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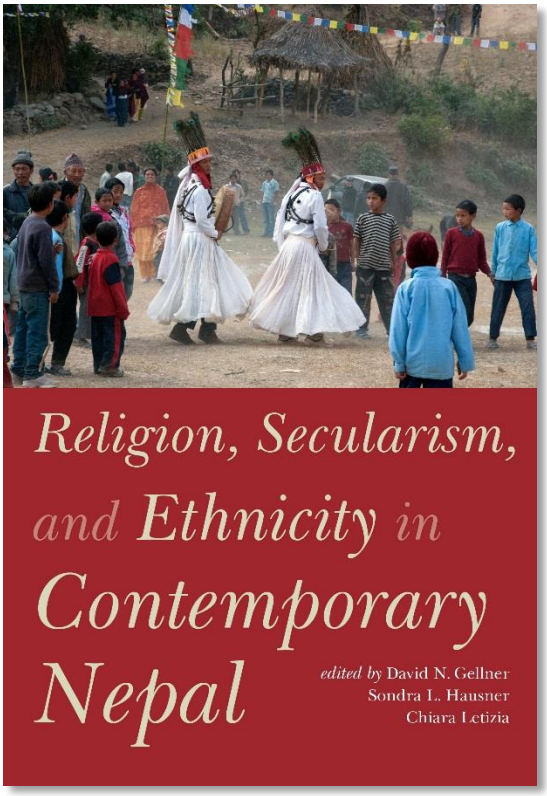

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Key features

- The most up-to-date book on religion in Nepal
- Comprises eleven detailed case studies, contextualized by an introduction and a comparative Afterword by Rajeev Bhargava
- Bridges a substantial gap in the empirical studies of secularism in Nepal

RELIGION, SECULARISM, AND ETHNICITY IN CONTEMPORARY NEPAL

Edited by **David N. Gellner**, **Sondra L. Hausner** and **Chiara Letizia**

About the book

The socio-political landscape of Nepal has been rocked by dramatic and far-reaching changes in the past thirty years. Following a ten-year Maoist revolution and civil war, the country has transitioned from a monarchy to a republic. The former Hindu kingdom has declared its commitment to secularism, without coming to any agreement on what secularism means or should mean in the Nepalese context. What happens to religion under conditions of such rapid social and political change? How do the changes in public festivals reflect and/or create new group identities? Is the gap between the urban and the rural narrowing? How is the state dealing with Nepal's multicultural and multi-religious society? How are Nepalis understanding, resisting, and adapting ideas of secularism?

In order to answer these important questions, this volume brings together eleven case studies by an international team of anthropologists and ethno-Indologists of Nepal on such diverse topics as secularism, individualism, shamanism, animal sacrifice, the role of state functionaries in festivals, clashes and synergies between Maoism and Buddhism, and conversion to Christianity. In an Afterword renowned political theorist Rajeev Bhargava presents a comparative analysis of Nepal's experiences and asks whether the country is finding its own solution to the conundrum of secularism.

About the editors

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