paradigm more broadly. Their financial inputs give them considerable power in identifying development priorities. While requests from recipient governments and communities are considered, donors ultimately make decisions regarding the types of activities they fund. Donors also play a role in setting the agendas of civil society organizations (CSOs).[9] In many OECD countries, a significant proportion of bilateral aid is programmed through such organizations. Aid delivery through CSOs represents nineteen percent of bilateral aid in the United Kingdom and nearly twenty-four percent in Canada.[10] While some NGOs are not interested in partnering with state agencies,[11] government grants constitute half to three-quarters of the annual income of other organizations.[12] Federal funding is accompanied by a level of government oversight, and there is evidence that organizations that rely on such sources of funding adjust their behaviour in response to donor expectations.[13] Given donors' impact on the broader aid environment, the

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[8] A few very large international NGOs, such as World Vision International, Save the Children, Oxfam International, and Médecins San Frontières, take in more revenue than some of CIDA's fellow OECD donors (Bill Morton, "An Overview of International NGOs in Development Cooperation," in *Working with Civil Society in Foreign Aid: Possibilities for North-South Cooperation?* (Beijing: United Nations Development Programme China, 2013), 346, http://www.undp.org/content/dam/undp/documents/partners/civil_society/publications/2013_UNDP-CH-Working-With-Civil-Society-in-Foreign-Aid_EN.pdf.).

[9] CSOs constitute a broader category of organization, which includes NGOs as well as actors such as professional associations and trade unions.

[10] Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development, "Aid for CSOs: Statistics Based on DAC Members' Reporting to the Creditor Reporting System Database," 2015, 12.

[11] Mennonite Central Committee U.S., for example, refuses federal government support, and British NGO Christian Aid limits its revenue from governments to thirty percent of total income. (Susan Dicklitch and Heather Rice, "The Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) and Faith-Based NGO Aid to Africa," *Development in Practice* 14, no. 5 (2004): 665; Laura C. Thaut, "The Role of Faith in Christian Faith-Based Humanitarian Agencies: Constructing the Taxonomy," *Voluntas: International Journal of Voluntary and Nonprofit Organizations* 20, no. 4 (2009): 335.)

[12] Ray Vander Zaag, "Canadian Faith-Based Development NGOs and CIDA Funding," *Canadian Journal of Development Studies* 34, no. 2 (2013): 341n13.

[13] Andrea Paras, "CIDA's Secular Fiction and Canadian Faith-Based Organisations," *Canadian Journal of Development Studies* 33, no. 2 (June 2012): 244.

approaches and ideologies that they espouse offer crucial lines of investigation for research on religion and development.

Conceptual Framework

Borrowing from terminology used by Marie Juul Petersen, the instrumentalist, technocratic, materialist, and secularist trends in contemporary development practice will be discussed in terms of "aid ideology" and "aid culture." Petersen describes aid ideologies as "meaning systems that centre on questions of aid provision."[14] Consisting of visions, rationales, strategies, and the sources of authority from which they emanate, ideologies of aid direct, justify, and legitimize the work of development actors.[15] Aid culture is defined more broadly as "those larger social structures that outline the overall boundaries for what can be said and done—in other words, what is legitimate—in relation to aid provision."[16] The cultural aspects of aid include ideologies, as well as customary practices, discourses, structures, and agents involved in relief and development activities.[17] Aid cultures are not homogenous, and the boundaries between them are porous, yet features such as shared lexicons provide adequate grounds for the establishment of such categories, assuming they are viewed as imperfect and tentative.[18] Moreover, as a result of historical and contemporary factors—not least of which are colonialism

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[14] Marie Juul Petersen, *For Humanity or for the Umma: Aid and Islam in Transnational Muslim NGOs* (London: C. Hurst & Co., 2015), 13.
[15] Ibid.
[16] Ibid., 15.
[17] Ibid. Humanitarian relief is conventionally distinguished from development response. While the former is generally understood as short-term relief in response to violent conflict or natural disaster, the latter is focused on longer-term objectives. In light of the protracted nature of many humanitarian crises, such as forced displacement of communities, there is a movement towards synchronizing humanitarian and development agendas.
[18] Ibid.

and ongoing Western political, economic, cultural, and ideological hegemony—a dominant aid culture can be discerned.

Hallmarks of the dominant aid culture include professionalism, adherence to the humanitarian principles (humanity, neutrality, independence, and impartiality), the primacy of human rights, and a focus on accountability and outcomes. Aid programming is coordinated by a bureaucratic network of agencies: multilateral organizations such as the United Nations and its subsidiaries, including the United Nations Development Programme, World Food Programme, and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees; bilateral donors such as CIDA and DFID; and non-governmental organizations such as Oxfam, Médecins Sans Frontières, and the Red Cross. These actors share a common discourse, which is characterized by a highly specialized and technical vocabulary and usually accompanied by a plethora of acronyms unintelligible to an outside observer. Mainstream development actors tend to work within a shared normative framework that has been formalized through a series of international commitments, charters, and standards. Guiding the development apparatus are the Sustainable Development Goals, which superseded the Millennium Development Goals in 2016. The objective of both aspirational instruments was to outline a global agenda for development. In the area of humanitarian relief, the Sphere Project set out standards for humanitarian assistance, stipulating particulars such as the minimum surface area for refugee shelters and the number of cooking pots that should be provided per household. Other initiatives, such as the Common Humanitarian Standards (formerly the Humanitarian Accountability Partnership) and the Code of Conduct of the International Committee of the Red Cross and Red Crescent, have sought to standardize best practices in terms of aid effectiveness, transparency, and accountability.

Through such instruments, the values, practices, and tenets of the dominant aid culture are normalized and perpetuated.

There are potentially unlimited other development cultures that bring with them particular discourses, ideologies, norms, and structures. There is a great deal of diversity both between and within aid cultures. An organization whose aid ideology is influenced by theologies of Christian mission might view development as a form of "witness" and use the language of "redemption" and "saving souls" in describing its objectives. Other Christian organizations eschew attempts to convert the local population and root their development efforts in biblically-inspired notions of social justice. An Islamic ideology of aid might conceptualize giving as *zakat*, obligatory almsgiving that is allocated in accordance with traditions laid out in the *Qur'an* and *Sunna*. Though they may share common features, aid cultures rooted in Islamic notions of charity are not homogenous. As in any religious tradition, divergent interpretations of Islam can produce drastically different aid cultures. Traditionally, Islamic jurists ruled that only Muslims were eligible to receive *zakat.*[19] Today, the traditional position is being questioned; some jurists argue that *zakat* may be distributed to non-Muslims as long as the Muslim poor are prioritized, whereas others posit that *zakat* is not exclusive to Muslims at all.[20] For development organizations that collect donations designated as *zakat*, such rulings have practical implications in terms of beneficiary selection.

As the preceding examples suggest, aid cultures are characterized by a high degree of internal heterogeneity, and are separated by indistinct and permeable borders. Interface between aid cultures is common. Some development actors, deliberately or by default, position

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[19] Yusuf Al-Qardawi, *Fiqh Al Zakah: A Comparative Study of Zakah Regulations and Philosophy in the Light of Qur'an and Sunnah (Vol. II)* (Jeddah: King Abdulaziz University, 2000), 25.
[20] Ibid., 92; Jonathan Benthall, "Financial Worship: The Quranic Injunction to Almsgiving," *The Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 5, no. 1 (1999): 31.

themselves between two or more cultures, operating effectively in multiple venues.[21] Development actors have adopted a wide range of tools for navigating between aid cultures, from full-scale adoption to outright rejection of elements of the opposing culture. In between these strategies are hybrid approaches that fuse together elements of two aid cultures; intentional ambiguity about the relationship between the two cultures; and even the strategic use of foreign concepts to construct a veneer that superficially complies with the dominant system, yet leaves the original system intact.[22] Given the range of strategies employed by development actors, the degree of convergence with the dominant aid culture can be expected to vary dramatically, even among individuals or groups that identify with a single alternative aid culture.

There are also deep-seated power imbalances between cultures, with the transnational development system having achieved near hegemonic status. The integration of development actors rooted in alternative aid ideologies into the global aid framework depends on their ability to navigate the barriers imposed by this dominant culture, which delimit the perspectives and approaches that are perceived as legitimate. As the present analysis of donor discourse and patterns of engagement with religious actors will affirm, CIDA and DFID are deeply rooted in the dominant aid culture. Accordingly, building relationships with either entity requires a level of familiarity with the associated discourses, values, systems, and structures. Within either donor's sphere of influence, actors that are unable or unwilling to operate within the bounds of the transnational development framework are likely to be marginalized.

The dominant development culture is frequently described as "secular," a statement that requires qualification in light of scholarship that exposes both "religion" and "the secular" as

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[21] Petersen, for example, describes transnational Muslim NGOs as "sites of cultural encounter… where the cultures of development and Islamic aid meet." (Petersen, *For Humanity or for the Umma*, 37.)
[22] Petersen, *For Humanity or for the Umma*, 102–3, 147.

problematic and culturally specific categories. I do not assume that these categories are useful cross-cultural tools—or even accurate representations of reality. To the contrary, I contend that the use of such a binary alienates particular development actors. At the same time, the terms "religious" and "secular" will be used throughout this analysis to describe various agents, perspectives, and discourses. The use of these adjectives should not be taken to signify that such categories are unproblematic, but rather that they have acquired a particular meaning within the dominant aid culture and have influenced the development philosophies and approaches of donors such as CIDA and DFID. As the discourse analysis in Chapter Four will reveal, the religious-secular binary is central to the way in which both donors think about phenomena conventionally classified as "religious" in the West.

Rather than delve into the problematic task of adopting or developing universal definitions,[23] I have employed the terms "religious" and "secular" in accordance with the most conventional Western usage. In common parlance, phenomena are described as "religious" if they are associated with a tradition classified as a "religion." The most commonly cited examples are so-called "world religions" such as Christianity, Islam, Buddhism, Hinduism, and Judaism. "The secular" is conventionally understood as a residual category comprised of all phenomena regarded as "non-religious."[24] Though lacking considerably in terms of nuance, these definitions of "religion" and "the secular" are operative in the development arena. As will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter Five, individuals, organizations, and communities in the Global North and South have been known to "secularize" or "developmentalize" their discourse in their

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[23] Talal Asad, *Genealogies of Religion: Discipline and Reasons of Power in Christianity and Islam* (Baltimore: John Hopkins, 1993), 29.
[24] José Casanova, "The Secular, Secularizations, Secularisms," in *Rethinking Secularism*, ed. Craig Calhoun, Mark Jueurgensmeyer, and Jonathan VanAntwerpen (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 55.

interactions with donors by removing language that the latter might code as religious.[25] Such discursive behaviour in no way confirms the existence of a cross-cultural notion of "the religious" and "the secular," but rather suggests that this binary has shaped development discourse by imposing parameters as to what types of vocabularies and conceptual frameworks are acceptable and in which contexts. The goal of this analysis is to examine the ways in which these concepts have been evoked in development and how this has subsequently delineated spaces that are associated with particular ideologies and discourses and in which other ideologies and discourses are deemed undesirable or inappropriate.

In order to provide a thorough and well-rounded analysis of donor approaches to religion, a diverse range of methodologies will be employed. The following chapter will draw on qualitative and quantitative approaches to provide a selective contextual overview of donor engagement with religion and religious actors. Drawing upon public statements, targeted initiatives, policy documents, and funding patterns, the chapter will identify broad trends in the Canadian and British governments' approaches to questions of religion and development. This discussion will be followed in the third chapter by a focused study of the statements of principles developed by CIDA and DFID to guide their relations with religious development actors. Borrowing from techniques in discourse analysis, this comparative study of the two documents will yield a more nuanced understanding of how the two donors have communicated their approaches to RNGOs. The fourth chapter will consider the implications of donor approaches to religion for development practice. The thesis will conclude by considering these research findings in light of calls for dialogue between "religious" and "secular" perspectives. The potential of donors such as CIDA and DFID to contribute to dialogue efforts will be explored, as

[25] Andrea Paras, "CIDA's Secular Fiction," 244.

well as the ways in which their contributions might be limited by their underlying assumptions about “the religious” and “the secular.”

2

Bilateral Donor Engagement with Religion

Introduction

Recent studies of religion and development have devoted far more attention to non-governmental actors than to official aid agencies such as CIDA and DFID. This trend is counterintuitive given the scale of government funding for development activities and the influence that institutional donors exude over development agendas. The current chapter will supplement existing research by using qualitative and quantitative methods to trace patterns of bilateral donor engagement with RNGOs, with a focus on the British and Canadian contexts. It will break new ground by offering a quantitative analysis of British government funding to religious development actors. This unprecedented study will provide a sense of scale for the relationship between DFID and RNGOs and will complement data already available for the Canadian context.

In order to identify broad trends in each agency's engagement with the topic of religion, a survey of relevant research and dialogue initiatives, publications and public statements, and administrative and funding structures will be presented. This contextual overview will be followed by a quantitative analysis of each donor's funding relationships with RNGOs. As will be discussed in the following chapters, a dichotomy between "the religious" and "the secular" is

implicit in the approaches of both government agencies, the mandates of which relate to activities that are seen as "developmental" and not "religious." Due to the "secular" nature of donors' work, they primarily engage with religion indirectly, through partnerships with religious actors. For this reason, the relationship between the Canadian and British donor agencies and religious development organizations provides a significant source of insight into the donors' approaches to religion and development.

Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA)

Overview of CIDA's Engagement with RNGOs

Canadian federal funding for development has been managed primarily through the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) and its successor, Global Affairs Canada.[1] Founded in 1968, CIDA had close ties to religious organizations from its inception.[2] Unlike former colonial powers such as Britain, Canada did not have a long history of engagement in the Global South, and so sought to capitalize on the linkages that existed through industry and other sectors.[3] In its early years, the fledgling government department relied heavily on civil society and the private sector to fulfil its staffing requirements and to gain access to specialized knowledge and relevant expertise about the Global South.[4] Returned missionaries were among those who joined CIDA's ranks, and the agency considered civil society development initiatives,

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[1] CIDA merged with the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade in 2013 to form the Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development. The Department was renamed Global Affairs Canada in 2015. For the sake of consistency, and in recognition of the historical perspective of this study, the Government of Canada's development arm will be referred to as CIDA throughout this analysis.
[2] Canadian International Development Agency, "Christian NGOs and CIDA: Guiding Principles, Understandings and Affirmations," 1995, 2.
[3] David R. Morrison, *Aid and Ebb Tide: A History of CIDA and Canadian Development Assistance* (Waterloo, ON: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 1998), 70.
[4] Ibid., 69.

including those undertaken by church groups, to be integral to Canada's aid agenda.[5] The perceived importance of this sector's contributions was reflected in CIDA's institutional structure. A Non-Governmental Organisations (NGO) Program was established in November 1967, when CIDA was still the "External Aid Office," operating under the auspices of External Affairs.[6] Through this program, CIDA provided support to organizations such as CUSO and explored partnerships with other non-governmental actors, including religious institutions such as the United Church.[7] Notably, CIDA's relationship with Christian organizations was conducted through a formalized channel: until the 1990s, the NGO Program had a "Church Division" to facilitate dialogue with RNGOs.[8]

The decades after CIDA's establishment were marked by the professionalization, bureaucratization, and secularization of the development sector.[9] Mission and aid societies morphed into complex, multilayer networks of organizations with strategic plans and fundraising departments. Highly specialized professionals with graduate degrees replaced volunteers and missionaries.[10] Religious and secular organizations alike increasingly saw themselves as engaged in "development." Development was distinguished from proselytist missionary activities by its exclusive focus on poverty reduction, and from traditional charity by its advocacy for long-term solutions, rather than handouts. As a reflection of this shift from mission and charity to

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[5] Morrison, *Aid and Ebb Tide,* 64; Paras, "CIDA's Secular Fiction and Canadian Faith-Based Organisations," 237.
[6] Morrison, *Aid and Ebb Tide*, 62, 69.
[7] Paras, "CIDA's Secular Fiction and Canadian Faith-Based Organisations."
[8] Ibid.
[9] Barnett and Stein refer to these processes as the "secularization of aid," which they take to include "the growing role of states and commercial enterprises, the centrality of fundraising, encroachment of earthly matters such as governance, processes of bureaucratization and professionalization, and the kinds of evidence that are required to demonstrate effectiveness" (Michael Barnett and Janice Gross Stein, *Sacred Aid: Faith and Humanitarianism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 8.
[10] Michael Barnett, "Faith in the Machine? Humanitarianism in an Age of Bureaucratization," in *Sacred Aid: Faith and Humanitarianism*, ed. Janice Gross Stein and Michael N. Barnett (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 188–210.

development, RNGOs adopted new systems and vocabularies.[11] With the emergence of secular development NGOs, overseas charity—which had evolved into the field of development—was no longer the exclusive domain of religious organizations.

Dialogue with RNGOs and "Christian NGOs and CIDA"

Despite CIDA's early reliance on RNGOs, by the 1990s, the agency began expressing concern about this relationship. On the one hand, it became evident that support for CIDA's development objectives was not universal among the agency's partners. Gender, for example, was increasingly a priority for CIDA, but not necessarily for some of its religiously affiliated partners.[12] CIDA was also wary of potential misuses of public funds, such as the inclusion of religious activities in federally funded projects, or the preferential treatment of Christians in beneficiary selection.[13] In 1992, CIDA launched a dialogue with Christian NGOs in order to address such concerns. While CIDA's intent may have been to clarify the terms of its engagement with RNGOs, the dialogue also provided an opportunity for religious groups to demonstrate their legitimacy as development actors and to entertain the spiritual dimensions of aid.[14] The dialogue consisted of two conferences in 1993 and 1994 and culminated in the development of a working paper entitled "Christian NGOs and CIDA: Guiding Principles, Understandings and Affirmations."[15] The document articulated an understanding between

[11] Andrea Paras, "Between Missions and Development: Christian NGOs in the Canadian Development Sector," *Canadian Journal of Development Studies* 35, no. January 2015 (2014): 443.
[12] Paras, "CIDA's Secular Fiction and Canadian Faith-Based Organisations," 239.
[13] Ibid.
[14] Ibid., 241.
[15] Ibid., 240.; Canadian International Development Agency, "Christian NGOs and CIDA: Guiding Principles, Understandings and Affirmations."

RNGOs and the Canadian government on issues such as proselytism, cultural diversity, and gender equality.

CIDA's Disengagement with Religion

CIDA's engagement with religion was pioneering in the 1990s. The World Faiths Development Dialogue initiative of the World Bank, one of the first major initiatives on religion and development, was not launched until 1998. It was not until the early 2000s that governments in the Netherlands, United Kingdom, United States, Switzerland, Germany, and the Scandinavian countries initiated a number of workshops, dialogue and research initiatives, and special offices to deal with questions of religion.[16] CIDA was well ahead of its contemporaries in terms of challenging what it called "a tendency to regard religion as largely irrelevant to the development process and something which can be safely ignored and kept separate."[17] However, while attention to religion has increased among other institutional donors, CIDA's interest in the topic sharply declined after the dialogue with RNGOs concluded in 1995. The Church Division was disbanded during organizational restructuring in the late 1990s.[18] The outcome document from the dialogue is no longer being circulated, yet has not been replaced by a similar policy or statement of principles to guide CIDA's relationship with RNGOs.[19] Subsequent CIDA publications have referenced religion only fleetingly as a component of culture.[20] There is little political will to renew the conversation on religion and development and, in recent years, CIDA

[16] Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit, "Summary Status Quo Report: Religion and Development," 2015, 8–11, http://jliflc.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/GIZ-Summary-Status-Quo-Report-Religion-Development-13-05-2015.pdf.
[17] Canadian International Development Agency, "Christian NGOs and CIDA," 3.
[18] Paras, "CIDA's Secular Fiction," 238.
[19] Ibid, 241.
[20] Ibid.

has declined to participate in several forums on the topic.[21] If the lack of official references to religion is any indication, the contemporary CIDA approaches religion as both irrelevant to development, and something that can be safely ignored.

The reason for CIDA's apparent disinterest in religion is unclear. An obvious limitation of the agency's dialogue with RNGOs in the early 1990s was that it included only Christian organizations.[22] The inclusion of NGOs from other religious traditions was considered; however, according to one participant in the dialogue, it was seen as pragmatic to "try to sort out the Christian issue first."[23] Consequently, the outcome document was heavily Christian-centric. The document includes sweeping statements about "the Christian faith" that tend to obscure the tremendous diversity among Christian traditions. Moreover, the pseudo-theological language used at certain junctures—such as the phrase "prophets crying in the wilderness" to describe Christian NGOs—would no doubt make some non-Christian readers uncomfortable. Given Canada's multicultural context, it is not surprising that CIDA does not wish for a document that delineates a partnership between Christian organizations and the federal government to formally guide its engagement with RNGOs. Norman Cook, who was involved in the dialogue on behalf of CIDA, speculates that senior CIDA staff also felt that the guidelines had gone too far in legitimizing the approaches of Christian NGOs.[24] Even given the limitations of the dialogue and working paper, it is interesting that CIDA has not returned to the topic of religion in

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[21] Vander Zaag, "Canadian Faith-Based Development NGOs and CIDA Funding," *Canadian Journal of Development Studies* 34, no. 2 (2013): 323–24.
[22] A 1998 CIDA document made passing reference to an interchange between Christian and Muslim NGOs that CIDA apparently initiated in June 1996; however, the outcome of the meeting is not well documented (Canadian International Development Agency, "Cultural Dimensions of Sustainable Development: CIDA's Orientations and Initiatives," 1998, 22.).
[23] Paras, "CIDA's Secular Fiction," 243.
[24] Ibid., 241.

development in more than twenty years, despite steps taken in that direction by American and European bilateral donors.

Public Statements and Controversy

Since the 1990s, the federal government has tended to explicitly address the question of religion in development only in response to controversies, such as public opposition to the funding of organizations suspected to be homophobic or proselytist. In 2013, CIDA froze its funding to Ontario-based Crossroads Christian Communications when it came to light that the organization's website listed homosexuality, alongside pedophilia, as a "perversion."[25] The organization was implementing a water, sanitation, and hygiene project in Uganda at a time when the parliament of that country was debating anti-homosexual legislation. Julian Fantino, the federal minister responsible for international development, called for a review of the organization to determine whether funding would be reinstated. He also defended Canada's funding of religious civil society organizations: "We fund results-based projects, not organizations…Projects are delivered without religious content, including this particular project."[26]

Prime Minister Stephen Harper echoed these sentiments later that year when a study by François Audet, Francis Paquette, and Stéphanie Bergeron found that the Harper administration had disproportionately increased development funding to religious—and particularly

[25] Lina Dib and Fannie Olivier, "Fantino Orders Review of Funding for Anti-Gay Group Working in Homophobic Uganda," *The Globe and Mail*, February 10, 2013, http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/national/fantino-orders-review-of-funding-for-anti-gay-group-working-in-homophobic-uganda/article8430601/.
[26] Fannie Olivier, "Harper Government Receives Flak for Funding Anti-Gay Christian Aid Group," *The Globe and Mail*, July 7, 2013, http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/politics/pmo-receives-flack-for-funding-christian-aid-group-that-insulted-homosexuals/article13054775/.

evangelical—organizations.[27] The study, which was published in the Canadian Journal for Development Studies, was picked up by mainstream Canadian media. "We consider the efficiency of projects," said Harper in response to the ensuing outcry, "[We] do not consider the religion of groups promoting these projects."[28] Despite the incendiary public response to the story, the survey in question was flawed, both in its use of a very limited dataset and in its coding of NGOs.[29] An editorial in a later issue of the journal presented a list of complaints the journal had received from groups such as the United Church of Canada that felt they had been inaccurately represented as "proselytist" in the study.[30] A more comprehensive analysis of funding patterns to religious and secular NGOs revealed no consistent increase in funding to religious organizations between 2005 and 2010.[31] CIDA's funding to RNGOs has been relatively constant under both Liberal and Conservative governments.[32]

A common position was communicated in both Fantino's and Harper's statements on funding to RNGOs: an organization's religious affiliation is irrelevant as long as the organization

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[27] François Audet, Francis Paquette, and Stéfanie Bergeron, "Religious Nongovernmental Organisations and Canadian International Aid, 2001–2010: A Preliminary Study," *Canadian Journal of Development Studies* 34, no. 2 (June 2013): 291–320.
[28] CBC News, "Funding Stopped for Anti-Gay Religious Group Pending Investigation," February 10, 2013, http://www.cbc.ca/1.1388877.
[29] Ray Vander Zaag, "Trends in CIDA Funding to Canadian Religious Development NGOs: Analysing Conflicting Studies," *Canadian Journal of Development Studies* 35, no. 3 (2014): 458–74.
[30] John Harriss, "Proselytism and Canadian NGOs: Editor's Note," *Canadian Journal of Development Studies* 35, no. 3 (2014): 480–82.
[31] Vander Zaag, "Canadian Faith-Based Development NGOs and CIDA Funding"; Vander Zaag, "Trends in CIDA Funding to Canadian Religious Development NGOs: Analysing Conflicting Studies."
[32] Although a discernable shift in funding to RNGOs was not evident in the early years of the Harper government, the establishment of the Office for Religious Freedom was a notable development during the Harper era, with at least a marginal impact on international development. The establishment of the office in 2013 was considered by some to be an effort to appease religious voters and promote a Conservative agenda; its controversial nature was such that it was disbanded just a few months after the election of Liberal Justin Trudeau. The office fell under the auspices of the Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development (DFATD), into which the activities of CIDA were also absorbed in 2013. While the associated Religious Freedom Fund was managed separately from development funds, agencies such as Aga Khan Foundation and Mennonite Central Committee, which also undertake international relief and development work, were among grant recipients. (Government of Canada, "The Religious Freedom Fund," n.d., http://www.international.gc.ca/religious_freedom-liberte_de_religion/fund_fond.aspx?lang=eng#a1.).

complies with the government's standards for aid effectiveness, and is prepared to sequester religion from its federally funded program delivery. Their statements thus reaffirm the prohibition on the use of federal government funds for "the promotion and development of a particular religious faith," which was articulated in "Christian NGOs and CIDA."[33] Without a publicly available policy or statement of principles to replace the now obsolete working paper, CIDA's official position on religion and funding to RNGOs must be gleaned from such one-off comments from staff and politicians. Communicating CIDA's position on religion and RNGOs seems to be the work of the program officers responsible for the bulk of interaction with NGOs. Whether official internal policy is in place is unclear; however, Andrea Paras' interviews with CIDA staff reveal that the position articulated by Fantino and Harper seems to have been internalized within CIDA's bureaucracy. In the words of one civil servant, "We [approach] our partners in a secular way whether they are religious or not."[34] Canadian organizations, too, seem to implicitly understand the agency's stance and self-censor the language used in communications with the government accordingly.[35]

CIDA's Funding to Canadian RNGOs, 2005-2011

In the absence of official policy on religion and RNGOs, analysis of the Canadian government's behaviour towards religiously affiliated development actors becomes integral to understanding how CIDA conceives of religion in development. While no major CIDA initiatives have been directed at religion since 1995, funding to religious organizations remains significant. Ray Vander Zaag's quantitative analysis of CIDA funding to RNGOs between the

[33] Canadian International Development Agency, "Christian NGOs and CIDA," 5.
[34] Paras, "CIDA's Secular Fiction and Canadian Faith-Based Organisations," 232.
[35] Ibid., 244.

2005/06 and 2010/11 fiscal years provides valuable insight into the nature and degree of federal funding to religious organizations. A quarter of NGOs that received CIDA funding during this period were coded as "faith-based," and their allotment represented thirty-four percent of all funding to NGOs.[36] Factoring in grants to civil society organizations (CSOs)—including NGOs, volunteer-sending agencies, cooperatives, and professional associations—RNGOs comprised one-sixth of CSO funding partners and received one-fifth of the CIDA funding to this category.[37] By either measure, religiously affiliated organizations are significant development partners of the federal government.

Federal funding to RNGOs in Canada is overwhelmingly directed to Christian organizations. Ninety-four percent of RNGOs that received CIDA funding in the years covered by the study were Christian; only five out of seventy-seven religious organizations funded represented non-Christian traditions, including Islam, Hinduism, Judaism, and the Baha'i tradition.[38] This figure represents relative continuity. Between 1996 and 2005, eighty-eight percent of RNGO recipients of CIDA funding were Christian.[39] A notable exception to the underrepresentation of non-Christian RNGOs is the Aga Khan Foundation. The Foundation, which professes to be non-sectarian, but has strong ties to the Ismaili community, received one-sixth of the total funds allocated to RNGOs between 2005 and 2011.[40] A review of the organization's tax returns reveals that its federal government funding has grown steadily in the

[36] According to Vander Zaag, organizations were coded as "faith based" if, on the website "the NGO made reference to a traditional religious faith, a deity, or spiritual values in at least one of its defining organisational statements (mission or purpose statement, or a values or philosophy of development statement), or showed clear evidence of an organisational relationship to a faith community…." (Vander Zaag, "Canadian Faith-Based Development NGOs and CIDA Funding," 325, 327.)
[37] Ibid., 327–28.
[38] Ibid., 327.
[39] Ibid.
[40] Ibid., 340n10.

years since Vander Zaag's study.[41] In 2005, Aga Khan received over C$10 million from the Canadian government. By 2014, the agency reported receiving more than C$51 million in revenue from Ottawa, more than twice what had been received only two years earlier. The International Development and Relief Foundation, which bases its work on "Islamic principles of human dignity, self-reliance, and social justice," has also secured federal funding, most recently a C$400,000 grant under the government's Maternal, Newborn and Child Health initiative.[42]

CIDA's most prominent Christian RNGO implementing partner is the Canadian Foodgrains Bank (CFGB).[43] CFGB and the United Nations World Food Programme are the two primary channels for the delivery of Canadian government food assistance.[44] Between 2010 and 2014, CFGB received nearly C$142 million in federal government funds, averaging more than C$28 million each year.[45] CFGB is a consortium of fifteen Christian groups that engage in relief and development activities, representing many of the major Christian denominations across Canada.[46] Projects are implemented by the members, and as such, funding through CFGB ultimately supports the work of a variety of Christian agencies. Members may also have a direct

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[41] Based on author's own review of Schedule 6 (line 4540) of the organization's T3010 information return to the Canadian Revenue Agency (CRA), available from the CRA's Charity Listing (http://www.cra-arc.gc.ca/chrts-gvng/lstngs/menu-eng.html).
[42] See CIDA's Project Browser: http://www.international.gc.ca/development-developpement/aidtransparency-transparenceaide/browser-banque.aspx?lang=eng.
[43] Canadian Foodgrains Bank, "Canadian Foodgrains Bank and the Government of Canada," http://foodgrainsbank.ca/about-us/partnership-with-the-government-of-canada/.
[44] Global Affairs Canada, "Food Assistance," 2015, http://www.international.gc.ca/development-developpement/humanitarian_response-situations_crises/foodassistance-assistancealimentaire.aspx?lang=engfoo.
[45] Based on author's own review of Schedule 6 (line 4540) of the organization's T3010 information return to the Canadian Revenue Agency (CRA), available from the CRA's Charity Listing (http://www.cra-arc.gc.ca/chrts-gvng/lstngs/menu-eng.html).
[46] The members of CFGB are: Adventist Development & Relief Agency (ADRA), Canadian Baptist Ministries, Canadian Catholic Organization for Development and Peace, Canadian Lutheran World Relief, Christian and Missionary Alliance in Canada, Emergency Relief & Development Overseas (Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada), Mennonite Central Committee, Nazarene Compassionate Ministries (Church of the Nazarene Canada), Presbyterian World Service and Development, Primate's World Relief and Development Fund (Anglican Church of Canada), The Salvation Army, The United Church of Canada, World Relief Canada, and World Renew (Christian Reformed Church in North America).

funding relationship with the federal government outside of the food assistance programming that is supported by CIDA through CFGB.

The Aga Khan Foundation and Canadian Foodgrains Bank define their objectives in terms of poverty and hunger alleviation, with no reference to religion. Aga Khan seeks to "improve living conditions and opportunities for the poor, without regard to their faith, origin or gender."[47] Though CFGB styles itself as "a Christian response to hunger," the organization characterizes its mission as "working to end global hunger."[48] While Aga Khan and CFGB are among the government's top RNGO partners, CIDA does not restrict its funding to organizations that articulate their mission statements using a "secular" development vocabulary. A number of CIDA-funded organizations combine development and proselytism. Samaritan's Purse, for example, explains that its development work "often earns us opportunities to achieve our ultimate goal, which is to share our faith in Jesus."[49] Audet, Paquette, and Bergeron attempted to analyse the degree of CIDA funding to "proselytist" organizations in the aforementioned 2013 study from the Canadian Journal for Development Studies.[50] Coding issues aside, the authors' side-by-side comparison of RNGOs' statements of intent did shed light on the variety of ways in which organizations themselves frame the role of religion in their work. CIDA's RNGO partners are characterized by various levels of religiosity, from those whose work is simply "inspired by" religious tenets, to those that seek to recruit new religious followers.

It is clear from both Vander Zaag's and Audet, Paquette, and Bergeron's quantitative analyses that the Canadian government engages extensively with RNGOs, including those that

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[47] Canadian Foodgrains Bank, "Mission," n.d., http://foodgrainsbank.ca/about-us/mission/.
[48] Ibid.
[49] Samaritan's Purse Canada, "What Is Samaritan's Purse?," n.d., http://samaritanspurse.ca/what-is-samaritans-purse/.
[50] Audet, Paquette, and Bergeron, "Religious Nongovernmental Organisations and Canadian International Aid, 2001–2010."

proselytize. Nonetheless, CIDA's official position on proselytism is difficult to gauge. The section on Evangelism and Development from the seemingly defunct "Christian NGOs and CIDA" working paper expressly prohibits the use of federal funds for proselytization, though it is unclear whether this document reflects official CIDA policy. No reference is made to proselytism or religious activities in the funding information available on the CIDA website, including in the assessment criteria and the questions and answers section on applying for funding.[51] The Official Development Assistance Accountability Act stipulates that ODA may be provided only if it: "(a) contributes to poverty reduction; (b) takes into account the perspectives of the poor; and (c) is consistent with international human rights standards."[52] While proselytising activities could conceivably be prohibited on any of these grounds, none of these provisions definitively proscribe proselytism.

CIDA's dialogue with RNGOs in the 1990s would have established the agency as a leader in addressing questions of religion and development, had the close of the dialogue not signaled the end of CIDA's engagement with the topic. Aside from scant references to religion in response to public controversy, there is little evidence that CIDA or its successors view religion to be a relevant unit of analysis in foreign aid policy and decision-making. At the same time, funding levels to RNGOs—particularly Christian organizations—are significant, and have remained relatively constant. As will be discussed in the following chapter, CIDA's ongoing funding of RNGOs, coupled with its failure to consider the intersections of religion and development, expose the secularist and Christian biases that shape the official aid agenda. The

[51] See, for example: Global Affairs Canada, "Assessment Criteria," http://www.international.gc.ca/development-developpement/funding-financement/criteria-critere.aspx?lang=eng; Global Affairs Canada, Questions and Answers About Applying for Funding," http://www.international.gc.ca/development-developpement/funding-financement/apply-faq-demande.aspx?lang=eng.
[52] Government of Canada, Official Development Assistance Accountability Act, 2009.

assumption that religion is of no consequence to aid delivery implies that the Canadian government expects religious phenomena to be compartmentalized in federally funded programming. Implicit in this assumption is a dichotomy between "the religious" and "the secular" that has roots in a Christian worldview. A distinction between "religious" and "developmental" activities has been internalized by many Christian groups, yet it is less amenable to other religious perspectives. In the absence of intentional dialogue with organizations that represent non-dominant perspectives on development, it is likely that federal funding to RNGOs will continue to favour Christian organizations.

United Kingdom Department of International Development (DFID)

Overview of DFID's Engagement with RNGOs

CIDA and its British counterpart, the Department for International Development (DFID) have been shaped by markedly different histories. Unlike Canada, itself a former British colony, Britain had enduring and extensive historic ties with the Global South. Britain's earliest development efforts were tied to its colonial interests. Economic assistance provided to struggling colonial economies was hardly altruistic and was expected to accrue benefits to Britain. Grants-in-aid, for example, were provided to promote self-sufficiency so that the colonies would not be a drain on British resources; accordingly, grants were accompanied by close scrutiny of colonial budgets.[53] Similarly, in the wake of World War I, Britain offered loans

[53] Barrie Ireton, Britain's International Development Policies: A History of DFID and Overseas Aid (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 6–7.

to its colonies to support capital projects that required input of British goods, thereby stimulating employment in Britain.[54]

Geo-political events in the mid-twentieth century provoked a shift in the way the British government approached economic assistance. Decolonization caused Britain to rethink its role in the developing world at the same time as the birth of the multilateral system for aid provision (the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, now the World Bank, and specialized programs within the United Nations) put aid on the international agenda.[55] Aid was increasingly framed as both the moral responsibility of wealthy countries, especially former colonial powers, and a means to promote geo-political stability and protect national economic interests.[56] In response to the new approach to aid, DFID's predecessor, the Ministry of Overseas Development, was established in 1964, just a few years before CIDA.[57] Originally an independent department, the ministry operated under the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and was known as the Overseas Development Administration under the Conservative governments between 1970-74 and 1979-97.[58]

The contemporary Department for International Development (DFID) was created by the Labour government in 1997. DFID's establishment marked another significant shift in British aid. DFID's creation was framed as a reflection of the country's "clear moral responsibility to help combat global poverty," without reference to the national interest.[59] As this framing might suggest, the department had a stronger poverty reduction mandate than its predecessors.[60] The poverty reduction imperative was written into law with the International Development Act of

[54] Ireton, Britain's International Development Policies, 7.
[55] Ibid., 19.
[56] Ibid.
[57] Ibid., 1.
[58] Ibid.
[59] Ibid., 50.
[60] Ibid., 65.

2002, which stipulated that development assistance must be provided for the purpose of "furthering sustainable development" or "improving the welfare of the population," and must be "likely to contribute to a reduction in poverty."[61]

DFID and Civil Society

While the Canadian government drew heavily on expertise from civil society upon the founding of its official development agency, the British government had extensive linkages with developing countries, including a large staff presence in the Global South. While Britain required little assistance from civil society in its early development efforts, DFID has been intentional in its engagement with civil society organizations since its establishment in 1997. This increased focus on civil society roughly coincided with a decline in the department's overseas staff. In the mid-1960s, sixteen thousand British staff posted in developing countries were associated with the Overseas Development Ministry; by the 1990s this number had dwindled to almost zero.[62] While initially skeptical about the effectiveness of non-government organizations in combating poverty, and the appropriateness of channeling funds to private institutions, DFID gradually warmed to the idea of including NGOs as partners.[63] The introduction of Programme Partnership Arrangements (PPAs) in 2000 marked a noteworthy policy shift in relation to civil society, as the agreements provided flexible funding that would allow organizations to pursue their own strategic objectives.[64]

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[61] UK Parliament, "International Development Act 2002," 2002, http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2002/1/pdfs/ukpga_20020001_en.pdf\nlegislation.gov.uk.
[62] Owen Barder, "Reforming Development Assistance: Lessons from the UK Experience," Center for Global Development Working Paper 70, 2005, 10, http://www.cgdev.org/publication/reforming-development-assistance-lessons-uk-experience-working-paper-70.
[63] Ibid., 27.
[64] Ibid., 27–28.

Further affirming DFID's commitment to civil society partnerships, a 2009 government white paper called for "deeper and broader partnerships with civil society organizations (CSOs), faith groups, trade unions and the private sector" and pledged to double civil society support to £300 million (C$522 million) by 2013.[65] Most recently, DFID has undertaken a Civil Society Partnership Review to guide its future engagement with NGOs and other civil society actors. The findings from dialogue with stakeholders between July and November 2015 are expected to be released in conjunction with the findings from reviews of the bilateral and multilateral aid processes. While the outcomes are not yet available, DFID has promised that it will revolutionize DFID's approach to civil society.[66]

DFID has identified religious groups as a distinct subset of civil society actors.[67] The adoption of such a stance was influenced by a series of events in the early years of the new millennium. Particularly influential was the Jubilee 2000 campaign for debt relief to low-income countries, which was built on early Judeo-Christian notions of debt forgiveness. The high-profile campaign, and the subsequent Make Poverty History movement, drew the British government's attention to faith-based activism and spurred meetings with religious groups and leaders.[68] Following the terrorist attacks of 9/11, the British government approached questions of religion and politics with a new urgency. An inter-departmental dialogue on religion was launched in 2003.[69] DFID's participation in the dialogue was hampered by the absence of a clearly

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[65] Department for International Development, *Eliminating World Poverty: Building Our Common Future*, *A Challenge for the 21st Century - A Summary*, 2009, 125–26, https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/229029/7656.pdf.
[66] George Mclaughlin, "Civil Society Partnership Review : Reshaping Our Work with CSOs," n.d.
[67] Department for International Development, "Faith Partnership Principles: Working Effectively with Faith Groups to Fight Global Poverty," 2012.
[68] Mike Battcock, "Working Effectively with Faith Groups to Fight Poverty: Background Paper," 2011, 394, www.jliflc.com/wp.../Working-effectively-with-faith-groups-to-fight-poverty-2011.doc; Clarke, "Religion and International Development," 394.
[69] Ibid.

articulated policy on religion and religious actors and a lack of relevant internal reflection and research.[70] As the British government's interest in religion increased, DFID's apparent lack of expertise on the topic prompted a number of initiatives on religion in the next decade.

Religions and Development Research Programme and "Faith Partnership Principles"

Two recent DFID initiatives relating to religion and development warrant attention. The first was the £3.5 million (C$6.1 million) Religions and Development Research Programme, housed at the University of Birmingham from 2005 to 2010.[71] Led by Carole Rakodi, the five-year program brought together preeminent scholars on religion and development, including Emma Tomalin, Masooda Bano, and Nida Kirmani. With case studies focusing on India, Nigeria, Pakistan, and Tanzania, the program produced sixty-nine working papers and twenty-one policy briefs on a diverse range of topics, in addition to dozens of other scholarly works attributed to the associated researchers. At least eighteen events were convened in the UK, as well as in Tanzania, Pakistan, and India.

Despite the abundance of research generated through the project, it is difficult to assess the degree to which DFID has implemented the research program's findings. Five months after the project's final report was submitted to DFID, Rakodi expressed dismay about the department's lack of response to the report.[72] She attributes this to a lack of institutional structure to satisfactorily deal with questions of religion and development:

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[70] Battcock, "Working Effectively with Faith Groups to Fight Poverty," 394.
[71] See the Religion and Development Research Programme website: http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/schools/government-society/departments/international-development/rad/index.aspx
[72] Rakodi reflected, "It is quite stunning, and also disillusioning that our work has been given such little attention within DFID. I was frankly surprised." (Katherine Marshall, "A Discussion with Carole Rakodi, Former Director, Religions and Development Programme, University of Birmingham," 2011, http://berkleycenter.georgetown.edu/interviews/a-discussion-with-carole-rakodi-former-director-religions-and-development-programme-university-of-birmingham.).

> Even if there is staff interest, there is not an institutional home for our research, and no one to take responsibility for it. For the research to be taken seriously, DFID would have to designate a unit with policy responsibility for the issue, and this is not happening, either because the department is not willing to make the effort, or is not able to do so without a mandate from Parliament.[73]

As the case of DFID suggests, even where there is political will within institutional donor agencies to address questions of religion and development, their bureaucratic and political configurations may limit the degree to which these questions may be practically entertained.

The second major initiative undertaken by the British government was the development of a document entitled "Faith Partnership Principles: Working Effectively with Faith Groups to Fight Global Poverty" in 2012. Similar to "Christian NGOs and CIDA," "Faith Partnership Principles" seeks to clarify DFID's terms of engagement with RNGOs in order to enhance poverty reduction efforts. The statement of principles was officially launched at an interfaith event staged at Lambeth Palace, with addresses delivered by the Secretary of State for International Development, Andrew Mitchell, and the Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr. Rowan Williams.[74] Attendees included religious leaders from a range of traditions, an affirmation of the document's purportedly pluralist nature.

DFID has also undertaken less publicized efforts to engage with the theme of religion. There are regular interchanges between DFID and religious leaders representing mainstream Christian denominations, and, albeit to a lesser extent, with evangelical, Pentecostal, Islamic, and Jewish groups.[75] Religious groups, along with businesses, trade unions, the education sector, and the media, were central to DFID's efforts to raise awareness on development in the early

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[73] Marshall, "A Discussion with Carole Rakodi."
[74] "'Faith, Poverty and Justice': Lambeth Palace Inter-Faith Event with DFID, Tuesday 26th June 2012 Lambeth," accessed May 6, 2016, http://rowanwilliams.archbishopofcanterbury.org/articles.php/2539/faith-poverty-and-justice-lambeth-palace-inter-faith-event-with-dfid.
[75] Gerard Clarke, "Agents of Transformation? Donors, Faith-Based Organisations and International Development," *Third World Quarterly* 28, no. 1 (2007): 86.

2000s.[76] The Development Awareness Fund, for example, supported organizations such as UK Jewish Aid & International Development, Muslim Aid, Islamic Relief, and Christian Aid in raising awareness on development issues within their constituencies.[77] Through one such initiative, DFID collaborated with religious groups to produce booklets on the Millennium Development Goals written from different religious perspectives.[78] In addition to accessing DFID's primary funding mechanisms, RNGOs have been actively involved with projects implemented by country offices.[79]

DFID's Funding to RNGOs: Programme Partnership Arrangements and UK Aid Direct

Like CIDA, DFID counts religious organizations amongst its CSO partners; however, there is significant divergence in their respective approaches to RNGOs. As noted above, Canadian politicians and bureaucrats claim that the religious affiliation of NGOs has no impact on CIDA's funding decisions. By contrast, in a 2009 white paper, DFID committed to double support to religious development actors.[80] DFID reasoned that such a direction was warranted as a result of "the unique contribution that [faith groups] can make in both delivering development on the ground, and connecting with communities here and abroad."[81]

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[76] Guy Dominy et al., *Review of Using Aid Funds in the UK to Promote Awareness of Global Poverty* (London: Department for International Development, 2011), 12–13, https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/213991/rev-using-fnds-prom-aware-glob-pov.pdf.

[77] House of Commons, *Department for International Development: Departmental Report 2004, Eighth Report of Session 2003-04* (London: The International Development Committee, 2004), ev 52, http://www.ica.coop/al-ica/attachments/gullyinternationaldevelopment.pdf.

[78] Clarke, "Agents of Transformation?," 86; House of Commons, Department for International Development: Departmental Report 2004, Eighth Report of Session 2003-04, ev 52.

[79] Clarke, "Agents of Transformation?," 86.

[80] Department for International Development, *Eliminating World Poverty*, 126, 132, 134.

[81] Ibid., 134.

Whereas the studies carried out by Vander Zaag and Audet, Paquet, and Bergeron provide rich data on CIDA's disbursements to RNGOs, no comprehensive quantitative study of British development funding to religious and secular organizations was previously available. Without data on funding levels, it is difficult to gauge the extent of DFID's partnerships with RNGOs. To provide a sense of scale for the present study, a quantitative analysis of two of DFID's largest NGO funding mechanisms, UK Aid Direct and Programme Partnership Arrangements, was conducted. The relevant dataset, which included all organizations funded through the two streams from 2011 to 2016, was acquired through an enquiry to DFID's Inclusive Societies Department.

Coding of "religious" and "secular" NGOs was based on the organizational statements available on each agency's website.[82] Reflecting the professionalization of the sector, all of the organizations surveyed had a web presence. The vast majority of websites included an "About Us" section, or its equivalent, which generally provided sufficient evidence to facilitate coding. In the case of ambiguity, other sections of the website, such as organizational histories, were consulted. An organization was classified as "religious" if it had an obvious affiliation with a religious tradition, or if its statements of mission, vision, and values referenced phenomena conventionally classified as "religious." As this determination was made on the basis of self-representation, organizations that did not mention religion in their statements of identity were coded as "secular." The findings of this analysis, which will be detailed below, revealed that considerable funds have been allocated to RNGOs in recent years.

[82] As will be discussed in the following chapter, such a distinction can be highly problematic. Nonetheless, these categories are common within the development arena and it is clear that DFID distinguishes between "religious" and "secular" organizations.

UK Aid Direct, formerly the Global Poverty Action Fund, is the central funding mechanism for religious groups.[83] This stream provides project-specific grants on a matching fund basis in support of the Millennium Development Goals and subsequent post-2015 Sustainable Development Goals. Consistent with DFID's 2009 commitment to forge "broader and deeper partnerships," the fund was designed to expand and diversify DFID's support to small and medium-sized civil society organizations.[84] Two types of grants are awarded through this scheme. The larger of the two, impact grants, range from £250 thousand to £4 million (C$435 thousand to C$7 million)[85] and are awarded to medium-sized CSOs registered in the UK or one of DFID's priority countries. Smaller grants of up to £250 thousand (C$435 thousand) are awarded to small UK-based NGOs through the Community Partnership window (formerly the Innovation window).[86] Dozens of first-time DFID funding partners have received grants through the fund, including RNGOs such as the Buddhist Karuna Trust, South African Catholic Bishops Conference AIDS Office, Tearfund UK, and the Adventist Development and Relief Agency.[87] One hundred fifty-one organizations received UK Aid Direct grants between 2011 and 2016. Twenty-eight, or nineteen percent of these organizations, were religiously affiliated. Of the £130 million (C$226 million) allocated through this stream, £27.5 million (C$47.8 million), or twenty-one percent, was allocated to RNGOs.[88]

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[83] Department for International Development, "Faith Partnership Principles," 4.
[84] Department for International Development, *Eliminating World Poverty*, 54, 126; Coffey International Development, "Evaluation Manager PPA and GPAF: Evaluation Strategy," 2012, 2; Department for International Development, "Faith Partnership Principles," 4.
[85] Based on the Bank of Canada's nominal noon exchange rate for 28 June 2016 (rate of exchange: 1.7399).
[86] Coffey International Development, "Evaluation Manager PPA and GPAF: Evaluation Strategy," 2.
[87] Department for International Development, "Faith Partnership Principles," 4.
[88] This figure does not include £9.8 million (C$17.1 million) paid to Triple Line & Crown Agents for the management of the program.

Programme Partnership Arrangements (PPAs) are among DFID's most important civil society funding instruments.[89] PPAs provide flexible funding in the form of large grants to a relatively small number of organizations. Whereas UK Aid Direct caters to smaller development actors, PPA-holders are prominent organizations with global reach that demonstrate a high level of cohesion with DFID's objectives and strong performance in terms of development indicators.[90] PPA contracts represent significant and stable funding. The smallest grant awarded in the most recent round was £1 million (C$1.7 million), and more than two-thirds of PPA-holders received grants of £10 million (C$17.4 million) or more. The large size of individual grants, and the unrestricted nature of funding, suggests that DFID has a great deal of confidence in the organizations to which it extends PPAs.

Grants in the most recent funding round were awarded for the period between 2011 and 2014, but were extended through to 2016 to accommodate the Civil Society Partnership Review without disrupting funding to organizations. During this period, a total of £690 million (C$1.2 billion) was allocated to forty-one organizations, including five religious organizations. These RNGOs, which constituted twelve percent of successful applicants, received £105.8 million (C$184 million), or fifteen percent of all PPA funding. Given that RNGOs comprise nineteen percent of UK Aid Direct funding partners, and have received twenty-one percent of funds allocated through this stream, it appears that RNGOs have been less successful in accessing PPA funding, which is unrestricted, than in securing project-specific funding through UK Aid Direct. Restricted funding is easier to monitor and allows government donors greater control over the use of funds, whereas unrestricted funds require a higher level of trust in an organization and

[89] The fund was renamed in 2014.
[90] Coffey International Development, "Evaluation Manager PPA and GPAF: Evaluation Strategy," 2.

confidence in the complementarity of development objectives.[91] Nonetheless, it is worth noting that the value of individual PPA grants awarded to RNGOs was substantial. Christian Aid's £41.7 million (C$72.6 million) grant was the fourth largest PPA, ranking behind only Oxfam, Save the Children, and International Planned Parenthood Federation. Three of the ten largest PPAs were awarded to RNGOs (Christian Aid, the Catholic Fund for Overseas Development, and World Vision UK). This seems to suggest that DFID is confident that the RNGOs it has selected as partners will spend unrestricted funds appropriately.

DFID's traditional RNGO funding partners have been mainstream Christian groups such as Christian Aid, the Catholic Fund for Overseas Development (CAFOD), and the Catholic Institute for International Relations (CIIR).[92] Christian Aid, which succinctly describes its vision as "an end to poverty," is known for its close resemblance to secular organizations and the non-proselytist nature of its work.[93] The latter two organizations are obviously associated with mainstream denominations. In recent years, however, the department's funding to RNGOs has not been restricted to "secularized" agencies or those with denominational affiliations. PPAs with World Vision and Islamic Relief, for example, represent a modest diversification of core funding to non-traditional RNGO partners. DFID has had Programme Partnership Arrangements in place with World Vision since 2006. The organization is not aligned with a particular Christian denomination and is generally regarded as evangelical.[94] According to its mission

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[91] PPA funds are designed to be flexible; however, an external evaluation of the PPA funding mechanism has suggested that some organizations chose to direct PPA funds to particular projects as a result of rigorous monitoring, evaluation and reporting requirements, which are easier to manage if the use of funds is concentrated. (Independent Commision for Aid Impact, "DFID's Support for Civil Society Organisations through Programme Partnership Arrangements," 2013, 22.)

[92] Clarke, "Agents of Transformation?," 93*n*43.

[93] Christian Aid, "Our Aims and Values," n.d., http://www.christianaid.org.uk/aboutus/who/aims/our_aims.aspx; Emma Tomalin, "Religions and Development" (London: Routledge, 2013), 209; Thaut, "The Role of Faith in Christian Faith-Based Humanitarian Agencies: Constructing the Taxonomy," 334-35.

[94] Tomalin, "Religions and Development," 210.

statement, the organization exists to "seek justice and bear witness to the good news of the Kingdom of God."[95] While DFID did not begin to provide core funding to Islamic Relief until 2011, the department has been deliberate in nurturing this partnership, for example, by including the organization as the only NGO partner in the aforementioned research program on religion and development.[96]

The department's commitment to diversifying its civil society partnerships, and expanding its engagement with religious organizations, is even more evident in its disbursement of funds through UK Aid Direct. Of the thirty-eight Christian RNGOs that received funding through this stream, the majority did not have a particular denominational affiliation. Due to the criteria for selection, all were small or medium-sized organizations. While some, like Samaritan's Purse, are associated with proselytism, a number report that their development efforts do not carry a religious agenda. Send a Cow, for example, professes to "pursue our charitable objectives in accordance with the principles and values of the Christian faith," yet its website explicitly states that the organization "works with people of all faiths and none" and does not "evangelise or proselytise."[97] While DFID's funding of such organizations suggests that it is comfortable with the religious motivations behind aid provision, the department expressly prohibits the use of federal funds for projects that involve proselytism.[98] Guidelines for the first round of UK Aid Direct funding include the following proviso:

> DFID recognises that Faith-Based Organisations play a very important role in International Development. However, applications from organisations that include proselytising in their organisational objectives must be able to provide assurances that

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[95] World Vision, "About Us," n.d., http://www.worldvision.org.uk/who-we-are/about-world-vision/.
[96] Marie Juul Petersen, For Humanity or for the Umma: Aid and Islam in Transnational Muslim NGOs (London: C. Hurst & Co., 2015), 181n21.
[97] Send A Cow, "Our Vision, Mission and Values," n.d., https://www.sendacow.org/mission-vision-and-values.
[98] Steve Bradbury, "Missions, Missionaries and Development," in *Handbook of Research on Development and Religion*, ed. Matthew Clarke (Cheltenham: Edward Elgar, 2013), 422.

> their promotion of religion would not influence the implementation of the proposed project, or lead to any form of exclusivity or conditionality.[99]

The onus is thus on organizations that engage in proselytism to ensure that such activities do not impact development efforts.

While DFID has had some success in diversifying its partnerships, funding to RNGOs in both the PPA and UK Aid Direct streams has primarily been awarded to Christian organizations. Ninety percent of UK Aid Direct funding to religious organizations was channeled through Christian entities, the allotments of which totalled £24.7 million (C$43 million). Only three non-Christian RNGOs—Muslim Action for Development and Education, the Aga Khan Foundation, and the Buddhist organization Karuna Trust—received funding through UK Aid Direct. The combined total of their grants was only £2.8 million (C$4.9 million), representing ten percent of funding to RNGOs and two percent of the total funds allocated.[100] Islamic Relief is the only non-Christian RNGO to have a Programme Partnership Arrangement in place with the federal government. The organization received a relatively modest PPA, valued at £5.8 million (C$10.1 million), compared to £41.7 million (C$72.6 million) awarded to Christian Aid and £64.2 million (C$111.7 million) to Oxfam. DFID has demonstrated a commitment to correcting this imbalance and, in particular, to expanding its relations with Muslim NGOs. The department has staged workshops to assist Muslim organizations in accessing federal funding and has participated in the Humanitarian Forum, which was initiated to foster collaboration between Muslim and Western development actors.[101] DFID's efforts to build a relationship with Islamic Relief are

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[99] Department for International Development, "UK Aid Direct Funding Round One: Impact Grants Guidelines for Applicants," n.d., https://assets.digital.cabinet-office.gov.uk/media/544a3462ed915d137d000003/UK-Aid-Direct-fund-rnd-one-impact-grants-guid-for-appls.docx.

[100] Though this allocation is small, it is important to note that all grants awarded through UK Aid Direct are modest, and the Aga Khan Foundation's £2.3 million (C$4 million) allocation was the eighth largest overall.

[101] Mohammed R. Kroessin, "Worlds Apart? Muslim Donors and International Humanitarianism," *Forced Migration Review*, no. 29 (2007): 36; Petersen, *For Humanity or for the Umma*, 53.

also an indication of the department's commitment to expanding its RNGO partnerships beyond Christian organizations. The impact of this commitment on funding levels to non-Christian RNGOs remains to be seen.

DFID has devoted significant attention to religion in recent years, most notably in its funding of the Religions and Development Research Programme and its launch of "Faith Partnership Principles" to improve its collaboration with religious actors. The department has established funding mechanisms, such as UK Aid Direct, that target small and medium-sized organizations in order to expand its partnerships with CSOs, including RNGOs. A cursory quantitative review of two of DFID's main funding instruments reveals that substantial British government resources have been channeled through RNGOs in the last five years. While this demonstrates a significant level of engagement with religious development actors, DFID has engaged most extensively with Christian organizations. Notwithstanding DFID's efforts diversify its funding, the vast majority of funding awarded to RNGOs has been received by Christian NGOs. As the following chapter will demonstrate, the underrepresentation of non-Christian RNGOs among DFID funding partners is indicative of the influence of a Judeo-Christian secularist model,[102] which has shaped DFID's approach to religion and development. The dichotomy between "the religious" and "the secular" that DFID embraces tends to favour Christian organizations over those representing other religious traditions.

While DFID has affirmed the relevance of religion to development on many occasions, there is insufficient evidence to determine whether and to what extent initiatives such as the Religions and Development Research Programme and "Faith Partnership Principles" have concretely impacted DFID policy and practice. Given Carole Rakodi's concern that DFID lacks

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[102] To borrow a term employed by Elizabeth Shakman Hurd (Elizabeth Shakman Hurd, *The Politics of Secularism in International Relations* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007)).

the "institutional structure" to meaningfully implement the findings of the research program, an evaluation of the impact of both initiatives is in order. Moreover, a quantitative review tracing funding to RNGOs over a sustained period of time is required to assess whether DFID has achieved its commitment to double and to diversify grants to organizations in this category. As CIDA's disengagement with the topic of religion suggests, donor interest in religion can be fleeting. While DFID has been intentional about its engagement with religion and RNGOs, the direction that the department's approach to religion will take in the future is not clear.

Conclusion

This chapter has traced the divergent histories that shaped the Canadian and British governments' approaches to the intersections between religion and development. Canada's heavy reliance on civil society during the early years of its official development efforts set the stage for a long tradition of funding the work of development NGOs, both religious and secular. As long as organizations comply with federal government policy and standards for effective development, CIDA assumes that an organization's religious identity is immaterial. By contrast, civil society was less central to Britain's early development initiatives, but has become a priority in recent decades. As DFID's interest in civil society evolved, religious organizations were identified as ideal partners for project implementation, prompting the department to expand and diversify its partnerships with RNGOs.

Since its inception in 1997, DFID has followed a very different trajectory with its engagement with religion than its Canadian equivalent. Whereas CIDA's attention to the interplay between religion and development has waned, DFID's has intensified. During the last decade, DFID has been at the forefront of institutional donors attempting to address questions of

religion in development, investing significant resources into relevant research initiatives and taking intentional steps to formalize and intensify its partnerships with religious groups. By contrast, CIDA has ceased to consider religion a relevant unit of analysis in its development policy and decision-making. While the Canadian government's dialogue with RNGOs in the 1990s preceded similar efforts in the UK and other Western countries by a decade, the initiative was severely limited by its exclusive engagement with Christian organizations. Moreover, though the Canadian government has provided ongoing funding to RNGOs, there have been no significant attempts to address questions of religion and development since the dialogue with Christian NGOs concluded in 1995.

Despite the divergent trajectories of their engagement with religion, an analysis of funding patterns suggests that both donors regard RNGOs as legitimate development actors and as potential partners for project implementation. Though the datasets available for the British and Canadian funding contexts represent different time periods, and thus are not conducive to direct comparison, it is clear that both CIDA and DFID have invested significant financial resources in the work of religious development organizations. A number of trends are notable in CIDA's and DFID's funding of RNGOs. First, the variety of religious organizations they fund ranges from those such as CFGB and Christian Aid, which define their missions strictly in relation to poverty and hunger alleviation, to organizations such as World Vision and Samaritan's Purse, which include proselytism among their objectives. As the following chapter will discuss, both donors fund proselytist organizations, though they expect proselytist activities to be compartmentalized from aid provision. Secondly, funding to RNGOs has been concentrated in a relatively small number of organizations. PPA grants in the tens of millions of pounds awarded to Christian Aid, CAFOD, and World Vision dwarf those received by RNGOs in the UK Aid Direct stream, which

are worth one million pounds or less. In the Canadian context, groups such as CFGB and the Aga Khan Foundation have received a large proportion of federal funding to RNGOs. The absolute value of the federal grants they have received has only increased in recent years. Finally, CIDA and DFID tend to program larger proportions of their CSO funding through Christian organizations than through organizations representing other religious traditions. While efforts have been made in the British context to diversity funding to non-Christian RNGOs, it is too early to gauge the success of such efforts. Comparable efforts to diversify CIDA funding have not been evident. Reasons for these funding trends will be discussed in subsequent chapters.

Notably, CIDA and DFID frame their approach to RNGOs differently. While Canadian government representatives and civil servants are adamant that they do not consider the religious affiliation of organizations in their funding decisions, DFID regards RNGOs as having a distinct role to play in development processes. The donors' respective stances on RNGOs are indicative of their approaches to religion more broadly. Given DFID's assumption that RNGOs are distinct, it is not surprising that the department has devoted more attention to questions of religion than has its Canadian counterpart. Conversely, the Canadian government has seemed more intent on affording RNGOs and secular NGOs the same treatment than on investigating whether RNGOs have a distinctive added value. Not deeming religion to be a relevant variable in funding decisions, CIDA has declined to examine questions of religion in development more broadly.

The present chapter's analysis of CIDA's and DFID's approaches to religion and development, with a focus on their funding relationships with RNGOs, is incomplete without a more thorough examination of the way in which donors frame their engagement with religion and religious actors. Drawing on the documents produced to guide the donors' engagement with religious organizations, "Christian NGOs and CIDA" and "Faith Partnership Principles," the

following chapter will seek to expose CIDA and DFID's underlying assumptions about religion and secularism. These assumptions shape the donors' development visions and their identification of ideal partners for pursuing these visions. An analysis of donor discourse will contribute to an enhanced understanding of how institutional donors challenge or perpetuate the dominant "secular" development paradigm, and which actors and perspectives are marginalized as a result.

3

Donor Discourses on Religion

Introduction

Whereas the previous chapter sought to trace the general trajectories of CIDA's and DFID's engagement with religion in practice, the current chapter provides valuable insight into donor engagement with religion, secularism, and development on a discursive and conceptual level. An examination of donor discourses is an important complement to the foregoing discussion as it provides insight into to how donors understand—or profess to understand—the relationship between religion and development. Such an investigation can be highly instructive in exposing the assumptions about religion, secularism and development that underlie donor approaches to religion and religious actors. As Chapter 4 will explain, the way in which these concepts are implicitly or explicitly defined by donors establishes parameters that govern the type of visions, discourses, activities, and actors that are considered legitimate in federally funded development activity.

The following discussion will examine the ways in which donors frame the relationship between religion and development in relevant texts. At the centre of this analysis are two documents developed by CIDA and DFID to guide their work with religious development organizations: CIDA's 1995 working paper "Christian NGOs and CIDA: Guiding Principles,

Understandings and Affirmations" and DFID's 2012 "Faith Partnership Principles: Working Effectively with Faith Groups to Fight Global Poverty." These documents provide the richest material for analysis of the donors' discursive approach to religion and religious actors in their respective contexts. In the Canadian case, "Christian FBOs and CIDA" is the only publication that deals at length with religion in foreign aid delivery. As discussed in the previous chapter, the two decades since the working paper's release have been characterized by near silence on CIDA's part in relation to religion. By contrast, DFID has been intentional in its engagement with religious themes during the last decade. Consequently, evidence of the department's approach to religion can be found in a variety of publications, including the 2009 white paper, "Eliminating World Poverty: Building Our Common Future."[1] Even with the availability of other sources by which to gauge DFID's approach to religion, "Faith Partnership Principles" is by far the department's most comprehensive treatment of the topic.

Techniques in discourse analysis will be employed to explore the way in which the relationships between religion and development, and between religious actors and government donors, are articulated in "Christian NGOs and CIDA" and "Faith Partnership Principles."[2] The chapter will begin by examining the essential features of both documents as communicative devices and the processes that led to their creation. The form and stated purpose of both documents will be analyzed, as well as the vocabularies that dominate the discourse and how the language employed reflects the goals and perspectives represented. This initial overview will

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[1] Department for International Development, *Eliminating World Poverty: Building Our Common Future*, *A Challenge for the 21st Century - A Summary*, 2009, https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/229029/7656.pdf.

[2] I have found the following overview to be helpful in structuring my study on a practical level: Florian Schneider, "How to Do a Discourse Analysis: A Toolbox for Analysing Political Texts," Politics East Asia, http://www.politicseastasia.com/studying/how-to-do-a-discourse-analysis/.

yield insight into the texts' intended audience, authoritative status, and relevance to a study of donor approaches to religion and development.

This broad overview will be followed by a thematic study that attempts to identify and elaborate upon the positions that are communicated in the texts. The purpose of this analysis is to examine whether and to what extent a religious-secular binary is implied, to identify the relationship between religion and development that is considered normative, and to discern what assumptions about religion and secularism seem to be operative in both documents. In order to better understand CIDA and DFID's treatment of secularism in the two documents, Elizabeth Shakman Hurd's concepts of laicism and Judeo-Christian secularism will be employed.[3] Foucauldian analysis is not the foundation of the present study; however, given the complex power dynamics that characterize international development practice—which are discussed in the following chapters—such an approach would be highly instructive for future research.

Though separated chronologically by nearly two decades, both the CIDA and DFID documents provide statements of principles that lay the groundwork for a tacit agreement between the government donor and religious development organizations. This contract permits collaboration between the two parties on two conditions: that the partnership contributes to development objectives, and that the relationship proceeds according to particular rules of engagement that stipulate which manifestations of "religion" are acceptable in the development arena. The first condition is indicative of the instrumentalist approach of both donors in addressing questions of religion and development, while the second suggests that their approaches are guided by culturally conditioned understandings of "religion" and "the secular."

[3] Elizabeth Shakman Hurd, *The Politics of Secularism in International Relations* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007).

Dialogue and the Development of Guiding Principles

Christian organizations were central players in the development of both the CIDA and DFID documents. "Christian NGOs and CIDA" was the product of a dialogue process initiated by CIDA's NGO program and led by what the working paper refers to as a "joint Churches/CIDA steering committee."[4] Responsibility for the outcome document was assigned to Jim Cornelius, who would later go on to become the Executive Director of the Canadian Foodgrains Bank, a major Christian NGO partner of the Canadian government.[5] The dialogue consisted of a preliminary two-day conference in June 1993 and a second conference in October 1994, the latter of which focused specifically on the formulation of principles to guide collaboration between CIDA and Christian development organizations.[6] Only Christian NGOs were represented in the dialogue, and the resulting document, which was based on feedback from participants in both conferences, demonstrates no pretense of being an "interfaith" document.

While the working paper primarily references "the Christian faith," religion is discussed in generic terms at certain junctures. The discussion of RNGOs as civil society actors, for example, is not specific to Christian groups. Similarly, the embargoes on proselytism and conditional aid are not restricted to Christian evangelism, but are concerned with the "promotion of particular religious beliefs" more generally.[7] Indeed, the document has particular aspirations towards universality, explaining in the opening paragraphs that, "Many of the principles, understandings and affirmations outlined below are not unique to Christian NGOs and their

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[4] Canadian International Development Agency, "Christian NGOs and CIDA: Guiding Principles, Understandings and Affirmations," 1995, 1–2.
[5] Andrea Paras, "CIDA's Secular Fiction and Canadian Faith-Based Organisations," *Canadian Journal of Development Studies* 33, no. 2 (June 2012): 240.
[6] Canadian International Development Agency, "Christian NGOs and CIDA," 2.
[7] Ibid., 4.

relationship to CIDA. Many are equally applicable to other faith based or secular NGOs."[8] The assumption that aspects of the agreement forged between CIDA and Christian NGOs can be extended to other religious traditions is evidence that Christianity is understood as a normative model on which the category of "religion" is based.

The process that culminated in the development of DFID's "Faith Partnership Principles" was initiated in February 2011, when the British Secretary of State announced the establishment of a working group for the purpose of determining guidelines for DFID's relationship with religious groups.[9] The working group convened in June of the same year and, following a series of consultations, "Faith Partnership Principles" was released the following June.[10] While the process was consultative and aspired to be religiously inclusive, the working group composition was weighted in favour of Christian perspectives. Eleven of thirteen members represented Christian organizations, including Catholic, Church of England, Quaker, and non-denominational Christian groups. Only two non-Christian organizations were represented: one Muslim and one Sikh.[11] While "Faith Partnership Principles" is ostensibly an "interfaith" document, the DFID dialogue initiative, like the Canadian process, was dominated by Christian organizations.

The stated purpose of the CIDA and DFID documents is strikingly similar: to delineate the relationship between donors and religious groups in order to enhance development initiatives.[12] The language employed in the texts is indicative of a dual purpose: to promote development and to foster positive relationships among religious and non-religious actors. With

[8] Canadian International Development Agency, "Christian NGOs and CIDA," 1.
[9] Department for International Development, "Faith Partnership Principles: Working Effectively with Faith Groups to Fight Global Poverty," 2012, 2.
[10] Department for International Development, "Faith Partnership Principles," 2, 8.
[11] Ibid., 10.
[12] Canadian International Development Agency, "Christian NGOs and CIDA," 1; Department for International Development, "Faith Partnership Principles," 2.

regards to the former objective, both documents rely heavily on language associated with conventional development activity. The dominant aid culture has its own lexicon. The liberal use of terms such as "progress," "beneficiaries," "impact," "evidence," "evaluation," "measurement," and "results" in both documents speaks to the bureaucratic and social scientific nature of both governments' approaches to development. References to "gender equality," "environmental sustainability," and "resilience" are also a product of the dominant development paradigm. The documents also make extensive use of the language of pluralism and dialogue. The abundance of references to "solidarity," "mutuality," "common understanding," "diversity," "participation," "partnership," and "bridge-building" is indicative of the collaborative objectives of the documents. In addition to promoting development, CIDA and DFID hope that the documents will nurture amity between religious groups and donors, though they do not expect consensus on all issues.[13]

In addition to the lexicons of development and pluralism, a third vocabulary characterizes the CIDA document. Two distinctive voices seem to be reflected in the working paper: that of Christian NGOs, and that of CIDA. As a result of the participation of the former, theological language is embedded in the document. The mission of the church and Christians' divine "calling" are mentioned in several passages.[14] For instance, Christians are said to be "called to participate in God's loving, caring and saving action around the world…"[15] Additional references are made to the role of the divine in bringing about transformation.[16] The statement "Christian NGOs are more than… prophets crying in the wilderness" is also an obvious allusion

[13] Canadian International Development Agency, "Christian NGOs and CIDA," 1, 3; Department for International Development, "Faith Partnership Principles," 2, 8.
[14] Canadian International Development Agency, "Christian NGOs and CIDA," 3, 5, 10, 11.
[15] Ibid., 10.
[16] Ibid., 3, 11.

to Christian scripture.[17] The influence of Christian theology throughout the document betrays its religio-cultural specificity and casts doubt on the document's utility in guiding CIDA's relationship with non-Christian RNGOs.

The DFID document, by contrast, does not employ language associated with a particular religious tradition. Although only two non-Christian organizations were represented in the working group, the outcome document was intended to encompass a diversity of religious perspectives. In the spirit of pluralism, language that is particular to any one religious tradition is avoided. Instead, the document is built on a generic understanding of religion as a central aspect of life that structures social order and helps people "understand and relate to the world."[18] The launch of the statement of principles at an interfaith event reinforces its pluralist intent. Similarly, the cover of the document features a photograph of religious leaders wearing attire from a variety of traditions assembled at Lambeth Palace for the launch, providing a visual statement of interfaith solidarity.

Developed to further concrete development objectives, "Christian NGOs and CIDA" and "Faith Partnership Principles" were practical and accessible by design. According to DFID, the guidelines for collaboration with religious actors were intentionally succinct, so that the document would not "sit on shelves and get dusty."[19] The utilitarian ambitions of both documents are evident in their form. The texts are alike in their brevity—both are only eleven pages in length—and make liberal use of lists and headings to promote readability. The eleven pages of the CIDA document are divided into nineteen numbered points, while the DFID text consists of six sections of twenty-four points. The latter document includes a reference list and

[17] See, for example, John 1:23, Mark 1:3, Isaiah 40:3
[18] Department for International Development, "Faith Partnership Principles," 2.
[19] Mitchell, Andrew, "Foreword" in Mike Battcock, "Working Effectively with Faith Groups to Fight Poverty: Background Paper," n.d., 1, http://jliflc.com/resources/working-effectively-with-faith-groups-to-fight-poverty/.

two annexes: an implementation plan, and a list of working group members. Both documents take an informal tone and use easily comprehensible language, generally avoiding the technical jargon of either international development or government bureaucracy. While the documents would be intelligible to the general public, they are likely to be of most interest to development actors and religious groups.

Despite the similarities between the CIDA and DFID documents, they differ in terms of authoritative status. "Faith Partnership Principles" has been disseminated as a polished document, easily available on the DFID website. As noted above, the principles were launched at an official event at Lambeth Palace in London in late June 2012. By contrast, "Christian NGOs and CIDA" is not available online and has circulated primarily as photocopy.[20] The working paper was never officially endorsed and has reportedly fallen out of circulation within CIDA.[21] The unofficial status of the CIDA document is evident from its relatively unpolished nature. The points are numbered incorrectly, for example, and, unlike a CIDA document on culture that was developed three years later, "Christian NGOs and CIDA" does not have a publication quality cover page bearing the Government of Canada logo. As a result, it is unclear whether the CIDA document can be taken to be an official and conclusive statement of CIDA's position on religion and development.

While not necessarily authoritative, "Christian NGOs and CIDA," is still illuminating. The Christian-centric nature of the document, which remains the only comprehensive publication on CIDA's approach to religion, points to a blatant Christian bias in CIDA's historic treatment of religion. In the absence of a subsequent initiative involving minority religious traditions, this

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[20] Ray Vander Zaag, "Canadian Faith-Based Development NGOs and CIDA Funding," *Canadian Journal of Development Studies* 34, no. 2 (2013): 323.
[21] Paras, "CIDA's Secular Fiction," 241.

Christian bias has gone unchallenged. More recently, CIDA's reticence to engage questions of religion is indicative of a strong secularist disposition. Paradoxically, DFID's much more accommodating approach to religion is also heavily influenced by a model of secularism rooted in a Christian separation of church and state. In short, the approaches of both governments reveal a Christian and secularist bias; however, as will be discussed in the following section, the particular models of secularism they espouse are similar, but not identical.

Religion and Secularism in "Christian NGOs and CIDA" and "Faith Partnership Principles"

"Christian NGOs and CIDA" and "Faith Partnership Principles" reveal that a religious-secular binary is implicit in the development paradigm embraced by the Canadian and British governments. While frequently taken for granted in contemporary Western discourse, this dichotomy has a particular history. The demarcation of "the religious" as a contradistinction to "the secular" is a relatively recent phenomenon. While religion is frequently discussed as a universal and ahistorical category, a number of influential scholars contend that it is both modern and culturally specific.[22] Ancient cultures did not have a concept analogous to what we today call "religion."[23] Instead, the category evolved through a series of historical particularities centered in Europe.

While not reducible to a simple narrative, it has been argued that the project of classifying particular phenomena as "religious" was undertaken by colonizers and modern

[22] Talal Asad, *Genealogies of Religion: Discipline and Reasons of Power in Christianity and Islam* (Baltimore: John Hopkins, 1993); Talal Asad, *Formations of the Secular: Christianity, Islam, Modernity* (Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University Press, 2003); Tomoko Masuzawa, *The Invention of World Religions; Or, How European Universalism Was Preserved in the Language of Pluralism* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005).
[23] Brent Nongbri, *Before Religion: A History of a Modern Concept* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2013).

scholars, and has served as a vehicle for normalizing a Eurocentric view of the world and cementing the European identity.[24] European Christianity served as the archetype for the construction of the category of religion. Similarly, secularism was a product of the Protestant Reformation and the ensuing political turmoil in Europe. When the Protestant Reformation challenged the dominance of the Catholic church, legitimate authority in Western Christendom came increasingly to rest on civil, rather than ecclesiastical leaders.[25] As wars raged between Christian sects, Europeans sought to establish a form of reason and morality that was not subject to religious sectarianism.[26] Secularism emerged as an alternative, and potentially less divisive, political arrangement. Not only was secularism a product of internal divisions within Christianity, but the identity of the secular West has come to be constructed in contradistinction to the "other."[27] As secularism became a trademark of the West, Islam was increasingly viewed as quintessentially "non-secular."[28] The distinction between "the religious" and "the secular" emerged from and served to validate and normalize a Western Christian worldview.

According to the logic of the religious-secular dyad, religion is essentialized as a class of human phenomena that is separate from other spheres of life, including the political and economic arenas with which development is associated. The partitioning of the religious from the political is conceivable because religion is understood primarily in terms of *belief* (as Talal Asad has argued), which is private in insofar as it is said to occupy a space independent from public reason.[29] Since religion does not belong in the public and political spheres, it is not always

[24] Hans G. Kippenberg, *Discovering Religious History in the Modern Age* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2002); Masuzawa, *The Invention of World Religions*.
[25] Shakman Hurd, *The Politics of Secularism in International Relations*, 30-31.
[26] Ibid., 25.
[27] Wendy Brown, Judith Butler, and Saba Mahmood, "Preface," in *Is Critique Secular? Blasphemy, Injury, and Free Speech* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2013), viii; Shakman Hurd, *The Politics of Secularism in International Relations*, 7.
[28] Ibid., 7.
[29] Asad, *Formations of the Secular*, 8.

considered a relevant object of analysis within political projects such as bilateral aid provision. Development is implicitly understood as a "secular" domain within which religion is either restricted or prohibited. The pervasiveness of a dichotomy between "religious" and "developmental" activities or, in Christian circles, as a distinction between "mission" and "development," reinforces the ostensibly "secular" nature of the global aid framework. While these are not necessarily mutually exclusive categories, activities coded as "religious," and not "developmental," are often regarded as inappropriate in the aid arena. The degree to which an activity contributes towards goals such as poverty reduction, human rights, and community resilience and cohesion is the litmus test for distinguishing between "religious" and "developmental" activities.

Secularism in the West is understood as an arrangement that governs the relationship between the religious and political.[30] A common expression of Western secularism is the idiomatic "separation of church and state." Despite what this phrase might imply, secularism does not merely confine religion by determining its appropriate location in social and political life. As Wendy Brown, Judith Butler, and Saba Mahmood reflect, it also "*stipulates* what religion is and ought to be."[31] The religious and the secular have been described as "co-constitutive": without a discrete category of "the secular," a notion of "the religious" could not exist.[32] The secular is commonly regarded as "natural and universal," whereas the religious is a "superfluous" and "residual" category that is progressively displaced by the secular.[33] Religion is viewed as dangerous, divisive, and even counter-developmental. Development thought has been

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[30] Shakman Hurd, *The Politics of Secularism in International Relations*, 12.
[31] Brown, Butler, and Mahmood, "Preface," ix.
[32] Ibid., x.
[33] José Casanova, "The Secular, Secularizations, Secularisms," in *Rethinking Secularism*, ed. Craig Calhoun, Mark Jueurgensmeyer, and Jonathan VanAntwerpen (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 55.

influenced by secularization theory, which reckons that religion and modernization are inversely related: as societies modernize, the public significance of religion declines.[34] As a result of development's association with progress and modernization, religion is regarded as either irrelevant or detrimental to the development process. According to Alastair Ager and Joey Ager, "Religion, if considered at all, is viewed either as an index of under-development or as a barrier to progress."[35]

Despite its Christian roots, a "secular" approach is often seen to provide a neutral development arena independent of potentially divisive religious dynamics. It is sometimes framed as a precondition for multiculturalism and for a flourishing democratic state. While particular models of secularism may be conducive to multiculturalism and democracy, secularism is not ideologically neutral. As Ager and Ager reflect, "…secularism is, in reality, not so much a system for managing a diversity of beliefs as it is a mechanism of promoting specific ones."[36] Secularism, it has been argued, actively promotes a Western view of the world.[37] The emphasis on "belief" as the locus of religion, for example, is a post-Reformation development. While freedom of belief is upheld in development policy, other manifestations of "religion" are barred from the development arena. Additionally, Ager and Ager contend that the "secular" development paradigm advances a materialist worldview that is taken to be both universal and self-evident.[38] The rise of secularism in the West is closely tied to the primacy of reason, a product of the Enlightenment. As Ager and Ager observe, the emphasis on reason means that "only that which is materially verifiable is deemed reasonable."[39] This materialist bias has strong

[34] Casanova, "The Secular, Secularizations, Secularisms," 7–8.
[35] Alastair Ager and Joey Ager, "Faith and the Discourse of Secular Humanitarianism," *Journal of Refugee Studies* 24, no. 3 (August 4, 2011): 456–72.
[36] Ager and Ager, "Faith and the Discourse of Secular Humanitarianism," 462.
[37] Brown, Butler, and Mahmood, "Preface," ix.
[38] Ager and Ager, "Faith and the Discourse of Secular Humanitarianism," 459.
[39] Ibid.

implications for contemporary development, which has been overwhelmingly oriented towards fulfilling material needs, largely through stimulation of economic growth. Enlightenment influence is also evident in the centrality of quantifiable results as a measure of successful development programming.

"Christian NGOs and CIDA" and "Faith Partnership Principles" bear evidence of the influence of these Western understandings of the religious and the secular. At the same time, CIDA's and DFID's approaches to the role of religion in development are divergent and, particularly in the case of CIDA, in flux. While the aid strategies of both government donors are guided by a religious-secular binary, they have not adopted the same position on the role of religion within the political arena of international development. Given the discrepancies in their approaches, Elizabeth Shakman Hurd's discussion of laicism and Judeo-Christian secularism adds valuable nuance to an examination of the relationship between religion and development within British and Canadian aid policy.

Shakman Hurd identifies two varieties of secularism, both rooted in Western Christian history, theology, and philosophy. Laicism, which is most commonly associated with the French secularist model, insists on a rigid separation between religion and politics. The operative assumption is that religion will be privatized or will otherwise decline in public significance, leaving in its wake a neutral public space independent from the influence of religion.[40] Judeo-Christian secularism is more accommodative of religion, yet accepts as normative the Christian tradition of separating church and state.[41] This separation is viewed as a "unique Western achievement that grew out of a shared adherence to a common set of European religious and

[40] Shakman Hurd, *The Politics of Secularism in International Relations*, 5.
[41] Ibid., 42.

political traditions."[42] Rather than banishing religion from public life, this arrangement aspires to ensure equal treatment of religious traditions and to provide common ground on which a political consensus can be built.[43] This model is epitomized by the United States, where religion shapes political discourse and legitimizes American exceptionalism and hegemony, despite the constitutional separation of church and state. Shakman Hurd's ideal types shed light on why, despite the apparent differences in the contemporary British and Canadian approaches to religion and aid, the policies of both governments are guided by some of the same secularist assumptions. This analysis will now turn to an examination of these assumptions.

"Christian NGOs and CIDA"

The Canadian government's approach to religion and development is convoluted. With no established church, yet no constitutional separation of church and state, Canada's system for managing the relationship between religion and politics is distinct from that of Britain and the United States. As demonstrated in the previous chapter, Canada channels substantial development resources through religious organizations, yet has not significantly entertained questions of religion and development in recent years. Paul Bramadat posits that the federal government has adopted a "don't ask, don't tell" approach to partnering with religiously affiliated refugee resettlement agencies.[44] The government is not comfortable talking about the religious motivations of religious organizations, but at the same time seems uninterested in severing its ties with these entities, which it plainly regards as effective service delivery

[42] Shakman Hurd, *The Politics of Secularism in International Relations, 42*.
[43] Ibid., 41–42.
[44] Paul Bramadat, "Windows into the Canadian Approach to Managing Religion: Refugee Policies and the Office of Religious Freedom," (RECODE Working Paper No. 22: Augsburg, Germany, 2014), 3.

instruments.[45] Consequently, the federal government continues to engage with religious organizations, without engaging with issues identified as "religious." The same "don't ask, don't tell" tactic appears to characterize the federal government's approach to religious development organizations.

The federal government's rather ambiguous stance on the interplay between religion and politics is reproduced in "Christian NGOs and CIDA." The relationship between religion and development outlined in the working paper is at times indistinct, if not contradictory, most likely because it attempts to capture the perspectives of the Canadian government, as well as Christian NGOs. The document both challenges and reinforces the religious-secular binary and its artificial dichotomy between "religious" and "developmental" activities. The document recognizes the Western bias implicit in a notion of privatized religion sequestered from other spheres of human life.[46] Somewhat unconventionally, given the prominent role that secularism plays in dominant aid culture, the working paper suggests that "[e]fforts to create a rigid separation between religion and developmental processes are often inappropriate, and may be counter-developmental."[47] To this end, "integrated programming" is not prohibited, so long as it is "supportive and developmental in nature."[48] While no elaboration on what "integrated programming" entails is offered, "religion" presumably provides the integrative element. While multiple objectives might underpin the work of both Christian NGOs and CIDA, maintenance of "a strong commitment to distinct relief and development objectives in their own right" is considered essential.[49] Thus, as Andrea Paras reflects, "The overall message is that religion

[45] Paul Bramadat, "Windows into the Canadian Approach to Managing Religion," 3–4.
[46] Canadian International Development Agency, "Christian NGOs and CIDA," 4.
[47] Ibid.
[48] Ibid., 7.
[49] Ibid.

should play a supporting role to the main act of development."[50] Religion need not be quarantined, as long as it ultimately contributes to development objectives.

Considering the indictment of the religion-development dichotomy as counter-developmental, it is striking how swiftly the document proceeds to reinforce the same binary. The most obvious evidence that the religious-secular binary remains intact is in the underlying assumption that the operations of the state are independent from religious influence. CIDA is described as a "secular state agency" in contradistinction to religious NGOs, and a discussion of the respective mandates of Christian NGOs and CIDA emphasizes the "secular" nature of CIDA's relief and development efforts.[51] CIDA's mandate is "to support sustainable development in the South and provide humanitarian assistance," rather than to contribute to "the promotion and development of a particular religious faith."[52] By contrast, Christian NGOs are described as supporting "the mission of the Christian Church," in addition to pursuing development objectives. While the operations of Christian NGOs may be influenced by religion, CIDA, as a "secular" agency, is presumed to be immune to such influences.

The CIDA document affirms Christian ethics and beliefs, though its interest in their impact on poverty reduction and a flourishing civil society is heavily instrumentalist. Christianity is celebrated for providing a value system that is conducive to development.[53] Compassion, solidarity, and "the value placed on the individual person" are among Christianity's moral contributions to development objectives.[54] Similarly, CIDA's appraisal of the "value added" of RNGOs accentuates their role as civil society actors, rather than religious agents. Like secular

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[50] Paras, "CIDA's Secular Fiction," 240.
[51] Canadian International Development Agency, "Christian NGOs and CIDA," 3,4.
[52] Ibid., 5.
[53] Ibid., 3.
[54] Ibid.

actors, religious organizations are described as an "integral and legitimate part of a healthy and resilient civil society" with a role to play in keeping governments in check.[55] In addition to applauding their contributions to civil society, the working paper points to particular institutional advantages of Christian actors in development, such as their pre-existing connections with the Global South through church-to-church relationships.[56]

The provisions outlined in "Christian NGOs and CIDA" not only explore the contributions of religion to development, but also control the way in which religion impacts federal aid provision. While the document stresses mutuality and dialogue, it is more heavily weighted towards clarifying CIDA's expectations of Christian NGOs than identifying CIDA's responsibility towards the latter. A substantial portion of the text is dedicated to elaborating upon CIDA's concern that "public funds being spent are used appropriately."[57] While affirming the role of Christian NGOs as legitimate development actors, the document proceeds to restrict their behaviour. Christian NGOs commit to refrain from using CIDA funds for evangelism, to abide by principles of non-discrimination in the selection of beneficiaries, and to work to engage communities beyond their own constituencies.[58] Ultimately, the document serves to clarify which manifestations of religion are permissible in the development arena, particularly if funding is provided by a "secular" state agency.

While prohibiting certain types of religious activities, "Christian NGOs and CIDA" does not seek to eradicate religion from development completely. In this sense, it seems to adopt what Shakman Hurd describes as a Judeo-Christian model of secularism. A Christian influence is evident throughout the CIDA working paper. The document curbs some manifestations of

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[55] Canadian International Development Agency, "Christian NGOs and CIDA," 2.
[56] Ibid., 8.
[57] Canadian International Development Agency, "Christian NGOs and CIDA," 4.
[58] Department for International Development, "Faith Partnership Principles," 5, 9, 11.

religion and not others, based on an understanding of religion that takes Christianity as archetypal. CIDA appears to be more concerned with—and more permissive of—private or interior phenomena, such as beliefs, values, and motivations, than ritual activities and bodily practices. The language used in "Christian NGOs and CIDA" alludes to a privileging of the interior. The words "belief" and "believe" occur twenty-four times in the eleven-page document. More than half of these instances refer specifically to religious belief. By contrast, aside from a vague mention of "religious activities" and references to evangelism, there is no mention of religious ritual or practice. Religion is understood primarily as a system of beliefs and values. Belief is interpreted as an interior condition that can be critiqued, accepted, rejected, or changed.[59] Asad associates an understanding of religion that "emphasizes the priority of belief as a state of mind rather than as a constituting activity in the world" with a contemporary Christian worldview.[60] Interpreting religion as belief, and belief as an interior state and a precondition to knowledge, is not universal from a cross-cultural or historical perspective.[61]

The working paper implies that both the merits and dangers of religion in development relate to interior conditions. Aside from their contributions as civil society actors, RNGOs are primarily valued for their provision of an intangible value system that supports development. Conversely, evangelism and aid conditionality are cause for concern for CIDA because of the potential for such activities to lead to a "change in belief" among local communities.[62] The document stipulates that "CIDA funds are not to be used for programming designed to convert people from one religious faith to another, or to build up church and ecclesiastical structures

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[59] Canadian International Development Agency, "Christian NGOs and CIDA," 4, 6.
[60] Talal Asad, *Genealogies of Religion: Discipline and Reasons of Power in Christianity and Islam* (Baltimore: John Hopkins, 1993), 47.
[61] Ibid., 47–48.
[62] Canadian International Development Agency, "Christian NGOs and CIDA," 5.

apart from relief and development programming."[63] Both provisions could be interpreted quite broadly to prohibit a range of activities that are seen as promoting or advancing a religious tradition. At the same time, they are indicative of a worldview that imagines belief and formalized religious institutions to be central to religion. The document stresses that belief must be voluntarily chosen.[64] Promoting changes in belief and building up institutional structures is prohibited because such activities impinge on freedom of belief. Religious liberty is understood as the protection of belief, not of practice.

In addition to its grounding in a Christian understanding of religion, the working paper serves to validate an understanding of the relationship between religion and development that is highly accommodative of Christianity. It takes the form of an agreement, as though it were articulating a shared vision of development. There appears to be a high degree of convergence between "Christian relief and development" and the development approach of the Canadian government.[65] Even the prohibition against proselytism is phrased as a consensus between Christian NGOs and CIDA.[66] Similarly, the injunction on conditional aid is interpreted as a Christian tradition: "Christian NGOs believe that the Christian faith calls them to understand family and neighbor in a broad and inclusive sense… To provide assistance only to people of the same religious faith, and to discriminate against others is an *offence against the Christian faith.*"[67] Non-discrimination is framed not only as a development principle, but as a tenet of Christianity.

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[63] Canadian International Development Agency, "Christian NGOs and CIDA," 5.
[64] Ibid., 4.
[65] Ibid., 3.
[66] Ibid., 5.
[67] Emphasis added (Ibid.)

The high degree of convergence between the development philosophies of CIDA and Christian NGOs is not just a fortuitous accident. Rather, it is a reflection of the influence of Christianity in the purportedly "secular" development arena. The prohibition on conditional aid illustrates the way in which development principles complement Christian ethics, but may contradict the moral traditions of other religions. The universality of aid is widely considered a foundational tenet of humanitarianism. The United Nations' Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, for example, stipulates that aid should be provided according to need without "distinctions on the basis of nationality, race, gender, religious belief, class or political opinions."[68] Impartiality is also a criterion in the Code of Conduct established by the International Committee of the Red Cross and Red Crescent, to which many mainline development agencies subscribe.[69] Impartiality complements the universalizing message of Christianity, such as the doctrine of *imago dei* and the ethic of "human solidarity" referenced in "Christian NGOs and CIDA." Despite its centrality to mainstream development programming, however, impartiality is not universally recognized as a necessary condition for assistance. For example, as Marie Juul Petersen points out, one of the trademarks of the Islamic aid culture is the provision of aid to fellow Muslims to strengthen the *umma,* or community of believers.[70] Development is understood through a doctrine of solidarity, rather than a doctrine of universality.

In conclusion, "Christian NGOs and CIDA" reinforces the religious-secular binary, establishing development as an arena that should be free from most, but not all, religious

[68] Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, "OCHA on Message: Humanitarian Principles," n.d., https://docs.unocha.org/sites/dms/Documents/OOM-humanitarianprinciples_eng_June12.pdf.
[69] International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, "Code of Conduct in Disaster Relief," 1994, http://www.ifrc.org/en/publications-and-reports/code-of-conduct/.
[70] Marie Juul Petersen, *For Humanity or for the Umma: Aid and Islam in Transnational Muslim NGOs* (London: C. Hurst & Co., 2015), 35.

influence. The document adopts a Christian stance on secularism by acknowledging a "spiritual dimension" of development, yet interpreting that dimension primarily in terms of institutional religion and interior belief. Whereas religion should be controlled in public and political spaces such as development, some forms of religion are accommodated. The primacy of belief, which is central to particular varieties of contemporary Christianity, but not necessarily as integral to other religious traditions, is protected. Religious beliefs may serve as inspiration for development activities, but these activities must not be designed to alter the religious beliefs of program communities.

Given that "Christian NGOs and CIDA" is more than twenty years old, it is prudent at this juncture to identify continuities and departures in CIDA's approach to religion. While there is little evidence to draw upon in order to gauge CIDA's stance, the very absence of references to religion is a strong indicator of its position. The Canadian government's failure to engage in questions of religion and development despite steps taken in that direction by its American and European counterparts is suggestive of a creeping laicism in Canadian aid culture. Inattention to religion is more than just oversight; rather, it is indicative of an ideological position that Andrea Paras describes as "CIDA's secular fiction."[71] The absence of references to religion in Canadian official development policy suggests that a particular model of secularism is so deeply engrained in Canadian political culture that religion is not considered to be a relevant unit of analysis in the very public political and economic spaces that development occupies. This laicism is coupled with an ongoing ignorance to the Christian roots of Canada's political systems and approaches to foreign affairs and aid.

[71] Paras, "CIDA's Secular Fiction."

The few references that have been made to religion in the last decade affirm the influence of laicism on Canadian development policy. Julian Fantino's 2013 statement that federally funded development projects are "delivered without religious content" reveals that the Canadian government continues to rely on a dichotomy between religious and developmental activities.[72] Stephen Harper's remark that the federal government considers the "efficiency" and not the "religion" of the groups it funds suggests that religious actors are not considered distinctive, but are regarded simply as part of civil society.[73] Such an assessment is not evidence that the religious-secular binary is being challenged; rather, it is indicative of the deep-seated nature of this binary. CIDA does not distinguish between religious and secular NGOs because it expects their operations to be indistinguishable. Projects are delivered "without religious content," whether the implementing partner is religious or secular. It is the comparability of their operations that allows CIDA to use the same criteria to assess the funding proposals of organizations from both categories. Ostensibly, potential partners are judged on the basis of their aid effectiveness, without reference to their religious orientation. The underlying message is that religion does not warrant special consideration in the delivery of federally funded aid.

Despite efforts to depict Canadian foreign aid as a realm independent of religious influence, laicism alone is not sufficient to explain the Canadian approach to managing the relationship between religion and development. The previous chapter traced the agency's extensive and ongoing engagement with RNGOs, particularly those representing Christian traditions. Religion is not completely barred from the development arena. Many of the RNGOs

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[72] Fannie Olivier, "Harper Government Receives Flak for Funding Anti-Gay Christian Aid Group," *The Globe and Mail*, July 7, 2013, http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/politics/pmo-receives-flack-for-funding-christian-aid-group-that-insulted-homosexuals/article13054775/.
[73] CBC News, "Funding Stopped for Anti-Gay Religious Group Pending Investigation," February 10, 2013, http://www.cbc.ca/1.1388877.

that CIDA funds explicitly cite religious motivations for their development work.[74] A number identify religious goals in their mission statements: "to draw people to Christ"; "to train a sufficient number of qualified 'harvest workers'"; and "to proclaim, with love, the good news of Jesus Christ."[75] This conflation of "religious" and "developmental" objectives finds no place in laicism, which seeks to expel religion from the public arena. CIDA's funding of organizations that pursue such objectives suggests that elements of the Judeo-Christian model described by Shakman Hurd, and expressed so clearly in "Christian NGOs and CIDA," continues to influence federal government decision-making on aid.

The Christian roots of the religious-secular binary provide a possible explanation as to why CIDA has engaged more extensively with Christian NGOs than those of other religious traditions. There may be a variety of explanations for this disparity, including demographics, yet there is recognition even from within CIDA that the ease with which organizations negotiate the religious-secular binary contributes to the imbalance. As a CIDA staff person related to Andrea Paras, Muslim NGOs are underrepresented as CIDA funding recipients because, "They don't apply. Daily life is religion. They don't distinguish between religious and non-religious activities."[76] The foregoing discussion reveals that CIDA's acceptance of RNGOs as implementing partners is contingent on their ability to distinguish between "religion" and "development." Given that such a normative distinction has historic roots in Christianity, it is likely that Christian NGOs will be better able to comply with this stipulation than NGOs from

[74] François Audet, Francis Paquette, and Stéfanie Bergeron, "Religious Nongovernmental Organisations and Canadian International Aid, 2001–2010: A Preliminary Study," *Canadian Journal of Development Studies* 34, no. 2 (June 2013): 312–20.
[75] Ibid., 315–16.
[76] Paras, "CIDA's Secular Fiction," 243.

other religious traditions. Consequently, it is not surprising that Christian organizations receive the bulk of CIDA funding to RNGOs.

"Faith Partnership Principles"

"Christian NGOs and CIDA" and "Faith Partnership Principles" espouse a common goal: to collaborate with religious groups in order to enhance development outcomes. Notwithstanding subtle differences in their treatment of religion, both documents are heavily influenced by a Judeo-Christian model of secularism in which particular manifestations of religion are accommodated, while a distinction between the "political" and the "religious" is maintained. In their release of principles to guide collaboration with religious groups, CIDA and DFID demonstrated a willingness to address questions of religion in development. This inclination, however, has all but vanished in the Canadian context. As such, DFID's treatment of religion and development diverges sharply from the contemporary Canadian approach. Most notably, laicism, which would seek to eradicate religious influence from development, is less evident in "Faith Partnership Principles" than in the approach of the contemporary CIDA. Rather than expel religion from development, the DFID document posits that "[i]n many countries and for many people, faith and religion are central to development."[77]

On the surface, "Faith Partnership Principles" seems to circumvent the conventional secularist and materialist interpretation of development that dominates Western discourse. The document acknowledges the Western origins of the separation of church and state and the consequent expectation that religious organizations "leave their faith at the door" when approaching institutional donors.[78] The text also affirms "a more holistic understanding of

[77] Department for International Development, "Faith Partnership Principles," 2.
[78] Ibid., 6.

wellbeing in development that brings together social, economic, environmental and spiritual dimensions."[79] This would mean going "beyond standard development indicators to include wider measures of the ability to flourish."[80] Such statements suggest that DFID is at least marginally willing to embrace a vision of development that is less materially focused, and more attentive to development's "spiritual" dimension. Nonetheless, the document is ambiguous as to whether compartmentalizing religious activities, or "leaving faith at the door," is indeed a condition to working with DFID. The integration of "religious" activities in development is neither prohibited, nor sanctioned.

The British government's accommodation of religious actors in the public sphere is influenced by its longstanding tradition of an established church. Such an arrangement has accorded legitimacy to the Church of England as a political actor. The House of Lords includes twenty-six bishops that are accorded the title "Lords Spiritual," and a member of parliament is appointed from within the House of Commons to oversee matters pertaining to the church.[81] The Church of England's status as a legitimate political actor paves the way for the participation of other religious groups in affairs such as education and foreign aid, which are otherwise responsibilities of the state. While the Church of England enjoys a privileged position as the established church, participation in civil and political matters is not restricted to Christian groups. State funding to church schools, for example, sets a precedent and provides political modalities by which such privileges can be extended to minority religions.[82] The British government's openness to the political and civil society participation of religious actors is also

[79] Department for International Development, "Faith Partnership Principles," 7.
[80] Ibid.
[81] The Church of England, "The Church in Parliament," 2016, https://www.churchofengland.org/our-views/the-church-in-parliament.aspx.
[82] J. Christopher Soper and Joel S. Fetzer, "Religious Institutions, Church–State History and Muslim Mobilisation in Britain, France and Germany," *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 33, no. 6 (2007): 936.

evident in the department's deliberate attempts to increase and diversify its funding to religious development organizations.

Not only are religious actors in the UK permitted within political spaces such as foreign aid provision, but they are afforded special status. DFID has been consistent in its message that it regards religious groups as a distinctive element of civil society. A 2005 statement from DFID remarked that, "Faith groups are often simply seen as civil society organizations and many feel that work with faith groups can be subsumed into the overall commitment to civil society. We do not regard this as sufficient to reflect the distinctive nature of faith groups."[83] "Faith Partnership Principles" deals at length with faith groups' distinct contributions to development. Religious actors are approached as agents for change that promote peace and resilience, give voice to the concerns of the poor, and provide a platform for advocacy and action.[84] Their value-added as development actors is also based on their perceived legitimacy, the trust they enjoy in the Global South, and the depth and long-term nature of their involvement in local communities.[85] Their direct provision of health and other services is also noted, particularly in fragile states and in Sub-Saharan Africa.[86]

DFID's interest in the distinct contributions of religious development actors corresponds with a broader trend among institutional donors and scholars towards evaluating the value-added of "religious" (as compared to "secular") organizations. Scholarship on the topic highlights the reach, legitimacy, and religio-cultural literacy of religious actors.[87] The utility of engaging with

[83] Department for International Development, "Faith in Development," 2005, 3.
[84] Ibid., 3.
[85] Ibid.
[86] Ibid., 3, 7.
[87] Petersen, *For Humanity or for the Umma*, 53; Rick James, "What Is Distinctive About FBOs?" (Praxis Paper 22, International NGO Training and Research Centre: 2009), 7–9; Andrea Paras and Janice Gross Stein, "Bridging the Sacred and the Profane in Humanitarian Life," in *Sacred Aid: Faith and Humanitarianism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), 211-239.

religious actors is often framed as an issue of access. Religion can serve as an entry point, either literally, for gaining access to communities, or figuratively, for communicating effectively with project participants. The argument is often made that development visions and strategies that conflict with local religious sentiments are unlikely to resonate with project communities. The notion of "cultural proximity"—the idea that organizations will be able to operate more safely and to interact with local populations more effectively if they share the community's religio-cultural identity—frequently enters into these discussions.[88] While the cultural proximity thesis is contested, it is often implicit in arguments about the efficacy of religious NGOs.[89]

Unlike "Christian NGOs and CIDA," "Faith Partnership Principles" does not explicitly confine or dictate the activities of RNGOs. Rather than controlling religious behaviour, the document affirms the distinct contributions of religious actors and carves out a defined space for them within the development arena. Aside from outlining the principles of transparency, mutual respect, and understanding—which equally bind DFID—the document does not establish ground rules for religious development actors. Perhaps surprisingly, no mention is made of proselytism, though it is prohibited in other DFID publications.[90] In lieu of outlining its expectations of RNGOs, the department makes a number of commitments that relate to religious groups, including promising further dialogue and the inclusion of religious actors in policy consultations.[91] In the accompanying action plan, DFID also pledges to support a diverse range

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[88] Jonathan Benthall, "'Cultural Proximity' and the Conjuncture of Islam with Modern Humanitarianism" in *Sacred Aid: Faith and Humanitarianism*, ed. Michael Barnett and Janice Gross Stein (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), 65-89.
[89] Victoria Palmer's analysis of the proximity argument within the context of Islamic Relief's work in a Rohingya refugee camp in Bangladesh, for example, revealed that a common Muslim identity did not necessarily transcend differences in background, educational attainment or relative power between NGO staff and the local community. (Victoria Palmer, "Analysing Cultural Proximity: Islamic Relief Worldwide and Rohingya Refugees in Bangladesh," *Development in Practice* 21, no. 1 (2011): 96–108.)
[90] Battcock, "Working Effectively with Faith Groups to Fight Poverty," 5.
[91] Department for International Development, "Faith Partnership Principles," 5.

of organizations in accessing federal funding.[92] The document sets out tangible steps towards more effective collaboration with faith groups, including the identification of priority countries and issues to be discussed by a representative forum, with oversight from a Faith Working Group.[93]

"Faith Partnership Principles" may demonstrate a willingness to accommodate "religion" in development, but it does not represent a complete reversal of DFID's traditional secularist stance. Marie Juul Petersen associates DFID with an understanding of aid as "inherently secular."[94] Similarly, Gerard Clarke describes DFID's historic approach as "secular and technocratic."[95] Interviews reveal that this stance has been internalized within DFID. Clarke, in his conversations with department staff, discovered that some were resistant to expanding relations with RNGOs or softening the department's "secularist" approach.[96] Civil society funding patterns, traced in the previous chapter, are also an product of the department's particular variety of secularism. While the department has moved towards more diverse partnerships in recent years, it has historically demonstrated a preference for funding secular or "quasi-secular" religious organizations such as Christian Aid and Islamic Relief.[97] "Faith Partnership Principles" does little to challenge this secularist tradition.

While the DFID documents advocates for a "holistic" approach to wellbeing and demonstrates an openness to a "spiritual dimension" in development, there is a lack of evidence that the religious-secular binary is being fundamentally challenged. DFID's identification of "faith groups" as a distinct subset of civil society actors is indicative of the influence of the

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[92] Department for International Development, "Faith Partnership Principles," 9.
[93] Ibid.
[94] Petersen, *For Humanity or for the Umma*, 26.
[95] Gerard Clarke, "Agents of Transformation? Donors, Faith-Based Organisations and International Development," *Third World Quarterly* 28, no. 1 (2007): 90.
[96] Ibid.
[97] Petersen, *For Humanity or for the Umma*, 26; Clarke, "Agents of Transformation?," 84.

religious-secular binary on the department's aid culture. The type of actors included in this subset is diverse, ranging from individual congregations to development organizations and religiously affiliated political parties. The category also includes organizations in which "faith plays an important role," such as Guides and Boys Brigade.[98] The defining feature of "faith groups" seems to be that they are influenced by phenomena classified as "religious." Given the disparate nature of actors classified as "faith groups," the establishment of such a category presumes the existence of a set of social actors that is not significantly influenced by religion. Accordingly, DFID's identification of faith groups as a distinct class hinges on an understanding of the "secular" as distinct from the "religious."

Despite recognizing religious groups as distinct civil society actors, DFID values them primarily as agents for development. DFID's valuation of religious groups is based exclusively on their contributions to development agendas. No reference is made to activities that do not contribute to conventional development outcomes. Similarly, religion's relevance to development is assessed in terms of how it advances or impedes development efforts. While acknowledging that religion can incite or aggravate conflict, the DFID document resolves to harness the potentially constructive energy of religion in pursuit of its development objectives. A foreword by Andrew Mitchell, Secretary of State for International Development at the time, begins with the statement, "Faith makes such an important contribution to development."[99] The opening line betrays the instrumentalism implicit in DFID's approach to religion in development.

DFID's instrumentalist approach to collaborating with religious groups is easily discernable in the emphasis of "Faith Partnership Principles" on impact, evidence, and value-added. According to the text, "DFID's interest is the *impact* of faith groups on poverty reduction

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[98] Department for International Development, "Faith Partnership Principles," 3.
[99] Ibid., 1.

and the Millennium Development Goals and global development framework that follows the MDGs from 2015."[100] In addition to outlining the perceived contributions of faith actors, the document calls for "more systematic evidence on the scale and impact of services provided by faith groups, and the distinctive contribution they make."[101] The instrumentalist nature of DFID's approach to religion is also acutely apparent in the action plan appended to "Faith Partnership Principles." Among the propositions listed in the annex is the formation of a community of learning to "map the work of faith and inter-faith groups; document the added value and effectiveness of approaches used by faith groups and produce guidance on evaluation of the impact of faith groups."[102] Significantly, quantifying the contribution of religious groups is not framed as a way in which to preserve religio-cultural diversity, but rather as a pragmatic move that "fits well with the UK government's prioritization of results and value for money."[103]

DFID situates development primarily in a temporal domain, drawing upon language commonly associated with "secular" development and its focus on material wellbeing. The ultimate objective of DFID's collaboration with religious groups is to "transform poor people's lives and achieve the Millennium Development Goals."[104] Although "to transform" is a vague objective, it is clear from the context that a change in socioeconomic status is key to transformation. The Millennium Development Goals, which aspired to reduce poverty and hunger and to improve the health and education status of people around the world by 2015, were oriented towards material wellbeing. Similarly, non-material contributions of religious groups are not mentioned except insofar as they foster resilience or empowerment, which are viewed as

[100] Emphasis added (Department for International Development, "Faith Partnership Principles," 7.)
[101] Department for International Development, "Faith Partnership Principles," 7.
[102] Ibid., 9.
[103] Ibid., 7.
[104] Ibid., 2.

prerequisites to the realization of traditional development objectives such as poverty reduction. Despite DFID's openness to "holistic" development, the case studies selected to showcase the British government's collaboration with religious groups feature activities in conventional relief and development sectors such as child protection, HIV awareness, disaster risk reduction, food security, livelihoods, and access to water, all of which have a strong focus on physical and economic wellbeing.

At the same time as the DFID document associates development with material wellbeing, religion is understood not as bodily practice, but as an interior mental or emotive condition. "Faith Partnership Principles" describes religionists as "believers," though it makes comparatively fewer references to religious belief than does the corresponding CIDA text. The terms "belief," "believe," and "believers" occur ten times—half as many times as in the Canadian document—and only four times specifically referring to religious belief. Nonetheless, the extensive use of the term "faith" as a synonym for "religion" is an indicator that interior conditions such as "belief" are considered the hallmark of religion. "Faith" is mentioned more than one hundred times throughout the text. The term, which also occurs fourteen times in the CIDA document, alludes to an interior disposition that may or may not be expressed through external actions. As Emma Tomalin relates, such a use of the term is often an attempt "to capture the dimension of religions that extends beyond the codification of values, rules and social practices within particular traditions."[105] As Tomalin and other scholars point out, emphasizing faith or belief over rules and social practices is a trademark of Protestant Christianity. The word "faith" is less useful in describing traditions such as Islam and Hinduism, which tend to

[105] Emma Tomalin, "Religions and Development" (London: Routledge, 2013), 4.

emphasize orthopraxy, rather than correct belief, as signs of piety.[106] Reflecting an internalization of this Protestant bias, "Faith Partnership Principles" is relatively inattentive to the ritual or behavioural dimensions of religion, making only three references to religious practice.

The CIDA document very obviously represents a Christian perspective on religion; however, the DFID document also represents a historically specific understanding of religion built around Christian assumptions about the world. In its focus on interfaith harmony, the document demonstrates the influence of what Tomoko Masuzawa calls the world religions paradigm. This taxonomy of about a dozen "living religions" emerged from a twentieth-century movement with strong roots in the United States and in initiatives such as the Parliament of the World's Religions.[107] According to Masuzawa, the vanguard for this movement was religious communities in the United States who were "primarily interested in the future survival of religions, [and] who groped for ecumenical, universalist, and pluralist strategies for 'uniting all religions against all irreligion.'"[108] Euro-American scholars sought to prop up "religion itself" where it was not viable to propagate European Christianity.[109] A doctrine of pluralism came to dominate world religions discourse, replacing the old exclusivist claims of Christianity with a sympathetic and universalist perspective. Superficial differences were assumed to produce different paths to spiritual fulfillment, but could not disguise a common "essence" found in all religions, or a unity found in religious experience.[110] Significantly, Christianity served as the blueprint for the identification of "world religions."

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[106] Thomas H. Jeavons, "Religious and Faith-Based Organizations: Do We Know One When We See One?," *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly* 33, no. 1 (2004): 141.
[107] Masuzawa, *The Invention of World Religions*.
[108] Ibid., 270.
[109] Ibid., 313.
[110] Ibid., 315.

Evidence of the world religions paradigm in the DFID document lays in the use of the monolithic categories "people of faith" and "faith groups." Such language tends to obscure the diversity within and among religious traditions. This is problematic in two respects. First, development organizations representing different religious traditions may embrace starkly different aid ideologies. As previously mentioned, Islamic notions of charity based on solidarity and mutual interdependence within the religious community diverge significantly from notions of universal and apolitical aid that emerge from Christian traditions of social justice.[111] Alternately, scholars point out that many so-called "faith-based organizations" have more in common with secular NGOs than with those that represent the same religious tradition. The aid culture of Islamic Relief and Muslim Aid more closely resembles that of Care and Oxfam than that of Gulf-based charities such as the International Islamic Relief Organization and the International Islamic Charity Organization.[112] Analogous trends have been observed among Christian NGOs. Noting the operational similarities between mainstream Christian organizations and secular development agencies, the former have been described as "Oxfam with hymns."[113] Similarly, a DFID staff person facetiously referred to Christian Aid, a major recipient of DFID funding, as "We're-not-that-Christian" Aid.[114] "Faith groups" is clearly far from a cohesive category. Approaching such a disparate group as a homogeneous entity is likely to normalize the features of the dominant tradition, while marginalizing other perspectives.

Not only does DFID's understanding of religion take Christianity to be archetypal, but the model of secularism that DFID adopts has deep Judeo-Christian roots. As Shakman Hurd

[111] Petersen, *For Humanity or for the Umma*, 35.
[112] Ibid.
[113] Michael Taylor, *Angels but Agencies: The Ecumenical Response to Poverty – a Primer* (New York: Trinity Press International, 1995).
[114] Petersen, *For Humanity or for the Umma*, 24.

explains, the Judeo-Christian model does not attempt to expel religion from the public sphere, but rather to promote equal treatment of all religious traditions.[115] Judeo-Christian principles provide a foundation upon which a consensus about the relationship between religion and politics can ostensibly be reached.[116] Secularism is thus lauded as a noteworthy Judeo-Christian contribution to global political order.[117] The public's level of comfort with Britain's Christian heritage is likely a factor in influencing DFID's more accommodative approach to religion. A 2005 poll by BBC News found that nearly three-quarters of respondents agreed that it was important that "British Society continues to be based on Christian values."[118] Support for this statement came not only from Christians, but also from sixty-nine percent of Jewish respondents and almost half of Muslims, Sikhs, and Hindus.[119] More than two-fifths of those who professed to have "no faith" also supported the preservation of Christian values in Britain's national identity.[120] As long as public sentiment continues to be favourable towards Britain's Christian heritage, it is likely that a Judeo-Christian model of secularism will continue to dominate British political affairs.

"Faith Partnership Principles" does little to challenge the Christian roots of DFID's assumptions about religion and secularism and does not represent a significant departure from the department's traditional "secularist" stance. While the document does not fundamentally challenge the religious-secular dyad, efforts to diversity DFID's civil society engagement through initiatives such as UK Aid Direct may open the door to partnerships with RNGOs that

[115] Shakman Hurd, *The Politics of Secularism in International Relations*, 41.
[116] Ibid.
[117] Ibid.
[118] BBC World News, "Britons Back Christian Society," *BBC News World Edition*, 2005, http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/ 4434096.stm; Shakman Hurd, *The Politics of Secularism in International Relations*, 92.
[119] Ibid.
[120] Ibid.

have not fully internalized this dyad. DFID's partnership with Food for the Hungry UK is an example. The mission of the organization is "[t]o walk with churches, leaders and families in overcoming all forms of human poverty by living in healthy relationship with God and His creation."[121] Far from regarding development as secular, the organization views religious goals as integral to poverty reduction efforts.

Though DFID funds organizations that pursue religious goals through their development efforts, it retains the expectation that such activities will not impinge on federally funded development programming. Proselytism is expressly prohibited in funding guidelines, yet, as Philip Fountain points out, the difference between "espousing" and "promoting" religious perspectives is tenuous at best.[122] As a result of the difficulty in distinguishing between "proselytising" and "non-proselytising" activity, it is likely that donors such as DFID will eschew all "religious" activity in development in an effort to eradicate proselytism. While DFID's commitment to diversifying its partnerships may open the door to new actors, it is unlikely that the religious-secular binary will cease to be a feature in the department's approach to religion.

DFID accepts secularism as a normative stance in its development programming, yet the model of secularism that it adopts is far more permissive of religious influence on development than the Canadian model. Nonetheless, while it purports to be inclusive of diverse religious traditions, the British model provides no guarantee of the equal treatment of religions. Given British development policy's grounding in a Judeo-Christian version of secularism, there is a distinct possibility that a Christian-centric appraisal of the appropriate relationship between

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[121] Food for the Hungry UK, "Vision & Mission," n.d., http://www.uk-fh.org/about-us/vision-and-mission/.
[122] Philip Fountain, "Proselytizing Development," in *Routledge Handbook of Religions and Global Development*, ed. Emma Tomalin (London: Routledge, 2015), 82.

religion and development will continue to dominate foreign aid policy and practice. The consequent marginalization of non-dominant religious perspectives will be discussed in the following chapter.

Conclusion

While both “Christian NGOs and CIDA” and “Faith Partnership Principles” demonstrate a willingness on the part of the Canadian and British governments to engage questions of religion and development, they leave the religious-secular dyad unchallenged. Official development assistance is understood as a political and essentially “secular” activity that should generate scientifically verifiable improvements in material wellbeing. The primacy of results tends to breed an instrumentalist approach to religion. Indeed, in both documents, religion is instrumentalized in pursuit of temporal development objectives. Given CIDA’s and DFID’s accountability to taxpayers, it is unsurprising that they are eager to demonstrate their efficient use of public funds and their commitment to the mandate of poverty reduction. Investing time and resources in research or policy related to religion and development must be justifiable in terms of results.

Concomitantly, both government donors have internalized a notion of religion that hinges on interior conditions, such as beliefs, rather than bodily practice. This limits the manifestations of religion that are permitted in the development arena. Religious beliefs, values, and motivations that enhance development outcomes are tolerated, while public, corporal, and ritualistic behaviours coded as “religious” and not “developmental” are proscribed. Religious groups are embraced as development actors providing they are effective in achieving the desired results, and are willing to refrain from inappropriate “religious” activities. Commending the

contributions of religious actors in development, while leaving the categories of religion and secularism essentially unchallenged, is reminiscent of the “add religion and stir” approach to questions of religion and development.[123] Acknowledging the relevance of religion to development allows government donors to appear accommodating of religion, while limiting its influence, thus appeasing both those that welcome and eschew “the religious” in public life.

CIDA and DFID’s funding of religious groups, coupled with their understanding of development as an inherently “secular” activity, suggests that both donors expect that religious groups privatize or compartmentalize “religion” in their development activities. The fact that neither the British nor the contemporary Canadian government feel the need to make this expectation explicit is evidence of the pervasiveness and the power of the religious-secular binary within the political traditions of both countries. This influential binary shapes the dominant aid culture, and has practical implications for development programming. These implications, and the associated power dynamics, will be investigated in the following chapter.

[123] This approach is referenced, for example, in Elizabeth Shakman Hurd, “A Suspension of (Dis)Belief: The Secular-Religious Binary and the Study of International Relations,” in *Rethinking Secularism*, ed. Craig Calhoun, Mark Juergensmeyer, and Jonathan VanAntwerpern (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 171.

4

Implications of Donor Approaches to Religion

Introduction

As donor discourse and funding patterns suggest, CIDA's and DFID's development ideologies originate in and promote a secularist and materialist view of the world. Their approaches to development partnerships and programming are instrumentalist, bureaucratic, and technocratic. These characteristics are not exclusive to the Canadian and British contexts, but are features of the paradigm that dominates the global aid framework more broadly. Development is equated with a particular vision of progress that takes economic growth and material wellbeing to be the primary measuring sticks for success. Such an interpretation of development is neither universal nor a foregone conclusion. Rather, a view of development as linear progress and unfettered growth is rooted in a Western worldview.[1] Dissatisfaction with this vision of development has been voiced by both program communities and Western academics. Development actors are sometimes viewed with suspicion by local populations who question their motives and assume their work is accompanied by a hidden "Western" agenda.[2] Post-

[1] Gilbert Rist, *The History of Development: From Western Origins to Global Faith*, 4th ed. (London: Zed Books, 2014), 270.
[2] See for example: Jason Squire and Kristen Hope, "Journeys of a Secular Organisation in Southern Lebanon," *Forced Migration Review* 48 (2015): 25.

development scholars, who are critical of the power imbalances that have been reinforced by conventional development theory, also question the dominant aid paradigm.

Critiques of development have spawned efforts to promote local ownership and the participation of beneficiaries, yet even with the turn towards bottom-up and participatory approaches, decisions about what constitutes meaningful development ultimately remain the prerogative of donors. Government donors are significant development players, both in terms of the scale of their aid investments and the influence they exude within bilateral and multilateral aid processes. As a result, the trends traced thus far in the discourse and practice of the Canadian and British official development agencies have a discernible ideological and operational impact on the global aid environment. The current chapter will examine the far-reaching implications of bilateral donors' approaches to "religion" and "the secular" within the context of the power dynamics that are created or perpetuated as a result of these approaches. The secularist and instrumentalist orientation of donors impacts the varieties of activities and organizations funded, the types of discourses that are validated, and ultimately, the perspectives that are affirmed or marginalized in development practice. The degree to which donors such as CIDA and DFID are willing to revise their definition of development to take into account religious perspectives or alternate interpretations of wellbeing warrants further research. Given the power of institutional donors to shape the development agenda and the ideological environment in which it is enacted, significant change to the dominant aid culture is unlikely to occur without donor support. Moreover, if governments, NGOs, and multilateral organizations are uncompromising in their understanding of legitimate development, efforts to integrate religion and culture into aid provision risk instrumentalizing local religion and culture in pursuit of donor-defined objectives.

Implications of Donor Approaches to Religion

Affirming a Particular Development Vision

As the forgoing analysis suggests, CIDA and DFID view development through a secularist lens. They embrace a dichotomy between "the religious" and "the secular" that emerged from a Christian worldview. Central to this perspective is the notion that religious influence on the public and political spheres should be controlled or disciplined. The religious-secular binary and the separation of religion and politics have implications for development policy and practice. Whereas religion is understood primarily in terms of intangible internal phenomena such as beliefs, values, and motivations, development is regarded as a "secular" activity focused on material wellbeing and associated with goals such as poverty reduction, economic growth, and physical security. While DFID appears to be somewhat more willing to engage with questions of religion than its Canadian counterpart, both donors assume a meaningful distinction between "religious" and "developmental" activities and name the latter as the locus of their concern.

The religious-secular binary, though ubiquitous within the dominant development culture, is far from universal. Studies in countries such as Jordan and Tanzania, for example, reveal that a distinction between religious and secular development actors does not necessarily have traction outside of Western Europe and North America. In Tanzania, discourse conventionally classified as "religious" in the West pervades public services and aid provision. In such a context, a distinct category of organization that is immune from religious influence is not tenable.[3] Similarly, in Irbid, Jordan, where the vast majority of the population is Muslim,

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[3] Maia Green, Claire Mercer, and Simeon Mesaki, "Faith in Forms: Civil Society Evangelism and Development in Tanzania," *Development in Practice* 22, no. 5–6 (2012): 721–34.

bearing the term “Islamic” does not relegate organizations to a distinct category of NGO, since Islam is presumed to influence all local institutions. In the words of one interviewee in Irbid, “The separation between Islamist and secular is deceiving. We are all religious people. If I say 'there is no God but Allah and Mohammad is his prophet', does my organization become Islamic?"[4] Distinguishing between organizations based on the degree of their association with “religion” makes little sense in a context in which Islam permeates all aspects of social life. Similarly, Tamsin Bradley and Zara Ramsey’s fieldwork in the slums of Pune, India, suggest that religion and social justice are inextricably linked within the worldview of the local Dalit community. Whether they identified as Buddhist or Hindu, interviewees described spirituality as an integral element of development.[5]

According to the dominant aid culture, the key determinant in the conventional distinction between “religion” and “development” is the latter’s concern with material wellbeing and economic growth, as compared to the more transcendent matters that are considered the terrain of religion. Though this distinction is taken for granted by CIDA and DFID, research shows that not all development actors have adopted such a materialist view. Darren Noy’s survey of development practitioners from the Global South revealed that many viewed development through a “spiritualist” lens. While some interviewees embraced elements of a market-driven or rights-based model, many embraced alternative interpretations of development with strong social, spiritual, and ecological dimensions.[6] Non-material aspirations such as personal and

[4] Alastair Ager and Joey Ager, *Faith, Secularism and Humanitarian Engagement: Finding the Place of Religion in the Support of Displaced Communities* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), 41.
[5] Tamsin Bradley and Zara Ramsey, “‘The People Know They Need Religion in Order to Develop’: The Relationships between Hindu and Buddhist Religious Teachings, Values and Beliefs, and Visions of the Future in Pune, India,” (Working Paper 51, Religions and Development Research Programme, International Development Department, University of Birmingham, 2010) 19, 27.
[6] Darren Noy, “Material and Spiritual Conceptions of Development: A Framework of Ideal Types,” *Journal of Developing Societies* 25, no. 3 (2009): 285–88.

societal morality, spiritual purification, the preservation of kinship and social bonds, and harmony between humans and the natural environment were central to these alternative development visions.[7] Economic indicators are wholly inadequate for assessing "progress" towards such goals.

There is skepticism towards the conventional development-as-progress paradigm even in the West. As Gilbert Rist, one of the champions of post-development theory, notes, "It is mere common sense to accept that infinite growth is impossible in a finite world."[8] Rist argues that development, when understood as a linear progression, happens at the expense of the natural environment and human relations and thus is better understood in terms of loss, rather than progress.[9] Victoria Palmer's fieldwork in a Rohingya refugee camp in Bangladesh demonstrates that ensuring physical security and material wellbeing alone at the expense of spiritual welfare may be experienced as loss by local communities. The camp residents she interviewed expressed consternation at the absence of a mosque in the camp. Existing structures did not meet the community's needs for a dedicated prayer space or provide the necessary facilities for performing ritual ablutions. As one camp resident lamented, "we can live without food but we can't live without our religion."[10] Interviewees viewed the lack of religious infrastructure such as mosques, *madrasas*, and cemeteries in the camp as detrimental to their overall wellbeing.[11]

Palmer's analysis reveals a clash between the development visions of service providers and the local community. Despite the obvious importance of religion in the lives of residents, the European Community Humanitarian Aid Office and even Islamic Relief did not heed the

[7] Noy, "Material and Spiritual Conceptions of Development: A Framework of Ideal Types."
[8] Rist, *The History of Development*.
[9] Gilbert Rist, "Development as a Buzzword," *Development in Practice* 17, no. 4–5 (2007): 490.
[10] Victoria Palmer, "Analysing Cultural Proximity: Islamic Relief Worldwide and Rohingya Refugees in Bangladesh," *Development in Practice* 21, no. 1 (2011): 103.
[11] Ibid.

refugees' requests for a mosque, viewing religious infrastructure as nonessential in a humanitarian context. Even more significant from a donor perspective was the fear that funding religious institutions might create an enabling environment for proselytism or discriminatory aid.[12] This case study suggests that development decisions continue to be made on the basis of materialist notions of progress, regardless of the relative value that a local community places on material wellbeing as compared to spiritual wellbeing or social relations. As Palmer reflects, "While it may appear rational to prioritise material needs above spiritual well-being, refugee camps are intended to be secure and comforting places for those who have suffered physical and emotional trauma."[13] The failure of aid providers to cater to refugees' religious or spiritual needs may have ramifications for the latter's ability to recover from trauma, thus undermining one of the chief objectives of relief programming.

As the previous chapters indicated, religion is not categorically excluded from the development arena. While donors themselves may espouse a secular worldview, they are permissive of religious dimensions of development that complement their own normative frameworks. CIDA and DFID actively collaborate with religious development organizations and implicitly or explicitly affirm religious motivations for charitable activities. At the same time, donor engagement with religion is selective, based on notions of "good" religion, which contributes to the development objectives of donors, and "bad" religion, which detracts from such objectives. Religious perspectives that are socially progressive, that demonstrate a high degree of compatibility with human rights, and that contribute towards development goals are tolerated by Western government donors. Religion is considered favourably insofar as it promotes resilience, increases the salience of awareness-building activities, contributes towards

[12] Palmer, "Analysing Cultural Proximity," 104.
[13] Ibid.

gender equality, or expands the reach or effectiveness of an organization. Other manifestations of religion are considered counter-developmental, such as practices that ostensibly undermine the paramount Western values of freedom and equality. Reflecting a Christian interpretation of religion, donors are more permissive of interior religious phenomena such as values, beliefs, and motivations than of bodily practices such as prayer, worship, or religious education. While religion is celebrated as a powerful motivator of charitable action and as a moral framework that promotes development principles, religious practice—particularly that which is coded as "proselytist"—is seen as dangerous and divisive.

Case studies offered by Tamsin Bradley illuminate the dichotomy between "good" and "bad" religion. In order to demonstrate the diversity of approaches taken by RNGOs, Bradley examined the gender equality programming of two local organizations in Pune, India. The first, Jeevak Project, organizes self-help groups for women. According to the organization's philosophy, conversion to Buddhism equips Dalit women with "the language to articulate their oppression" and thus is integral to their attempts to confront discrimination and domestic violence.[14] The second organization, Sadhu Vaswani Mission, justifies its focus on girls' education by citing their motherhood potential.[15] In a maternal capacity, women and girls serve as guardians of Indian culture and the Hindu religion, thereby furthering India's liberation from British colonial rule. To prepare girls for this task, spiritual instruction is incorporated into the curriculum.[16] While religion is central to the activities of both organizations, Bradley offers disparate appraisals of the appropriateness of their respective strategies. While she applauds the

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[14] Tamsin Bradley, "Broad Perspectives Concerning the Interrelation between Religion and Development," in *Faith, Belief & Development: The Role of Religion in International Development* (Ottawa: Canadian Association for the Study of International Development, 2013), 16–17.
[15] Ibid., 20.
[16] Tamsin Bradley, *Religion and Gender in the Developing World: Faith-Based Organizations and Feminism in India* (New York: I.B. Tauris, 2011), 73–74.

Jeevak Project for its commitment to social justice and women's equality, she condemns Sadhu Vaswani Mission as nationalistic and patriarchal.[17] She urges donors to be cautious in their interfaces with organizations such as the latter, which conceal a "conservative agenda" beneath the guise of gender empowerment.[18] Bradley's divergent assessments of the gender strategies of both organizations is revealing. While she affirms religious interpretations that challenge the oppression of women by men, she is suspicious about the use of religion to reinforce traditional understandings of gender—which she views as illiberal and non-egalitarian—or to challenge the economic and political dominance of one nation by another. Such inconsistencies in the treatment of religion in development reflect the priorities of Western scholars and donors and expose the power imbalances implicit in the relationship between donors and "beneficiaries."[19]

Validating Development Discourses

A notable effect of the secularist and materialist influences on the Canadian and British donors' development philosophies is the validation of some discourses over others. Donors set the tone for development discourse, covertly limiting which discourses are authorized in the development arena. Generally, "religious" discourses are not seen as legitimate except insofar as they express a religious motivation for development activity. The Canadian government shirks religious vocabularies in favour of the discourse of development. The pseudo-theological language featured in "Christian NGOs and CIDA" appears to be an aberration, unparalleled in subsequent CIDA publications. In response to CIDA's perceived preference for secular scripts,

[17] Bradley, "Broad Perspectives Concerning the Interrelation between Religion and Development," 23.
[18] Ibid., 19, 23.
[19] The very language of "beneficiary" portrays people in project communities as passive recipients of aid. Even in an era of participatory development, the term dominates development discourse as a convenient shorthand.

RNGOs avoid religious language in their communication with the federal government.[20] Even DFID, which postulates that "faith plays such an important role in development," discusses development in secular, materialist terms with economic growth as the presumed ultimate objective. The previous chapter's discourse analysis of "Faith Partnership Principles" revealed that the document was dominated by secular development vocabularies.

In response to donor constraints on development discourse, mainstream religious NGOs exhibit a kind of bilingualism. They adroitly alternate between religious and secular language depending on whether they are addressing constituents, donor governments, fellow aid agencies, or project communities. In keeping with the linguistic metaphor, the process of negotiating between discourses and worldviews has been described as "translation." Sally Merry discusses the "vernacularization," or "translation," of transnational concepts such as human rights into a language and conceptual framework that suits the local cultural context. She also considers the reverse process, though which local communities articulate their concerns using the language of human rights.[21] She describes the actors who traverse the boundaries between local cultural perspectives and transnational human rights norms as "translators" or "intermediaries." The degree to which transnational ideas are altered through vernacularization varies. Merry uses the terms "replication" to describe the appropriation of non-indigenous concepts and "hybridity" to refer to the blending of indigenous and non-indigenous concepts.[22]

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[20] Andrea Paras, "Between Missions and Development: Christian NGOs in the Canadian Development Sector," *Canadian Journal of Development Studies* 35, no. January 2015 (2014): 244.
[21] Merry's work is focused on human rights; however, her analysis is deeply relevant to development, particularly given the preponderance of rights-based approaches to development. Similarly, while she does not focus on religion, but discusses culture more broadly, her discussion of vernacularization can be applied to translation between religious and secular discourses.
[22] Sally Engle Merry, "Transnational Human Rights and Local Activism: Mapping the Middle," *American Anthropologist* 108, no. 1 (2006): 44, 46.

The discursive behaviours described by Merry are common amongst RNGOs. In a discussion paper on religion and development, APRODEV, an association of European Christian NGOs, says of its members:

> Some agencies are accountable to churches and ecumenical groups as well as seeking support from the wider public and from governments, and some use a certain bilingualism in their communications. In that case, messages intended for a church audience are explicitly Christian in tone (e.g. using Bible texts) while those that are aimed at the general public (like in national newspapers) do not use "religious" language.[23]

As the APRODEV statement attests, Christian NGOs are engaged in translating between religious and secular vocabularies to suit their audience. Marie Juul Peterson offers a similar assessment of Islamic Relief, suggesting that the organization "has to be bilingual, mastering the languages of both development and Islam."[24] The organization's "Gender Justice Policy," for example, builds on a consensus between international human rights discourse and Islamic principles of social ethics.[25] The policy, rooted in the *Qur'an* and *Sunna*, explicitly evokes the language of rights-based development, though with a distinctly Islamic vernacular. As a nod to both rights-based development discourse and Islam's focus on social obligation, Islamic Relief describes its role as that of a "duty-bearer," though without reference to the term's usual counterpart: "rights-holder." Rights and duties are linked throughout the policy, generally using the language of "reciprocal rights and responsibilities." Bilingualism is not only evident on an organizational level. Individual staff become practiced at self-censoring their language. Jonathan Benthall suggests that "CAFOD's staff are enjoined to be 'bilingual,' familiar with the idioms of

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[23] APRODEV, "Development and Religion: A Discussion Paper" (Brussels, n.d.), 31.
[24] Marie Juul Petersen, "Islamizing Aid: Transnational Muslim NGOs After 9.11," *Voluntas* 23, no. 1 (2012): 126–55.
[25] Islamic Relief Worldwide, "Gender Justice Policy: April 2015," 2015, www.islamic-relief.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/Gender-policy.pdf.

both development and Christianity."[26] Similarly, a Ugandan aid worker reported that he would never use religious language, which he considered appropriate in the field, during a presentation at the World Bank or in the office for fear that he would lose his job.[27] Translation is an automatic response of individuals and organizations to the discursive constraints imposed by the dominant development culture.

While translation often occurs spontaneously as part of cultural exchange, some organizations have intentionally leveraged the power of religious discourses to achieve development objectives. World Vision's Channels of Hope for Gender program, for example, translates human rights and gender equality principles into an explicitly religious framework, based on the assumption that such a framework will resonate more deeply with project communities. Through scriptural reinterpretation and capacity building, the program seeks to inspire and mobilize faith leaders to tackle issues such as gender-based violence, child marriage, and sexual abuse.[28] Originally piloting the program in Christian communities, World Vision has worked with Islamic Relief and scholars of Islam to develop a curriculum for use in Muslim contexts.[29]

Some scholars have presented bilingualism as a normal, and perhaps even necessary, aspect of the democratic public sphere. Anne Marie Dalton relates that "[s]ome varieties of religions (mainline Christianity, moderate Islam, engaged Buddhism, reformed Judaism, diasporic Hinduism) have developed public languages through which they convey their

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[26] Jonathan Benthall, "'Cultural Proximity' and the Conjuncture of Islam with Modern Humanitarianism" in *Sacred Aid: Faith and Humanitarianism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), 70.
[27] Ager and Ager, *Faith, Secularism and Humanitarian Engagement,* 79–80.
[28] World Vision, "Channels of Hope for Gender: Uganda Case Study," 2014, 3, http://www.wvi.org/sites/default/files/CoH4G_Uganda%20Case%20Study.pdf.
[29] World Vision, "Channels of Hope: The Faith Connection - Evidence of Transformation," October 2015, 1, http://www.wvi.org/sites/default/files/Channels%20of%20Hope-The%20Faith%20Connection-Evidence%20of%20Transformation.pdf.

meanings and values to a pluralistic and secular society."[30] This description of "public languages" complements the argument advanced by the likes of Jürgen Habermas, who posits that religious discourse should be permitted in the public sphere, but should be transformed into "generally accessible language."[31]

Other observers are more cynical about the role of translation in development. Ager and Ager somewhat pejoratively refer to the verbal dualism of RNGOs as "linguistic schizophrenia."[32] Despite the insinuation that bilingualism is an affliction, Ager and Ager recognize its inevitability, acknowledging that "[t]ranslation is necessary to permit encounter and understanding."[33] Although translation appears to be a neutral, technical project, it is inherently political and has the potential to reinforce power imbalances.[34] Bilingualism is a product of the dominant aid culture, which demands that local religio-cultural perspectives be translated into the language of secular development. Ager and Ager's quarrel is less with translation than its one-sided nature. They contend that secular humanitarianism is not neutral, but rather "serves to privatize, marginalize and instrumentalize matters of faith and religion."[35] In regions where religion shapes the contours of daily life, secular discourse alienates religious perspectives. According to the authors, "small choices of language can aggregate to marginalization of a major sphere of experience for local communities."[36] If fluency in the language of secular development is a condition for participating in aid decision-making, then people who are monolingual—who do not understand their world in so-called "secular" terms—are at a disadvantage. Moreover,

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[30] Anne Marie Dalton, "Beyond Functionality: Religion and International Development," *Canadian Journal of Development Studies* 34, no. 2 (2013): 168.
[31] Ager and Ager, *Faith, Secularism and Humanitarian Engagement*, 81–82.
[32] Ibid., 43.
[33] Ibid., 98.
[34] Ibid.
[35] Ibid., 49.
[36] Ibid.

particular segments of the community are more likely to be excluded from development decision-making than others. Wealthy, educated local elites, for example, may be better able to articulate their concerns using donor language than some of their compatriots. Consequently, they are better equipped to advocate vis-à-vis donors.

In order to challenge the hegemony of secular humanitarianism, Ager and Ager call for humanitarian actors to become conversant in local religious languages.[37] They are not alone in their call for development scholars, practitioners, and organizations to become multilingual. In a study they co-authored, Elena Fiddian-Qasmiyeh and Alastair Ager posit that "[t]here is a case for more research to be 'bilingual'—that is, comfortable in both secular academic language and that of religious communities."[38] Similarly, in their aptly named book, *Religion in Development: Rewriting the Secular Script,* Séverine Deneulin and Masooda Bano call for "dialogue between worldviews—especially between those who see the world through secular eyes, without reference to a transcendental source of value, and those who see it through the eyes of a religion."[39] Such a dialogue should be characterized by "genuine openness to the other position, an ability to identity the multiple voices within the opposing traditions, and an openness to revise one's own worldview in the light of the encounter with others."[40] For Deneulin and Bano, dialogue demands a two-way process of translation that seeks to build mutuality between "religious" and "secular" development actors.[41]

[37] Ager and Ager, *Faith, Secularism and Humanitarian Engagement*, 99.
[38] Elena Fiddian-Qasmiyeh and Alastair Ager, "Local Faith Communities and the Promotion of Resilience in Humanitarian Situations: A Scoping Study," UNPB, Joint Learning Initiative on Local Faith Communities (Oxford, 2013), 17.
[39] Séverine Deneulin and Masooda Bano, *Religion in Development: Rewriting the Secular Script* (London: Zed Books, 2009), 6.
[40] Ibid., 24.
[41] Ibid., 159, 161.

The application of scholarship from other fields can enrich discussions of translation in development. There is considerable debate regarding the potentiality and merit of cultural translation. Two of these interchanges illustrate the complexity of the dialogical approach for which scholars such as Deneulin and Bano, Ager and Ager, and Fiddian-Qasmiyeh advocate. The first is Talal Asad's response to the suggestion that scholars should reassess the adequacy of their own languages when they encounter problems in translating cultural phenomena from a foreign language into their native tongue. Asad counters that it is unlikely that Western scholars' language will be transformed through translation:

> To put it crudely, because the languages of third-world societies—including, of course, the societies that social anthropologists have traditionally studied—are seen as weaker in relation to Western languages (and today, especially to English), they are more likely to submit to forcible transformation in the translation process than the other way around. The reason for this is, first, that in their political-economic relations with third-world countries, Western nations have the greater ability to manipulate the latter. And second, Western languages produce and deploy desired language more readily than third world languages do. (The knowledge that third world languages deploy more easily is not sought by Western societies in quite the same way, or for the same reason.)[42]

While Asad refers to languages in a conventional sense (discussing English and Arabic, for example), his comments are relevant to a discussion of development discourses. As the previous chapter reveals, Western discourses of economic progress, equality, human rights, and quantifiable results dominate the aid approaches of both CIDA and DFID. Such discourses are entrenched in the global aid framework, shaping even multilateral institutions such as the United Nations and World Bank, which in theory represent an international consensus, but in reality are heavily influenced by Western ideologies. Given the power of bilateral and multilateral donors, it is far more likely that their discourses will be internalized by local communities than the reverse.

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[42] Talal Asad, *Genealogies of Religion: Discipline and Reasons of Power in Christianity and Islam* (Baltimore: John Hopkins, 1993), 190–91.

A second example of the translation debate is evident in Russell McCutcheon's reply to Benson Saler's argument that anthropologists should operationalize the folk categories of local communities in their scholarship. Like Asad, McCutcheon is skeptical of the potential for translation to transform power imbalances. He holds that the approach proposed by Saler is untenable in that both insider and outsider categories are indeterminate, contextual, and theoretical, while only the latter categories require one to "make our theoretical commitments explicit and rationally defensible."[43] McCutcheon argues that "theoretically and taxonomically grounded" explanatory efforts might be more appropriate than the use of local conceptual frameworks in combatting ethnocentrism in scholarship.[44] Furthermore, employing folk categories risks instrumentalizing "their" concepts in pursuit of "our" objectives.[45] In the case of the Channels of Hope for Gender program, it is plausible that, given World Vision's Christian identity, the organization's use of scripture to promote gender equality seen will be viewed as authentic and appropriate by local Christian communities. There is a risk, however, that the organization's use of Islamic concepts might be interpreted as a particularly latent form of neocolonialism that uses local language to promote an externally driven agenda.[46]

Though cultural translation is rife with power imbalances, program communities do not merely passively absorb the ideological positions of donors. Translation can be employed strategically by local people in their interactions with conventionally powerful development actors. Local communities are highly adept at adopting a development vernacular in order to pursue their own objectives, which may or may not resemble those of donors. Tamsin Bradley's

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[43] Russell T. McCutcheon, *Critics Not Caretakers: Redescribing the Public Study of Religion* (Albany: SUNY, 2001), 79.
[44] Ibid., 82.
[45] Ibid., 80.
[46] In response to Benson Saler's suggestion that scholars incorporate the folk categories of their subjects into their analyses, Russell McCutcheon counters that this would equate to "their means… for our ends" (Ibid., 81.).

analysis of the Sadhu Vaswani Mission in Pune, India provides a revealing example. While the organization employs the language of "empowerment" to describe its work with women, its understanding of the term differs from that of secular Western feminists. Empowerment is interpreted as "the strength and courage girls need to withstand the pressures of a modern secular life," rather than as the freedom to challenge gendered barriers to equal opportunity.[47] According to Bradley, such an interpretation complements the organization's "nationalist" political vision of an India fully emancipated from British influence.[48] Adoption of the language of Western feminists gives the organization an advantage when interfacing with—and seeking funding from—North American and European donors, while simultaneously challenging the imposition of Western values. This corresponds with what Marie Juul Peterson calls "subversive merging," in which local actors strategically use Western development language in order to camouflage local conceptual frameworks, which remain essentially intact.[49] While Bradley sees this move as disingenuous, it is also a demonstration of the agency of local actors. Overlooking the agency of those who are not conventionally classified as "powerful" in discussions of "neocolonial imposition" tends to reinforce the image of donors as active agents and local communities as passive recipients of both aid and ideology.

At the same time, agency must be distinguished from authorship, lest the structural inequalities of the global system be ignored. As Asad relates, the notion that "local peoples are not 'passive objects of their own history'… is not equivalent to claiming that they are its 'authors.'"[50] There is a difference between producing a narrative and "authorizing" the type of

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[47] Bradley, "Broad Perspectives Concerning the Interrelation between Religion and Development," 21.
[48] Ibid.
[49] Marie Juul Petersen, "For Humanity or for the Umma?: Ideologies of Aid in Four Transnational Muslim NGOs" (University of Copenhagen, 2011), 112, 219.
[50] Asad, *Genealogies of Religion*, 4.

narrative that may be produced.[51] People are authors of their own histories only insofar as they consciously and sub-consciously adjust to systemic forces such as Western capitalism and the global aid framework.[52] In the case of development, local populations' strategic use of dominant aid discourses demonstrates an agency that must not be minimized, but this does not negate the fact that this discursive maneuver is a response to constraints enacted by a global aid system that authorizes some discourses while marginalizing others.

Determining Legitimate Development Activities

The dominance of particular visions and discourses of development has practical implications for development programming. At perhaps the most basic level, donor assumptions that development is a fundamentally political and economic—and therefore non-religious—activity limits the type of projects that can legitimately be supported with official aid money. The use of official development assistance for activities regarded as "religious" is generally prohibited, though donors range in the degree to which such prohibitions are formalized. In the case of the United States, the expectation that religion should be compartmentalized has been codified into law. Legislation introduced in 2004 by the Bush Jr. administration prohibits the use of federal government money for "inherently religious activities such as worship, prayer, proselytizing, or devotional Bible study," as well as the purchase of scriptural texts or other "religious materials."[53] Like CIDA and DFID, USAID—the development arm of the U.S. government—affirms the role of religious organizations in development as long as they are able

[51] Asad, *Genealogies of Religion, 4*.
[52] Ibid.
[53] USAID (United States Agency for International Development), "Faith-Based Organizations FAQ," 2014, https://www.usaid.gov/work-usaid/partnership-opportunities/faith-based-community-organizations/faith-based-organizations.

to distinguish between “religious” and “developmental” activities. In fact, the purpose of the aforementioned legislation was to enable FBOs to “compete on an equal footing with other organizations for USAID funding.”[54] Organizations that engage in “inherently religious” activities are eligible for USAID funding on the condition that such activities are “offered separately, in time or location from the programs or services funded with direct financial assistance from USAID.”[55]

While the expectation that religion be compartmentalized temporally or geographically from federally funded aid delivery is less clearly articulated in British and Canadian official aid policy, the preceding chapters demonstrate that the expectation is nonetheless present. While CIDA has never defined religious activities in an official, publicly circulated document, the 1995 “Christian NGOs and CIDA” working paper prohibits the use of CIDA funds for evangelism or strengthening religious institutions.[56] Moreover, in recent years, CIDA spokespeople have publicly announced that the agency does not fund religious activities. DFID also distinguishes between “religious” and “developmental” activities. Proselytism is overtly prohibited in funding guidelines; while non–proselytist religious activities are not mentioned, the department has demonstrated a reluctance to fund religious activities, even indirectly. For example, funding for *madrasas* has traditionally been denied, even though such institutions can contribute to achieving universal primary education in countries such as India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sudan, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo.[57] At the same time as the department is undertaking

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[54] USAID (United States Agency for International Development), *Participation by Religious Organizations in USAID Programs; Final Rule*, 2004.
[55] Ibid.
[56] Canadian International Development Agency, “Christian NGOs and CIDA: Guiding Principles, Understandings and Affirmations,” 1995, 5.
[57] Gerard Clarke, “Religion and International Development,” in *Routledge Handbook of Religion and Politics*, ed. Jeffrey Haynes (London: Routledge, 2009), 397.

intentional efforts to expand and intensify its relationships with religious groups, support to RNGOs is focused on conventional "secular" development activities.

Christian organizations have responded to the secular frameworks of Western donors by distinguishing between "mission" and "development" activities. This administrative distinction is a function of the Christian origins of CIDA's and DFID's secular model. The religious-secular binary is not foreign to Christianity, but rather has longstanding roots in the tradition of distinguishing allegiance to political rulers from allegiance to God. Conventionally, "mission" is associated with evangelism, spiritual care, or church planting, and "development" with poverty relief; however, the defining qualities of "mission" and "development" are far from clear. Some Canadian organizations, such as World Relief, interpret the "mission" of the church primarily in terms of its social justice work, including international development efforts.[58] Within such a perspective, even "secular" development activities funded by CIDA are regarded as missional. Despite the lack of consensus on the definition of "mission," a distinction between mission and development is pervasive and, if asked by a government donor, many Christian churches engaged in development are able to demonstrate a separation of the two. Some, like the Anglican, Catholic, Christian Reformed, Lutheran, and Presbyterian churches in Canada, operate separate charitable organizations whose mandates relate exclusively to relief and development. Other Christian groups manage their development activities through their national or international church bodies, but maintain a distinction between "mission" and "development."[59]

While the administrative separation between religious and developmental activities might be a condition to partnering with CIDA or DFID, such a distinction is not always externally imposed. Andrea Paras' research reveals that this dichotomy is sometimes a result of pressure

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[58] Paras, "Between Missions and Development," 448.
[59] Ibid., 447.

from within a Christian NGO's constituency.[60] Some supporters of religious development agencies wish to designate their donations for poverty relief, and not traditional "mission" activities such as church planting.[61] The internalization of a distinction between religious and developmental activities by Christian development organizations and their supporters is indicative of the power of the dominant aid culture. Moreover, it suggests particular affinities between Christianity and the model of secularism embraced by CIDA and DFID. The Western secular tradition is not only compatible with the Christian worldview, but it is embedded therein.

The distinction between "religious" and "developmental" activities has eminently practical implications on development decision making. Infrastructural funding decisions in refugee camps or post-disaster contexts provide a prime example. As Victoria Palmer's case study in Bangladesh suggests, refugee communities often assign far greater importance to mosques and other religious structures than do donors. Similarly, communities affected by typhoons, earthquakes, and other natural disasters often prioritize the rebuilding of mosques, churches, or temples in recovery efforts. Donors' funding decisions regarding such religious infrastructure expose the fragile nature of the dichotomy between "religious" and "secular." Duncan Green of Oxfam Great Britain recounts the organization's deliberations with regards to two requests for mosques received from disaster-affected communities in Indonesia. In 2004, Oxfam declined to fund the construction of a mosque in Aceh following the devastation caused by the Indian Ocean tsunami. By contrast, when met with a similar request in Java two years later, the organization approved funding for the rebuilding of a mosque that had been leveled by an earthquake. According to staff, the latter decision was justified on the grounds that the Java

[60] Paras, "Between Missions and Development," 448–49.
[61] Ibid., 448.

mosque would also serve as a community centre for meetings and relief coordination.[62] The fact that the same building project is eligible for development funding if the resulting structure is called a "community centre," yet ineligible if it is called a "mosque," is indicative of the malleable nature of the religious-secular binary.

As Oxfam's decision to finance the mosque in Java demonstrates, some development agencies have acknowledged the potential for religion to contribute positively to community resilience and rebuilding. Recognizing the psychological trauma that often accompanies humanitarian crises, relief agencies are increasingly cognizant of the importance of social and emotional wellbeing in recovery efforts.[63] Emerging research points to religion as a source of resilience for communities in turmoil, whether as a result of poverty, natural disaster, violent conflict or displacement.[64] Consequently, psychosocial programming provides one of the most viable entry points for integrating local religio-cultural perspectives in relief and development. Nonetheless, religion is not generally integrated into psychosocial initiatives in a meaningful way; moreover, actors striving to deliver psychosocial programming that is mindful of local religious traditions tend to adopt technical approaches that do not resonate with local communities.[65] In the absence of a radical challenge to the dominant development paradigm, the

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[62] Duncan Green, "Should Emergency Relief Be Used to Build Mosques and Churches?," Blog: From Poverty to Power: How Active Citizens and Effective States Can Change the World, accessed April 14, 2016, https://oxfamblogs.org/fp2p/should-emergency-relief-be-used-to-build-mosques-and-churches/.

[63] Humanitarian relief is conventionally distinguished from development response. While the former is generally understood as short-term relief in response to violent conflict or natural disaster, the latter is focused on longer-term objectives. Given the protracted nature of many humanitarian crises, such as forced displacement of communities, there is a movement towards synchronizing humanitarian and development agendas.

[64] Fiddian-Qasmiyeh and Ager, "Local Faith Communities and the Promotion of Resilience in Humanitarian Situations"; Elzbieta M. Goździak, "Spiritual Emergency Room: The Role of Spirituality and Religion in the Resettlement of Kosovar Albanians," *Journal of Refugee Studies* 15, no. 2 (2002): 136–52; Damaris Seleina Parsitau, "The Role of Faith and Faith-Based Organizations among Internally Displaced Persons in Kenya," *Journal of Refugee Studies* 24, no. 3 (July 28, 2011): 493–512; Ager and Ager, *Faith, Secularism and Humanitarian Engagement*, 34.

[65] Ager and Ager, *Faith, Secularism and Humanitarian Engagement*, 34–35.

prevailing secularist and materialist bias of Western donors is likely to continue impeding the accommodation of religious perspectives in psychosocial response.

Privileging Conventional Development Actors

In addition to delimiting appropriate uses of official aid funding, the development vision of donors determines which actors, and therefore which perspectives, are represented within the development arena. Religious groups that share donors' empirical approaches to development, and are amenable to the compartmentalization of religion in aid delivery, are much more likely to be selected as implementing partners than organizations that do not meet these criteria. They are more likely to be afforded a seat around the table in consultations such as those that informed "Christian NGOs and CIDA" and "Faith Partnership Principles," and thus are better positioned to voice any alternative development perspectives they may espouse and ultimately to influence the official aid agenda. In practice, Christian RNGOs have been better represented in CIDA and DFID funding and consultative processes than NGOs representing other religious traditions. This imbalance is influenced by the methodological, as well as the ideological, orientations of donors.

On a procedural level, the bureaucratic, instrumentalist, and technocratic nature of CIDA's and DFID's approaches to development limits the type of actors with which they engage. As a result of their heavily bureaucratic aid delivery systems, both donors' civil society engagement is institutionally focussed. Neither department directly implements overseas development projects; rather, they work through a complex network of partnerships with governments, multilateral organizations, and NGOs. While donors may have a direct relationship with select civil society organizations in the Global South, most often these relationships are brokered through international NGOs headquartered in countries such as Canada and Britain.

Funding is awarded to the international organization, but projects are frequently implemented by a field office, subsidiary organization, or local partner of the recipient NGO. As a result, direct interchange between donors and local organizations tends to be limited.

Since funding must be channeled to a formally organized entity, donor partnerships with religious groups, whether Northern or Southern, are limited to those traditions that are institutionalized or have established charitable or development arms. Moreover, dialogue and consultation requires the identification of interlocutors, which can be a challenge in the absence of an organizational structure. Institutionalized traditions enjoy certain advantages when interfacing with donors. Many Christian denominations, in particular, are hierarchically organized, making questions of representation relatively straight-forward. In the British context, for example, the highly formalized administrative structure of the Church of England is conducive to consultation and partnership between government and church leadership. The launch of "Faith Partnership Principles" at Lambeth Palace, including addresses by both the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Secretary of State for Development, served as a symbolic affirmation of DFID's close relationship with the Church of England. The department's choice of venue for the high-profile event illustrates the ease with which governments can forge relationships with institutionalized traditions. By contrast, indigenous or African traditional religions tend not to have the same official organizing structures or historic relationships with Western governments, making them less appealing partners or interlocutors from a government perspective.[66]

In addition to institutional factors, donors' relations with civil society organizations are affected by their concern for aid effectiveness. While both CIDA and DFID actively fund

[66] Clarke, "Religion and International Development," 840.

RNGOs, they are highly selective in their identification of funding partners. Funding decisions are guided by demands for demonstrable development results and effective use of taxpayer resources. Reflecting the outcome-driven nature of aid delivery, CIDA has reported that it bases its funding decisions on effectiveness alone. All NGO partners, religious or secular, are held to the same standards of accountability, effectiveness, transparency, and professionalism. The obvious corollary is that the agency will not partner with organizations that do not meet its expectations for the attainment of donor-defined results, even if these organizations demonstrate a higher level of convergence with the perspectives and objectives of program communities. In the case of DFID, "Faith Partnership Principles" demonstrates that, while the department affords special status to religious groups, it is primarily interested in their ability to advance development aims.

Donors' pursuit of the most efficacious partnerships has resulted in non-uniform engagement with RNGOs. The results-driven strategies of donors has bred a technocratic system that privileges the organizations that are most successful in meeting donors' development objectives. Substantial inputs of financial and human resources are required to prepare a funding proposal or build rapport with institutional donors. Managing a government-funded project is even more taxing, as organizations are expected not only to attain the desired results, but also to report on project outcomes using the donor's templates for monitoring and evaluation. A select number of high capacity RNGOs such as Canadian Foodgrains Bank, the Aga Kahn Foundation, CAFOD, and Christian Aid have been successful in securing very large funding agreements with government donors. These organizations tend to fit a particular profile: large, established, and reputable professional organizations that make effective use of empirical methods for assessing

results. By contrast, small or fledgling organizations that rely heavily on volunteers may find it more difficult to cope with donor demands for quality and accountability.

The technocratic nature of the global aid system may contribute to higher levels of Western donor engagement with Christian organizations than with those representing other religious traditions. A possible explanation for this imbalance is that there are fewer non-Christian RNGOs with the financial or technical capacity to meet donor requirements. Muslim organizations are increasingly significant players in global development assistance, yet they still represent less than three percent of international NGOs.[67] There are a number of sizeable Muslim NGOs located in the West, including Islamic Relief, Muslim Aid, LIFE for Relief and Development, Muslim Hands, and Comité de Bienfaisance et de Secours aux Palestiniens, but these organizations are relative newcomers. While many Christian organizations were established in the 1940s, 1950s, and 1960s, the aforementioned Muslim agencies did not emerge until the 1980s or later. The oldest, Islamic Relief, was founded in 1984, while Muslim Aid was founded the following year, and the remainder were products of the 1990s.[68] Correspondingly, these organizations began to access federal funding comparatively recently. While CAFOD received British government funding as early as the 1980s, Islamic Relief did not receive its first grant from DFID until 1998, and Muslim Aid until 2007.[69] While both Islamic Relief and Muslim Aid have successfully leveraged institutional funding, smaller and less experienced

[67] Petersen, "Islamizing Aid," 134.

[68] Islamic Relief, "History," n.d., http://www.islamic-relief.org/about-us/history/; Muslim Aid, "The History of Muslim Aid," n.d., https://www.muslimaid.org/about-us/the-history-of-muslim-aid; LIFE for Relief and Development, "About Us," n.d., http://www.lifeusa.org/site/PageServer?pagename=wwa_About_Us; Muslim Hands UK, "About Muslim Hands," n.d., https://muslimhands.org.uk/about-us; Comité de Bienfaisance et de Secours aux Palestiniens, "About Us," n.d., http://cbsp.fr/en/about-cbsp/.

[69] Marie Juul Petersen, *For Humanity or for the Umma: Aid and Islam in Transnational Muslim NGOs* (London: C. Hurst & Co., 2015), 106. The Aga Khan Foundation predates these organizations slightly, establishing offices in Britain in 1973 and in Canada in 1980 (Aga Khan Foundation Canada, "About Us," n.d., http://www.akfc.ca/en/about-us.)

Muslim NGOs may struggle to compete in technocratic funding processes if such organizations are perceived as lacking capacity in areas deemed essential by donors. Indeed, according to DFID staff, a major impediment to funding Muslim NGOs has been the latter's lack of technical expertise in areas such as therapeutic feeding.[70]

The imperative of maximizing aid impact has also governed selection of implementing partners. Donors select partners based on the latter's potential contributions to development. Consequently, the relative importance of religious institutions in social service provision has influenced the geographic distribution of donor partnerships with religious actors and, by default, the variety of religious traditions with which donors engage. DFID, for example, has been more inclined to work with religious actors in Sub-Saharan Africa, where RNGOs' contributions to health and education systems are prolific, than with religious actors in Asia, where religious groups are less central to social service delivery.[71] Given the religious demographics in these regions, the de facto effect has been more extensive engagement with local Christian organizations than with Buddhist, Hindu, or Muslim organizations. A single-minded focus on effectiveness is not conducive to heterogeneous partnerships. Diversification of partnerships with religious groups, which DFID has identified as a priority, requires consideration of factors such as cultural appropriateness and religio-cultural literacy, in addition to a development actor's potential contribution to conventional development objectives.

While the institutional status, geographic location, and efficacy of religious groups seems to influence donors' relations with such actors, there is also an ideological element in the disparity between donor engagement with Christian and non-Christian RNGOs. Like the

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[70] Gerard Clarke, "Agents of Transformation? Donors, Faith-Based Organisations and International Development," *Third World Quarterly* 28, no. 1 (2007): 87.
[71] Clarke, "Religion and International Development," 397.

instrumentalist approach of donors, the secularist vision of the world that they espouse informs their selection of partners. Organizations that have internalized, or are conversant in, the religious-secular binary are more likely to receive funding from Western institutional donors. The expectation that federally-funded organizations be able to distinguish between "religious" and "developmental" activities excludes those whose foundational perspective is not amenable to compartmentalization. Indeed, many observers have commented on the operational similarities between the mainstream FBOs that have been most successful in obtaining federal funding and their secular counterparts.

Gerard Clarke and Marie Juul Petersen have described the traditional RNGO funding partners of government donors as "quasi-secular."[72] Not only do these organizations share the development vision of donors—and have the size and institutional capacity to manage federally funded projects—but they do not discriminate on the basis of religion in either hiring or beneficiary selection, and are willing to compartmentalize their "religious" and "developmental" activities.[73] For NGOs that fit this profile, religion tends to be relegated to the private space of motivations, values, and beliefs.[74] As discussed in the previous chapter, Christian organizations may be at an advantage as a result of the Christian origins of the religious-secular binary and the contemporary tradition of distinguishing between "mission" and "development." Fluent in the languages of both religion and development, long-time RNGO partners such as Christian Aid and CFGB are highly adept at demonstrating the separation of "religious" and "developmental" activities.

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[72] Clarke, "Agents of Transformation? Donors, Faith-Based Organisations and International Development," 84; Petersen, *For Humanity or for the Umma*, 36.
[73] Clarke, "Religion and International Development," 393.
[74] Petersen, *For Humanity or for the Umma*, 53.

Organizations representing non-Christian traditions have also adopted quasi-secular development approaches. The Aga Khan Foundation is a prime example. The organization describes itself as secular, despite its obvious affiliation with Ismaili Islam.[75] Accordingly, scholars have differed in their coding of the agency as "religious" versus "secular."[76] As noted in Chapter Two, the foundation has received large amounts of funding from both the Canadian and British governments. Other Muslim organizations have also adopted approaches that complement those of government donors. Petersen describes Islamic Relief and Muslim Aid as "donor darlings," referring to their success in securing significant funding from donors such as DFID, as well as multilateral organizations.[77] As Petersen reflects, "both [organizations] try to promote an aid that resonates with the values of the dominant aid culture, more specifically those of institutional donors such as DFID, and ECHO, framing themselves as highly professional organisations, based on a vision of sustainable livelihoods for the poor, a universalist approach to recipients, and a strategy of long-term development."[78] Notably, the examples cited here, the Aga Khan Foundation, Muslim Aid, and Islamic Relief, are all based in Western countries. The aid paradigms espoused by these "quasi-secular" organizations have much in common with Western aid culture in terms of their subscription to the humanitarian principles, engagement with multilateral organizations such as the United Nations system, and presumptions about the compartmentalization of religion from other spheres of life.[79] The secularization of RNGOs is

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[75] Aga Khan Foundation Canada, "About Us."
[76] Ibid.; Mohammad Ralf Kroessin, "Mapping UK Muslim Development NGOs," 2014, 12, http://berkleycenter.georgetown.edu/programs/religion-and-global-development; Ray Vander Zaag, "Canadian Faith-Based Development NGOs and CIDA Funding," *Canadian Journal of Development Studies* 34, no. 2 (2013): 341; Marie Juul Petersen, "Trajectories of Transnational Muslim NGOs," in *Religions, Religious Organizations and Development: Scrutinising Religious Perceptions and Organisations*, ed. Carole Rakodi (New York: Routledge, 2014), 765.
[77] Petersen, "For Humanity or for the Umma?: Ideologies of Aid in Four Transnational Muslim NGOs," 174.
[78] Petersen, *For Humanity or for the Umma*, 145.
[79] Ibid., 16.

advantageous to donors. By supporting organizations such as Islamic Relief and the Aga Kahn Foundation, the British and Canadian governments are able to demonstrate the inclusivity of their funding practices and leverage the value-added of RNGOs without having to compromise their own development vision or framework.

Despite the allure of institutional funding, not all RNGOs are able or willing to secularize. As discussed in the previous chapter, the religious-secular binary has strong Western and Christian associations.[80] Not all religious perspectives are so amenable to the compartmentalization of religion. Organizations rooted in a paradigm that does not embrace the religious-secular binary may be less likely to apply for government funding, or less successful in their attempts. While non-Christian RNGOs such as Islamic Relief and Muslim Aid have successfully navigated the religious-secular dichotomy to secure funding from institutional donors, organizations that are less experienced in articulating their objectives using "secular" development language may find that their proposals do not meet donor assessment criteria.

While decision-making power generally rests in the hands of funders, some RNGOs intentionally abstain from institutional funding processes. Some religious organizations deliberately minimize institutional funding levels to maintain independence from government agendas or to avoid compromising their religious identity or spiritual objectives.[81] Mennonite Central Committee U.S., for example, refuses federal government support, and Christian Aid

[80] Asad, *Genealogies of Religion*; Talal Asad, *Formations of the Secular: Christianity, Islam, Modernity* (Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University Press, 2003); Tomoko Masuzawa, *The Invention of World Religions; Or, How European Universalism Was Preserved in the Language of Pluralism* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005); McCutcheon, *Critics Not Caretakers: Redescribing the Public Study of Religion*.
[81] Laura C. Thaut, "The Role of Faith in Christian Faith-Based Humanitarian Agencies: Constructing the Taxonomy," *Voluntas: International Journal of Voluntary and Nonprofit Organizations* 20, no. 4 (2009): 319–50; Vander Zaag, "Canadian Faith-Based Development NGOs and CIDA Funding."

limits its revenue from governments to thirty percent of total income.[82] Ray Vander Zaag's quantitative analysis of Canadian development NGOs found that secular organizations relied much more heavily on government funding than did their RNGO counterparts; about half of international programming undertaken by secular NGOs was funded by CIDA, whereas only one quarter of that undertaken by RNGOs was federally funded.[83] Without information about unsuccessful funding applications, it is impossible to determine whether religious organizations' "independence" from official donor funding is the prerogative of RNGOs or of donors.[84] In either case, the development philosophy espoused by donors is likely a determining factor in the partnerships that are formed between government and religious organizations.

A question deserving further investigation is whether and to what extent concerns about charities channeling funds to terrorist groups have affected institutional donor funding to RNGOs, and particularly to Muslim organizations. The conflation of Islam and terrorism has generated distrust of Muslim organizations in both Canada and the UK. In the 1990s, CIDA discontinued funding to Muslim NGO Human Concern International following allegations that one of its volunteers was engaged in terrorist activity in Pakistan.[85] The organization in question claimed religious discrimination and proceeded to file for a judicial review of the decision.[86] Similarly, in 2014, International Relief Fund for the Afflicted and Needy lost its charitable status and was listed as a terrorist organization for allegedly transferring funds to Hamas.[87] Speaking to

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[82] Susan Dicklitch and Heather Rice, "The Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) and Faith-Based NGO Aid to Africa," *Development in Practice* 14, no. 5 (2004): 660–72; Thaut, "The Role of Faith in Christian Faith-Based Humanitarian Agencies."
[83] Vander Zaag, "Canadian Faith-Based Development NGOs and CIDA Funding," 335.
[84] Ibid., 336.
[85] Andrea Paras, "CIDA's Secular Fiction and Canadian Faith-Based Organisations," *Canadian Journal of Development Studies* 33, no. 2 (June 2012): 231–49.
[86] Faisal Kutty, "Canadian Charity Claims Religious Discrimination By Faisal Kutty," *Washington Report on Middle East Affairs* (Washington, D.C., 1999).
[87] Stewart Bell, "RCMP Raids Muslim Relief Group's Offices as Canada Declares It a Terrorist Organization," *National Post*, April 29, 2014, http://news.nationalpost.com/news/canada/canada-outlaws-toronto-based-muslim-

the British context, Al Jazeera recently reported that Muslim NGOs in the UK are forced to pay an "Islamic penalty," citing the closure of the bank accounts of a number of organizations, including both Muslim Aid and Islamic Relief, on the grounds that the charities did not fit with the financial institution's "risk appetite."[88] This was the initiative of the banks themselves, and not the British government; however, the government regularly freezes the assets of individuals and groups suspected of links to terrorist activity. Between 2003 and 2011, the assets of one hundred organizations were frozen.[89] Research could help determine the degree to which Muslim development organizations have been penalized as a result of this general atmosphere of distrust.

Conclusion

An analysis of donors' funding patterns and discourse yields clues about the underlying assumptions that shape their approaches to "the religious" and "the secular" within aid provision. The current chapter has examined some of the concrete implications of such assumptions on the aid environment, with attention to the Canadian and British contexts. On an ideological level, the secular, materialist, and technocratic approaches of donors affirm particular visions of development and establish boundaries that limit the types of discourses that are legitimate in the development arena. As a result of these boundaries, development actors favouring alternate understandings of development are obliged to translate their perspectives into the language and conceptual framework of the dominant aid culture. On a practical level, translation marginalizes

relief-group-adds-it-to-terrorist-list; Canada Revenue Agency, "Revoked Canadian Charity Listed Under the Criminal Code as Terrorist Entity," April 29, 2014, http://www.cra-arc.gc.ca/chrts-gvng/chrts/whtsnw/trrrst-ntty-eng.html.

[88] Muhammad Abdul Bari, "British Muslim Charities Are Paying 'Islamic Penalty': A New Menace Haunting Muslim Charities," *Al Jazeera*, January 10, 2016, http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/opinion/2016/01/menace-haunting-muslim-charities-160107110210362.html.

[89] Petersen, "Trajectories of Transnational Muslim NGOs," 152.

those development actors that are unwilling or unable to undertake the task of translation. Similarly, the bureaucratic and technocratic nature of development and the primacy of empirically verifiable results limits the actors with which donors engage to those that demonstrate high levels of institutionalization, professionalism, and effectiveness. At the same time, the centrality of the religious-secular binary in donors' development philosophies generates a distinction between "religious" and "developmental" activities that ultimately governs the approval of projects. Projects coded as "religious" are generally ineligible for development funding, even if the associated activities are considered a priority of program communities.

As the forgoing analysis suggests, donors play a significant role in perpetuating the dominant aid culture. There is ample evidence to suggest that the secularist, bureaucratic, technocratic, and empiricist nature of this paradigm does not necessarily resonate with program communities. While the West might pride itself on its secularism and scientism, this sentiment is not universal. Displaced people in Bangladesh consider the number of calories consumed to be an inadequate indicator of wellbeing.[90] Earthquake-affected populations in Java regard rebuilding a mosque to be a humanitarian priority.[91] Christians in Tanzania and Muslims in Jordan are baffled by the suggestion that development should be free from religious influence.[92] Based on such observations from project communities, reforms to the dominant development culture have been proposed, including calls for dialogue between local perspectives and Western donors. Through their agenda-setting role within bilateral and multilateral aid networks, and their funding of relief and development activities, donors are influential in the global aid framework,

[90] Palmer, "Analysing Cultural Proximity."
[91] Duncan Green, "Should Emergency Relief Be Used to Build Mosques and Churches?," Blog: From Poverty to Power: How Active Citizens and Effective States Can Change the World, accessed April 14, 2016, https://oxfamblogs.org/fp2p/should-emergency-relief-be-used-to-build-mosques-and-churches/.
[92] Green, Mercer, and Mesaki, "Faith in Forms"; Alastair Ager and Joey Ager, "Faith and the Discourse of Secular Humanitarianism," *Journal of Refugee Studies* 24, no. 3 (August 4, 2011): 456–72.

and a shift in the dominant aid culture is unlikely without buy-in from major institutional donors. The next and final chapter will consider the complexities of dialogue between development cultures, as well as the potential for donors to contribute to such dialogical initiatives.

5

Donors, Dialogue and Diversity

Introduction

A quantitative review of CIDA's and DFID's funding patterns reveals that a substantial volume of public development resources has been programmed through RNGOs. Federal funding is not only a significant source of revenue for these organizations, but it also serves to authorize RNGOs as development actors. Both the Canadian and British government donors, however, have been highly selective in the organizations they fund, demonstrating a preference for professional, quasi-secular agencies that are conversant in the "secular" language of the dominant aid culture. In practice, the majority of funding to religious organizations has been channeled through Christian agencies. A small number of non-Christian RNGOs that are adept at describing their objectives using the language of secular development have also secured funding from institutional donors.

Trends in funding to civil society emanate from donors' ideological positions. As the discourse analysis in Chapter Three demonstrated, CIDA's and DFID's approaches to questions of religion in development are rooted in a Western, Christian worldview. Within this perspective, religion is viewed as a sphere set apart from the rest of life, including the political and economic spaces with which foreign aid is associated. Development is regarded as an essentially non-religious endeavor interpreted through a materialist lens and pursued through empiricist,

technocratic, and instrumentalist strategies. Since religion is largely understood as a personal and internal phenomenon, Western donors tolerate religious beliefs, motivations, and values so long as they advance objectives regarded as "developmental." Such a stipulation assumes that "religion" can be compartmentalized in development activity, a notion that is not universally embraced.

The secularist, materialist, empiricist, and results-driven trends in aid discussed thus far are not unique to government donors, but are defining features of a powerful aid culture that dominates contemporary development practice. CIDA and DFID perpetuate this dominant culture through their funding decisions and discourse, delimiting the range of legitimate development vocabularies and activities, and creating an environment in which some actors flourish and others are marginalized. Ironically, the populations excluded by the dominant aid culture include those that the global aid apparatus seeks to assist. The enforced secularity of the development arena may make little sense within populations for which religion is an integral feature of daily life. Similarly, the priorities championed by this aid culture are not necessarily shared by project participants for whom family relations, spirituality, social order, and unity with the natural environment are as important as physical survival.[1]

Dialogue: Addressing Power Imbalances

Noting the limited cultural resonance of the so-called "secular" development framework, a number of scholars have called for dialogue between "religious" and "secular" development perspectives as a way to challenge the Western bias of the dominant aid culture.[2] The oft-cited

[1] Darren Noy, "Material and Spiritual Conceptions of Development: A Framework of Ideal Types," *Journal of Developing Societies* 25, no. 3 (2009): 275–307.

[2] Alastair Ager and Joey Ager, "Faith and the Discourse of Secular Humanitarianism," *Journal of Refugee Studies* 24, no. 3 (August 4, 2011): 456–72; Tamsin Bradley, *Religion and Gender in the Developing World: Faith-Based Organizations and Feminism in India* (New York: I.B. Tauris, 2011), 25; Kurt Alan Ver Beek, "Spirituality: A Development Taboo," *Development in Practice* 10, no. 1 (2000): 31.

purpose of such dialogical efforts is to correct the power imbalance between secular Western donors and local religious populations. On a macro-level, the dominant aid culture may indeed marginalize non-Western cultural perspectives; however, accounting for power imbalances in terms of the "West" versus the "rest" is a gross oversimplification. Development relationships are not only affected by global inequalities, but also by national, local, and even familial power dynamics. Thus, while calls for a more inclusive and dialogical development culture are well-founded, framing this approach as dialogue between religious and secular voices is problematic.

A narrow framing of dialogue takes for granted the tenuous religious-secular binary, and thus tends to reinforce, rather than challenge, a Western worldview. Identities and power imbalances are too complex to be reconciled through bilateral dialogue between "religious" and "secular" perspectives. Religion is but one of many aspects of an individual's identity. It contributes to, but does not determine, an individual's relative power and ability to voice her own concerns and to meaningfully influence development agendas. Intersectionality provides a powerful lens to interrogate the macro- and micro-level power imbalances that are reinforced by the hegemony of the dominant aid culture. The relative power of individuals and groups is not a function of a single aspect of identity, such as membership in a particular religious community or physical location in the Global South. Instead, power is determined by a confluence of factors. Personal attributes such as gender, ability, socio-economic status, educational attainment, and familiarity with Western discourses influence the ease with which individuals and communities are able to articulate their concerns vis-à-vis Western donors and to navigate the ideological and operational aid environment promulgated by the latter.

In light of the complexity of personal and group identities, the incorporation of local religious sentiment into development programming in an effort to circumvent the imposition of a

Western secular framework on local communities may have the unintended effect of exacerbating internal inequality. Ruth Pearson and Emma Tomalin draw attention to the tendency of development actors to "treat religious traditions as monolithic and as capable of speaking with a single voice."[3] Efforts to engage with religious communities are often characterized by tokenism. While the search for "representatives" is a logistical necessity for donor agencies wishing to solicit a variety of development perspectives, questions of representation are convoluted and contentious. Consultation with "representatives" of a community, culture, or religious tradition tends to privilege the viewpoints of a select (and often relatively elite) group of individuals such as community or religious leaders. Identifying religious authorities as spokespeople for their communities, for example, risks amplifying the voices of what is often a predominantly male leadership structure, while effectively silencing alternate religious interpretations and voices of dissent. Perspectives that are traditionally under-represented, such as those of women or religious minorities, may not be heard in dialogue with local community leaders or religious elites.

Given the multiplicity of power dynamics that shapes the global aid framework, the question of whether "religious" or "secular" approaches to development better represent local perspectives is far from straight-forward. So too are calls for dialogue between "religious" and "secular" worldviews. Soliciting "religious" perspectives on development can contribute to building an alternative development culture, yet one would be remiss to assume that such a move will automatically result in an equitable aid environment. Dialogical initiatives that do not consider internal diversity or the intersections of power implicit in development risk reinforcing existing power imbalances or creating new inequalities. A broader, more nuanced framing of

[3] Ruth Pearson and Emma Tomalin, "Intelligent Design?: A Gender-Sensitive Interrogation of Religion and Development," in *Development, Civil Society & Faith-Based Organizations*, ed. Gerard Clarke and Michael Jennings (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), 47–71.

dialogue, informed by theories of intersectionality, may be better suited to incorporating the perspectives of a wide variety of development actors, Northern and Southern, than a bipartisan conversation. This dialogue would include perspectives that might be coded as "religious" in the West, but without the assumption that such perspectives adequately encapsulate the diversity of Southern voices.

Donor Contributions to Dialogue: Limitations and Possibilities

As this thesis has argued, bilateral donors shape the aid environment by propagating a Western vision of development through their financing of development projects. Their influence on the culture of aid provision is such that the success of the proposed dialogical initiatives is likely to be hampered if donors do not support such efforts. At the same time, the potential for donors such as CIDA and DFID to meaningfully contribute to dialogue initiatives is limited by their status as state actors. Government aid agencies are often large, cumbersome bureaucracies that are resistant to change. Their agendas tend to be guided not only by development objectives, but also by foreign policy agendas. Projects must advance—or at least be compatible with—the national interest. Financing projects with public funds, donors are accountable to taxpayers, whose approval democratic governments must secure in order to remain in power. Expenditure on overseas health and education projects is easy to justify to the public, whereas defending the funding of research and dialogue initiatives is less straight-forward. Furthermore, as part of the state apparatus, donors may be reluctant to risk transgressing the principle of the separation of church and state, and may approach religion with trepidation as a result.

The particular barriers they face notwithstanding, government donors have the potential to make crucial contributions to reforming the dominant aid culture. Though steeped in this

culture, initiatives taken by the British government to address questions of religion in development can be instructional for the Canadian context. Funding to research initiatives such as the Religions and Development Research Programme can yield valuable insights that influence development policy and practice, assuming the resultant findings are properly implemented. Further studies on donor approaches to religion and development are necessary to gain a fuller appreciation of donors' role in propagating the dominant aid culture. Fieldwork can be undertaken to gauge the appropriateness of current development projects in different cultural contexts, and, if programming is found to be lacking, can contribute to devising more suitable solutions. Research that examines the success of donor initiatives in fostering alternative development can inform the establishment of best practices for promoting congruence between aid objectives and local perspectives. Finally, studies interrogating questions of religion in development through a lens of intersectionality can help to ensure that such efforts take into account the diversity of perspectives among local actors and the multiplicity of factors that help or inhibit the voicing of such positions.

DFID's deliberateness in diversifying the range of actors involved in official aid delivery is noteworthy, though the success of the associated initiatives warrants further investigation. Institutional funding to organizations that are rooted in alternative development paradigms may foster a less Western-centric aid culture, provided that these organizations are not expected to adopt the language, visions, and priorities of donors. DFID's workshops to help Muslim organizations access federal funding provide a potential modality for the inclusion of groups with alternate development visions in federally-funded development programming. If successful, analogous initiatives could be replicated to target other groups. If the goal is to diversify the perspectives represented in the development arena, it is important that these workshops not be

dictatorial. A methodology that builds the capacity of groups to access federal funding simply by elucidating donor expectations would require concessions of the participating organizations, but not of the donor. The likely outcome would be the assimilation of the former into the dominant aid culture. In order to re-shape the dominant ideology of aid, such capacity-building initiatives must have a dialogical element, soliciting alternative perspectives offered by participants in order to alter and enrich donors' own development ideologies.

Promoting innovation—the focus of which is not increasing outputs, but rather enacting change that is meaningful to local communities—is also an important role of government donors. The relationships that donors build with non-governmental organizations are crucial in this regard. NGOs, as on-the-ground implementers, often have more contact with program communities than do government donors. Furthermore, NGOs tend to have smaller and more flexible organizational structures, which may enable them to remain cutting-edge in terms of adopting alternative development approaches. Non-governmental actors can be at the vanguard of initiating new directions in development thought and practice, and thus can be a significant resource for donors. At the same time, organizations that rely on federal funding are unlikely to step outside the dominant aid culture if they are not confident that donors will support such a direction. If there is any doubt of donors' receptiveness to new development strategies, organizations will likely err on the side of caution, at least in terms of the projects they put forward for government funding. Donors can respond to this challenge by supporting and encouraging innovative projects that integrate alternative development philosophies or adopt more holistic definitions of wellbeing.

In addition to the type of organizations and projects that donors fund, the nature of their funding instruments may either suppress or promote alternative views on development. While

CIDA has moved towards less responsive funding instruments, DFID's Programme Partnership Arrangements provide unrestricted funds that give agencies the liberty to define and pursue independent development agendas using their own strategies. This type of mechanism is much more conducive to innovation and diversity of perspectives than project-specific grants tailored to donor objectives. Naturally, the potential for responsive funding protocols to shape the development culture depends on the variety of agencies funded. If support is restricted to conventional secular and quasi-secular organizations, the status quo is likely to be maintained.

Conclusion

This thesis has traced the ways in which donor approaches to religion and development—as demonstrated by funding patterns and discourse—reinforce the dominant aid culture and therefore delimit the acceptable range of development activities, discourses, and perspectives. Development actors, including local communities, that are not able to navigate the ideological and operational environment of the dominant culture are often inhibited from influencing development processes. This may include people who do not understand the world in "secular" terms, as well as those whose voices are unlikely to be heard as a result of a multiplicity of local and global inequalities. Questions of religion and development are thus innately linked to questions of power. Given the potential for donors to perpetuate the dominant aid culture, they are necessarily implicated in its deconstruction.

The problems implicit in the very notion of development, resting as it does on Western conceptions of wellbeing and progress, have been the subject of academic critique for decades. Scholars such as Amartya Sen and Martha Nussbaum have advanced alternate visions of

development that measure success in terms of human capabilities, rather than economic growth.[4] Those from the post-development school, such as Gilbert Rist and Arturo Escobar, argue that development, as it is currently understood, must be abandoned completely in order to avoid further destruction of the natural environment and subjugation of communities in the Global South.[5] Healthy debate about post-colonialism, alternative development, and post-development is integral to imagining new ways forward. However, what I have demonstrated above is that the problematic religious-secular binary, as a feature of the dominant aid culture, must also be challenged as part of these discussions. The historicity of the notions of "religion" and "the secular" suggests that these concepts, like development, are neither neutral nor universal.

An emergent alternative to today's international aid paradigm must be localized, participatory, and adaptable to local contexts. It must be grounded in a flexible development vision that reflects and is rooted in local worldviews. Given that the parameters of discursive arenas tend to be set by powerful actors—and that particular groups and individuals are better equipped than others to navigate within or outside of these boundaries—any proposed solutions must be attentive to the multifarious power imbalances that exist on both a global and local level. Attempts to promote dialogue must take into account those actors who might be overlooked if dialogue is framed as religious-secular without attention to the diversity of identities and intersecting inequalities manifest in any social group. The voices of women and girls, children and youth, minorities, and people of all abilities, backgrounds, and sexual orientations must be heard in order for these groups to truly benefit from development activities. Integrating "religious" perspectives into development may amplify select marginalized voices; however,

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[4] Emma Tomalin, "Religions and Development" (London: Routledge, 2013), 35–36; Amartya Sen, *Commodities and Capabilities* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985); Amartya Sen, "Development as Freedom" (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999); Martha C. Nussbaum, *Women and Human Development: The Capabilities Approach* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000).
[5] Gilbert Rist, *The History of Development: From Western Origins to Global Faith*, 4th ed. (London: Zed Books, 2014); Arturo Escobar, "Imagining a Post-Development Era? Critical Thought, Development and Social Movements," *Social Text* 31/32 (1992): 20–56.

such an approach is not a panacea for equitable development programming. Instead, entertaining questions of religion and development is but one line of discussion in a much broader conversation: a conversation that is centred on questions of power.

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