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THE PALGRAVE HANDBOOK OF VOLUNTEERING, CIVIC PARTICIPATION, AND NONPROFIT ASSOCIATIONS

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David Horton Smith, Robert A. Stebbins
and Jurgen Grotz

The Palgrave Handbook of Volunteering, Civic Participation, and Nonprofit Associations

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The Palgrave Handbook of Volunteering, Civic Participation, and Nonprofit Associations

Volume 1

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For my dear friend, Carolyn, with thanks for her practical help and moral support

DHS

Für Kristin
Alles Vergängliche ist nur ein Gleichnis

JG

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which he served first as Secretary and Editor and then as Vice Chair and Chair between 2007 and 2013.

His 35 years of active engagement in the voluntary and community sector and 25 years of applied policy and practice research in Germany, China, and the United Kingdom have offered him insights into a great variety of subjects, such as volunteering in public services with particular reference to the relationship between the state and the voluntary sector when reviewing the effectiveness of the English Compact, and the negative sides of volunteering, for example, during the Volunteer Rights Enquiry of Volunteering England.

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Volunteering in Religious Congregations and Faith-Based Associations

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A. Introduction

This chapter juxtaposes the vast knowledge regarding volunteering and voluntary associations with the world of religion. We start with the premise that more people volunteer within, and on behalf of, religious organizations than in any other organizational setting in the United States and certain other nations. We review the history of religion and religious volunteering, followed by a typology of the various forms of religious volunteering. We discuss how religious associations are formed, distinguishing between local religious congregations and faith-based organizations. Given the importance of local religious congregations, we discuss congregational volunteering, lay-leadership, and member volunteering in these voluntary associations. One section looks at monasteries/convents and communes/intentional communities as residential religious associations. We conclude with new challenges and relevant policies that affect religious volunteering.

Religion in all its forms and variations has been part of human societies since the earliest times. As soon as societies were formed and people divided labor by expertise and capabilities, religion became an integral part of human existence. It was and has been evolving and transforming ever since. What is important in this Handbook is the centrality of religion in the history and development of human compassion, welfare, and volunteering. The principle of compassion (to treat all others as we wish to be treated ourselves) exists in all world religions and spiritual traditions, and this principle motivates and mandates helping others. In fact, many services in the fields of health and social welfare have been provided by religious bodies, clergy, and lay leaders alike, and these are motivated by religion in most parts of the world.

Religious organizations are among the oldest human organizations (Bellah 2011). Throughout history believers have provided their religious organizations with donations and volunteer work. This chapter focuses mainly on contemporary religious volunteering and related associations, particularly local religious congregations and other faith-based associations. Religious volunteering is similar to all other types of volunteering with one important caveat: it is done under the auspices of religious organizations and influenced by religion and faith. We will discuss the impact of faith versus participation in a religious organization as a motivating factor that enhances volunteering. In addition, the chapter will focus on religious volunteering as an influence on secular volunteering. Where possible, we will use cross-national data.

B. Definitions

This chapter accepts the general definitions set forth in the Handbook Appendix.

Religion is notoriously difficult to define, especially in a way that captures the full range of religions and their expressions in the huge variety of human societies and cultures in which religion has manifested itself, as studied mainly by anthropologists. However, we cannot duck the obligation to define religion here, if only tentatively. Typical of many limited, Western, developed society definitions is that by Johnstone (1992:14): "[R]eligion can be defined as a system of beliefs and practices by which a group of people interprets and responds to what they feel is sacred, and, usually supernatural as well." In an alternative textbook on the sociology of religion, Hamilton (1995:chapter 1) reviews the problem of definitions of religion in much greater depth, with extensive anthropological examples from preliterate tribes, noting that definitions including the sacred or the supernatural as essential do not really fit some religions very well, and these come from a modern and Western cultural perspective (pp. 13–15).

Looking at all the options, the definition of Bellah (2011:1) seems the best, even though it still mentions the *sacred*: "Religion is a system of beliefs and practices relative to the sacred that unite those who adhere to them in a moral community." He goes on to define the *sacred* very broadly as a "realm of non-ordinary reality," enlarging on Durkheim's definition of "the sacred as something set apart or forbidden" (p. 1). Note that neither divine beings nor the supernatural are entailed, although this definition includes both of these concepts when relevant.

This definition can be supplemented by the theoretical and empirical work of Stark and Glock (1968:14–16), with others in a larger project, who identified five key dimensions of *religiosity* or *religious commitment*. Either of these latter terms refer to being significantly, often deeply, concerned with some existing

religion or with religious ideas and/or practices more generally, possibly one's own, personal religious philosophy. The five dimensions or facets of religion identified and studied were "belief, practice, knowledge, experience, and consequences" (p. 14). This chapter focuses especially on the two of these dimensions of religiosity – religious practice and consequences of religiosity for daily life.

Distinctively, in this chapter we use generally the neutral term *congregation*, which is more commonly used in North America. A congregation is a local place and community of worship in which people come to worship in a joint manner and follow a specific set of agreed-upon norms and rules. *Congregation* is thus a generic term that includes churches, mosques, synagogues, temples, meeting houses, house churches, storefront churches, wards, and so forth for all religions. Congregation also implies that the people who attend know each other to a certain degree and form a community of fellowship. Congregations can be seen as religious grassroots associations, as defined in the Appendix. However, it is important to note that in some parts of the world people come to worship not as a community but as individuals, as is the case in most Hindu and Taoist temples.

Religious volunteering is similar to other purposive types of formal volunteering with one distinguishing feature: it is done under religious auspices and/or is motivated by religious-related factors, mainly religiosity as a personal commitment to some religion or to religious ideas and/or practices more generally or personally. Religious volunteering includes sheer attendance at and participation in co-producing religious services, as well as more specific service roles in a congregation, both during worship services and at other times.

C. Historical background

Religious associations are one of the oldest types among all associations, having been found in various (pre-European contact) preliterate tribes and hence probably originating as early as 10,000 years ago (Anderson 1973; Bellah 2011; Smith 1997; Tyler ([1873]1903; see also Handbook Chapter 1). Religious associations made an early appearance in ancient agrarian civilizations as well (Bellah 2011). For instance, religious cults as types of local associations were present in ancient Egypt circa 5,000 years ago (Shafer 1991). There were religious buildings (temples, shrines, synagogues, etc.) in all ancient civilizations (Dillon 1996). Each such building had a corresponding religious association, formal or informal, of people who participated in worship, as well as many people who helped with the building's upkeep and preparation for religious services (e.g., Gutmann 1975). Regardless of society, people provided the religious organizations of their locale with goods such as food and labor. While the labor was not defined as volunteering, it is what we define today as volunteering (see the Handbook Appendix).

Almost every faith tradition in the world has clear tenets that ask adherents to behave ethically, not to cheat, not to harm others, and to exhibit charitable behavior (Cnaan, Wineburg, and Boddie, 1999). Helping the needy and seeking out justice are essential tenets of most religions. Members in good standing of religious congregations often demonstrate it by donating money and by performing tasks that are required or desired by the religious group.

Such religious volunteering was directed toward places of worship that were originally and usually very local in nature. People in small villages/towns congregated for religious purposes in some building and supported it as needed. In Judaism, first the community supported the holy temple and then other places of worship and also places for studying religious texts (Gutmann 1975). Community members were expected to donate and volunteer. Christians, for example, initially met in member's houses known as *house churches* (Banks 1994). The host family provided the place and related labor. As with other ancient religions and with increased social acceptance, within a century or two, Christian churches were built (Esler 2000; Hinson 1999). These edifices soon became centers in which members worshiped and associated with other members. Other major world religions, such as Islam (Berkey 2002; Lapidus 2002) and Buddhism (Reat and Reat 1994), followed similar paths to social acceptance, and local congregations had their own holy buildings. In earlier historical periods, such behavior was not labeled as volunteering. Furthermore, in many societies, such religious activity posed a threat to the ruling classes, who attempted to minimize free association and the right of people to assemble and produce goods without public supervision. As such, religious volunteering is a socially constructed modern phenomenon.

Research on religious congregations and related volunteering goes back millennia (e.g., early documents cited in Bellah 2011; Berkey 2002; Borgeaud 1988; Dillon 1996; Duchesne 1912; Fowler 1911; Godwin 1981; Gutmann 1975; Lapidus 2002; Reat and Reat 1994; Shafer 1991; Zaidman and Pantel 1992). As we come toward the present day, such research has intensified, from studies of medieval heresies and dissent in Europe (Lambert 1992; Moore [1977] 1994) or the Crusades (Wolff and Hazard 1962) to extensive research on denominations in America (Finke and Stark 2005; Greeley 1972; Littell 1962; Niebuhr [1929] 1957) and on specific congregations (Cnaan et al. 2006; Harris 1998).

One interesting recent approach to research on religion has been to study its evolution, as partly biological and partly cultural, for these have been intertwined in the past 50,000+ years (Bellah 2011; Broom 2003; Wade 2009; Wilson 2003; Wright 2009). Similarly, recent biological studies have investigated how neuroscience and the functioning of the brain can help explain religious belief and faith (e.g., Alper 2008; Newberg, D'Aquili, and Rause 2002; Newberg and Waldman 2007; Shermer 2012).

D. Key issues

1. Types of religious volunteering

Several different types of religious volunteering can be distinguished.

(a) First, volunteer work for and within the religious organization to enhance the religion. Such volunteering includes activities such as missionary work, Sunday school teaching, and sweeping the floor after services (Belanovsky 2012). The running of any congregation is often predicated on the availability of volunteer members to support its work (Harris 1998; Hodgkinson, Weitzman, and Kirsch 1988). Cnaan and Curtis (2013) showed that congregations are highly dependent on volunteer work. Indeed, congregations and faith-based organizations are very efficient at enlisting such volunteer labor.

(b) Second, one can volunteer through a religious congregation or group to support social services, such as having a congregational-based day-care or an Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) support group. Such volunteer work under religious auspices attempts to improve the quality of life of others, including counseling, staffing a food kitchen, helping ex-prisoners, and helping an environmental cause (for Russian social volunteering, see Knorre 2012).

(c) Third, one can volunteer to do political activity either to serve one's congregation or religion or as a reflection of those affiliations (Dalton and Klingemann 2007:chapter 25; Smidt et al. 2008; Wilcox and Robinson 2010). The role of the religious right in American politics is one recent example (Wilcox and Robinson 2010).

(d) Fourth, one can be motivated by religious motives to do secular volunteering as good deeds outside his or her place of worship. For example, one can help an environmental organization on one's own volition or as a member of a religious congregation. In both cases, the environmental volunteer work will be similar, but the latter type of volunteer is likely to perform the task along with friends from the congregation or as an expression of religious faith.

2. Religious volunteering patterns

(a) *Congregational-support volunteering*: Religious participation and religious faith are linked, but are two different phenomena. In the United States, while about four in five report that they never doubt the existence of God, only two in five attend places of worship on a regular basis (Pew Forum on Religion & Public Life 2012). In a study of volunteers to social services in the United States, Cnaan, Kasternakis, and Wineburg (1993) found that the key explanatory variable for who volunteers is congregational attendance and not level of personal faith.

According to the Eurobarometer Survey,12% of Europeans volunteered in religious or church organizations (European Parliament Special Eurobarometer 75.2, 2011). Participation levels in religious volunteering are relatively high at least in Austria (14% of active volunteers), Finland (16% of active volunteers), Ireland (26% of active volunteers), and the United Kingdom (24% of active volunteers). The overall volunteering rate in European Union countries is 23%. High levels of participation in religious or church organizations are more common in countries with a strong religious tradition, where the church is actively involved in the community (Volunteering in the European Union 2010).

The operation of the religious congregation is usually predicated on the availability of volunteer members to support or perform its work. Cnaan and Curtis (2013) showed congregations are highly dependent on volunteer work. Chaves (2004:223) found that 40.4% of all religious congregations had no full-time paid staff and that the median number of full-time paid staff was 1. Some 23.5% of congregations had no paid staff at all (p. 224), hence depending entirely on volunteers, including for their clergy or lay leaders. In the Philadelphia Census of Congregations, Cnaan and his colleagues (2006) found that more than a third of the congregations (38.6%) reported having no full-time clergy. Indeed, congregations and faith-based organizations are very efficient at enlisting such volunteer labor.

Hodgkinson, Weitzman, and Kirsch (1988) report the results of an earlier national sample survey of American congregations. In their data (p. 33), "34 percent of total congregations reported that they had no full-time paid employees," which was far more likely in smaller congregations. In addition, "42% of total congregations reported engaging one or more nominally paid employees" (p. 35), who were thus quasi-volunteers. Further, more than 99% of congregations reported using volunteers other than clergy each month, with 57.5% of congregations reporting having 25 or more volunteers each month (p. 36). An average of 36.2 volunteers were reported per congregation (p. 37). Findings from Chaves (2004), Cnaan and colleagues (2006), and Hodgkinson, Weitzman, and Kirsch (1988) confirm the assertion of Cnaan and Curtis (2013) noted above.

(b) *Congregation-based service volunteering*: One can volunteer through a religious group to support social services, such as having a congregational-based day-care or AA support group. For example, Cnaan et al. (2006) reported how Big Brothers/Big Sisters of America and a parallel reentry program (Rational Emotional Spiritual Therapy/R.E.S.T.) each recruited eight to ten volunteers from local congregations. The volunteers were all religiously affiliated and motivated, but the service and supervision were social and separate from any congregation. Cnaan, Wineberg, and Boddie (1999) and Cnaan and Boddie (2002b) review many studies of such social welfare volunteering by members of religious congregations.

(c) *Congregation-linked and/or religion-linked political activity*: One can do political activity linked to one's congregation or to one's religion/denomination more generally (Smidt et al. 2008). Smidt et al. present a highly nuanced and well-supported empirical approach to examining how religion affects political participation. Their key concept is the degree to which one's personal religious expression approach is private versus public, with attending worship services and getting involved in a congregation being the more public type of expression versus private prayers, and so forth (ibid.:chapter 7). Using data from two national sample surveys, the authors show that both religious tradition and one's form of religious expression (especially the public form) are statistically significant predictors of political participation in the context of many other demographic variables as controls in a multiple classification analysis (ibid., p. 221).

(d) *Religion-linked secular volunteering*: Finally, one can be motivated by religious motives to do good deeds as secular volunteering outside his or her place of worship. For example, one can help an environmental organization on his or her own volition or as a member of a religious congregation. In both cases, the environmental volunteer work will be similar, but the latter is likely to perform the task along with friends from the congregation or as an expression of being a person of faith.

Ample research in the United States shows that religious people, especially those who attend places of worship and do more voluntary work within their congregations as well as in wider society (Bekkers 2004; Bowen 1999; Lam 2002; Park and Smith 2000; Ruiter and De Graaf 2004). Such research found that the norm of congregational volunteering spills over to volunteering in secular organizations. In a study of volunteering in 53 countries, Ruiter and De Graaf (2006) found that in more religious communities, people are more involved in volunteering even if they themselves are not religious. In other words, percentage of congregation goers in a given society is strongly and positively correlated with percent of members in that society who volunteer. This implies that when other people in one's social network volunteer; the likelihood that an individual will also volunteer increases. Ruiter and De Graaf (2006) also found that across countries, non-Christians volunteer more than Christians and that among Christians, Protestants volunteer more than Catholics.

However, Ruiter and De Graaf (2006) found that religious participation only weakly explains secular volunteering rates among nations. With very few exceptions, when controlling for religious volunteering, church membership shows negative rather than positive effects on secular volunteering. As noted above, this is not the case in the United States, where Putnam, Campbell, and Garrett (2010) found that "religion boosts total volunteering so substantially that in addition to their higher rate of religious volunteering, regular churchgoers are also much more likely to volunteer for secular causes" (p. 445). Putnam et al.

(2010) also found that churchgoers are more likely to donate blood, give money to a homeless person, help someone find a job, help someone outside their own household with housework, and offer a seat to a stranger.

It is much more difficult to assess the scope of religious volunteering in faith-based organizations. A huge part of post-Hurricane Katrina volunteer work came from religious organizations (Michel 2007; Pant et al. 2008). It is also the case worldwide that after earthquakes, cyclones, and military devastations, religious organizations such as World Vision International or Catholic Relief Services are among the first to come with supplies and volunteers (Bane 2011). While there is no way to assess the scope of this volunteering, all observers agreed that religious-affiliated volunteers were the first on the ground, provided invaluable services, were the largest group of helpers, and kept sending volunteers years after the disaster. In the American context, Wuthnow (2009) reported that a large number of American Christians are personally involved in the developing world, with perhaps 1.5 million per year participating in direct short-term missionary or humanitarian efforts overseas. For a detailed analysis of the role of religion in international development volunteering and organizations, see Heist and Cnaan (2016).

Similarly, it is difficult to assess the scope of international religious volunteering. Rieffel and Zalud (2006) estimated that, in 2006, out of 43,000 Americans engaged in international volunteering, only 8,000 were affiliated with specific religious organizations, such as Caritas international, Habitat for Humanity, Catholic Relief Services, and the Presbyterian Hunger Program. However, this estimate excludes missionaries whose primary goal is to propagate the religion of the sending agency, such as the many missionaries sent annually by The Church of Jesus Christ and Latter-day Saints (LDS Church) or the Assemblies of God. If one adds missionaries to this statistics, then the majority of international volunteers are religious.

What is close to impossible to assess is the scope of religiously motivated social volunteering. What people do outside religious circles but highly influenced by them was not studied and can only be guessed. But religious volunteering also enhances people in the community to volunteer. In Cnaan and colleagues (2006), it was found that congregational social programs are carried out, on average, by eight congregational members and five non-members who just joined the program as volunteers but who are not affiliated with the congregation.

3. The formation of religious organizations

Many religious congregations are affiliated with a national or even international religion or denomination. Most world religions and denominations use missionaries and follow members' locations. They decide where to build a new congregation and what faith-based nonprofit organization (NPO) to establish.

This affiliation with central bodies does not mean that lay leaders do not have a say. Local adherents of a certain religion or denomination can pressure and finance the formation of a local (polymorphic) branch of the larger association. Only in rare cases are the religious places of worship and/or the faith-based organizations unique and unlinked (monomorphic). This is usually the case of independent churches, cults, charismatic churches, new gurus, and religious innovations. The latter form of forming religious organizations often involves a quest for "true" faith and leads to a more strict type of religious organization. Iannaccone (1994) argued that the strictness of religions reduces free riding and stimulates additional commitment from members. Members are expected to volunteer more hours, donate more money, and fully adhere to the religious rules. Individuals who are not willing or who are unable to display the high level of commitment expected of members of strict congregations either do not join the faith in the first place or drop out.

In some countries like the Unites States, Canada, and in Western Europe, the process of starting new congregations or faith-based organizations is ongoing and does not reflect fast growth. However, in other parts of the world and especially in African countries and in ex-communist countries, congregations and faith-based organizations are quickly growing and evolving, and as such they find it more difficult to establish a culture of congregational-related volunteering, so the majority of the burden is on leaders (Črpić and Zrinščak 2005).

4. Members and leaders as volunteers

In most cases, people join religious groups either through birth and family tradition or through conversion. As Pond and Smith (2009) demonstrated, converts are stricter and more committed to their faith than those who were born into the faith. These individuals take the teaching and expectations of their new religion more seriously and record higher rates of volunteering. A related group is that of new immigrants. New immigrants tend to search for a congregation composed of people like themselves; that is, of the same origin and of the same station in life and in this context often volunteer to help their own members and also volunteer in wider society to get local experience and social connections (Foley and Hoge 2007; Handy and Greenspan 2008). Similar findings are reported for the Netherlands (Carabain and Bekkers 2011). Finally, studies of American congregations found that the more a person is in a leadership position the more likely the person is to volunteer for and through the congregation (Cnaan et al. 2006).

5. Motivations for religious volunteering

In many countries (especially nations with high proportions of religious residents), religious people volunteer more than others. Religious practice is

associated with increased levels of volunteering in general in the European context. In a study by Voicu and Voicu (2009), religious practice was one of five main predictors of volunteering in almost all Western European societies alongside with education, social network, income, and age. Also individual country-level studies confirm the connections between religious practice and volunteering (Vermeer and Scheepers 2012; Yeung 2004). For example, in the Netherlands, volunteers are almost three times as likely as non-volunteers to be active in religious activities (Dekker and Halman 2003).

Furthermore, as we noted above, it is the people who are affiliated with congregations that volunteer at higher rates and not just people strong in their faith. This is also the case in Europe, including in ex-communist countries, although there are significant differences among different European countries in that respect (Bahovec, Potočnik, and Zrinščak, 2007). So what is the process? To understand religious volunteering, one needs to understand group dynamics and processes, as well as the impact of norms and values. Congregations are the places where people hear about being pro-social, where they see people act altruistically, where they find out about many needs, and where they are asked to volunteer. In most congregations, and especially in the United States, congregations hold volunteering as a mark of belonging and acting according to the group's norms. So the proposed model starts with the religious teaching and goes through wanting to be a valued member of the group (congregation) and meeting its behavioral expectations.

Drawing on Cnaan and colleagues (2002), the following flow of influences and development takes place in a congregation to produce high levels of volunteering:

Religious Beliefs and Religious Meaning---->Congregational Attendance---->

Formation of Face to Face Links and learning what the other congregants do---->

Congregational Involvement (wanting to be part of the group)----> Acceptance of Group Norms for Serving/Volunteering---->Volunteering in the Context of the Congregation and the community

There are two classical explanations as to why religious congregation members are more pro-social and volunteer more in other associations. We will distinguish between faith as a motive for volunteering and membership as a motive, but we will take the debate one step further to include culture as a critical component. In studying what moves people to be pro-social and generous, the literature distinguishes between "religious conviction" or "faith" and "community" or "social networks" as two distinct explanations (Jackson et al. 1995; Putnam, Campbell, and Garrett 2010; Ruiter and De Graaf 2006; Wuthnow 1991). The former refers to religious beliefs and norms that support generosity.

The latter refers to embeddedness within a religious group, such as a congregation, that exerts clear and measurable expectations, places social pressure, and provides a forum for personal solicitations. However, we argue that the two polar positions are both insufficient. To reach the high level of commitment that is required for such high rate of donations and volunteering, a strong set of norms and an organizational climate that sustains giving are required. The norms that are sustained and amplified in congregations are the sources of both the focus on religious volunteering and the opportunities to do good deeds.

6. Organization of religious congregations and other faith-based associations

Cnaan and Curtis (2013) have recently asserted that local religious congregations are membership associations, as other scholars have noted 40+ years ago (e.g., Robertson 1966; Scherer 1972), but many voluntaristics scholars still tend to ignore this, as previously (cf. Smith 1983). Congregations in most countries are organized around a religious leader(s) who is (are) assisted by lay leaders. In most contexts, these are the congregational leaders and then there are the members. Most congregations are characterized by a large level of informality and are not necessarily organized in a logical organizational structure. Some congregations are more formal, and without a formal ceremony (often baptism) a person cannot be counted as a member. When volunteers are needed the clergy often make a pitch from the pulpit or lay leaders talk with prospective volunteers. Lay leaders are by default volunteers, and they often energize others, including non-members, to join the congregational activities. Volunteerism both for the congregation and for social causes is secondary to the primary purposes of providing worship opportunities and teaching the tenets of the faith. Given that they have to provide the same level of transparency and accountability as other NPOs, they are usually first and foremost NPOs and then religious. Regarding volunteers, faith-based organizations treat them like other NPOs, and it starts with official recruitment. The difference is that non-religious NPOs cannot access congregations to be allowed to recruit volunteers.

In some European countries, the majority of Christian churches have a privileged position, either financially and/or by being close to political power. In these countries, we find that state churches, for example, have the right to collect membership fees through taxation. This has resulted in financially secured churches that emphasize professionalism and can be bureaucratic. Thus, opportunities and needs for volunteering can be lower compared to other contexts, although many European churches have tried to increase volunteering in recent years as church memberships have been in decline and secularization and professionalism have become powerful. Minority churches are in a different position in relation to financial resources and are often more dependent on the activity of members at all levels. In their study based on a

sample of 24 European countries, Traunniuller and Freitag (2011) concluded that state support and government involvement in religion weakens religious volunteering (i.e., crowding it out).

Religious voluntary contributions of both time and money have acted as a strong force within Hinduism and Buddhism, but less than in Christianity and Islam (Salamon and Anheier 1997). Early Indian voluntarism was very much inspired by religious beliefs, ideology, and sacred writings. According to the *Bhagwad Gita*, charity is valid if it takes account of *desh* (place), *kal* (time), and *patra* (recipient). Sen (1993) found that religious-based philanthropy was very active during the 1950s in India. Besides the domestic religious contributions (29%), external contributions made up nearly half (48%) of total foreign funding directed toward religious NGOs for different welfare activities in India (Government of India 2012). The followers of all major religions of the world live in India, and there are strong impulses for religious voluntarism. There is a deeply rooted religious history of Hinduism involving charity in India, with later shifts to socio-religious reform from the 15th century onward (e.g., sufi, the Nirankari Movement, Namdhari Movement, Atmiya Samaz, Brahma Samaz, Theosophical Society, Ram Krishna Mission, Anjuman-Himayat-i- Islam, and so on; Sundar 2002).

In the South Asian region, Hindu voluntary organizations (NPOs) emerged across India and Nepal mainly in two forms (Sundar 2002). First, some religious NPOs developed as trusts for temples where huge individual cash or in-kind regular contributions were made as tribute. Other forms of NPOs working for betterment of poor people, like Bhartiya Vanvasi Kalyan Parishad, also arose. Similarly, Sikh religious organizations with egalitarian principles provided community food and active participation either in *gurudwara* or in other localities. Dera Sachha Sauda, a Sikh NPO, extended its welfare programs in the northwestern region of India. Christian NPOs are also spread across India, such as the Christian Auxiliary for Social Action, World Vision of India, especially in southern India and the tribal belt. Their contribution to education has been widely acknowledged. Islamic NPOs and their contributions involve both obligatory and voluntary contributions, called *zakat* and *sadaqa*, respectively (Sundar 2002). Furthermore, there is also a major focus in Indian Islam on *madrasa* activities (Islamic educational institutions).

7. Success and impact of religious congregations and faith-based organizations

As noted above, Cnaan and colleagues (2006) found that congregational social programs are carried out by non-members who have just joined the program as volunteers but who are not affiliated with the congregation. In addition, in societies where the number of actively religious people is high, we find higher rates of volunteering among people who are not affiliated with religious groups.

This is known as the spillover effect (Ruiter and De Graaf 2006). This implies that religious volunteering is capable of influencing the immediate society to be more pro-social and to be further engaged in volunteerism. However, this is not the case in all countries; for instance, this finding has been challenged by Lim and McGregor (2012). In Russia, for example, the Russian Orthodox Church does not focus on enhancing volunteerism and as such, its impact on the rest of society in this regard is limited (Knorre 2012).

Religious communities cannot survive without heavy reliance on volunteers. The number of functions that are to be carried out – from maintenance to music, from bookkeeping to teaching the faith to new members, and from securing the premises to spiritual counseling – mostly relies upon volunteers. Congregations that cannot foster the spirit of volunteering are required to purchase these services and, unless they are very affluent, are doomed to collapse. Thriving religious groups produce high levels of volunteering and are able to get members engaged even in programs outside the congregation (Ammerman 2005). Faith-based organizations from schools to international relief organizations are all performing with heavy reliance on volunteers. Their access to congregations and to their potential volunteers is a major advantage over other NPOs. For example, when a Mormon relief organization needs 100 volunteer to ship emergency supplies, all they have to do is call local clergy and the volunteers will be there early the next day (Rudd 1995).

8. Religious residential communities

One very special kind of religious association is a religious residential community. Such a community, as defined here, is a set of adults, and sometimes their children, who have chosen to reside together because of religious reasons and have formed an association to pursue their version of the right way to live to please God or serve some other religious ideal. The joint residence may be in a single, usually large, building or in a complex of buildings in close proximity on a single plot of land (owned by the community or by one or more early members or founders). In every case, there is some special kind of moral, life-style ideology about the best/right way to live one's life according to the association's religious principles/values. There is an explicitly religious ideology, usually involving a deity or revered religious leader. Although not usually considered to be associations, intentional communities qualify according to our definition, but these are simply residential associations. Religious intentional communities are the main focus here.

One may ask, what is the nature of volunteering in religious intentional communities? First, there may be informal volunteering in such residential associations, as in any other context of daily life. Second, the entire daily activity pattern of residents can be viewed as quasi-volunteering (Smith, Reddy, and Baldwin 1972:168–169). Quasi-volunteering is volunteering where the volunteer receives significant remuneration for work done, but still significantly

less than the market value of such work. In religious intentional communities, there is rarely any pay, but participating members receive payment in kind in the form of lodging, food, clothing, and sometimes a special, luxury object (e.g., a wristwatch). Participants also receive substantial psychic benefits (ibid.), such as a sense of belonging, of serving God, of helping each other live the right way, and so on. This *net cost approach* to defining volunteering has been substantiated as fitting with popular/lay conceptions of volunteering in several nations (Handy et al. 2000).

Third, some ordinary formal volunteering can *in theory* occur in a religious intentional community, but this seems to be very rare in practice. For instance, a small group of participants in a commune could decide to form a singing or theater group, if this were permitted. Those who participated in the subgroup would then be formal volunteers in that group, helping co-members to enjoy the recreational activity and possibly also performing for the enjoyment of non-member commune participants, as a service to them. Unfortunately, suitable ethnographies could not be found to see if such recreational subgroups of religious residential association participants actually have existed.

Christian monasteries and convents, as intentional communities, go back two millennia (Dunn 2003), continued through the European Middle Ages (Venarde 1999), and continue to the present day in most nations with a substantial Christian population. Similar, very long, monastic (intentional religious community) traditions exist in other world religions (e.g., Benn, Meeks, and Robson 2011; Herrou 2013). Communes, as intentional communities, have arisen in the West in the past three centuries (especially in America, France, and Britain), usually based on some religious ideology and faith (Holloway 1951; Kanter 1972). In the past 60 years, communes have spread to many nations of the world, often with more secular than conventionally religious ideologies, but always with some moral ideology as a secular religion (Oved 2012; Zablocki 1980).

We could find no comparative, social scientific studies of monasteries and convents, but a few such studies exist for religious communes. Kanter (1972:chapter 4) compared long-lived (*successful*) versus short-lived (23 of 30 being religious) communes in the 19th century in the United States in terms of many structural mechanisms, such as aspects of sacrifice (e.g., abstinence, austerity) required, degree of personal investment required (physical residence, financial investment, irreversibility of investment), renunciation of outside relationships and limitations on leaving the commune physically, group ritual, communal sharing and labor, and other factors. Many such *costly* factors clearly distinguished successful from unsuccessful communes. Sosis and Bressler (2003) did a further quantitative test of the role of cooperation mechanisms in commune longevity.

Many of the commitment mechanisms examined in both studies can be seen as relevant to why conservative, stricter but often new Christian

churches in America have been growing in recent decades and also in past centuries, while more liberal and mainline ones have been declining (Finke and Stark 2005:249–253). Studying religious intentional communities as residential associations is important for understanding the depth of commitment that can be achieved by religious associations, as contrasted with most (not all) other purposive types of associations. Social movement/activist associations (Handbook Chapter 24) and deviant voluntary associations (DVAs; Handbook Chapter 53) are two other purposive types of associations that can generate similar depth of commitment and cause huge changes in their members lifestyles, social relationships, and perspectives on the world. Some DVAs have also been religious communes as intentional communities, such as the Peoples Temple, Jim Jones' suicidal commune eventually located in Guyana (Layton 1998), and the Branch Davidians, led by David Koresh (Breault and King 1993).

9. Challenges faced by religious volunteering and associations

In many parts of the world, secularization is one of the biggest challenges to religious volunteering (Ruiter and De Graaf 2004). This is especially the case in Western Europe. Societal processes like individualism, professionalization, secularism, old and new types of solidarity, and diverse communities are all chipping at religious commitment and by extension at religious volunteering. As part of modernity and post-modernity, increasing individualization processes have led people to focus on their own lives and careers. Accordingly, people reject old binding organizations such as congregations and engage in activities that are self-gratifying, including volunteering. However, these types of volunteering are short-lived, sought to satisfy and enhance the individual volunteer needs, and done without commitment to the organization (Hustinx and Lammertyn 2003). Furthermore, in societies where modernity-type individualism is on the rise, religious communities are shrinking and often congregations and faith-based organizations are merged or outright closed. In such contexts, volunteering tends to decline and religious volunteering becomes negligible.

In ex-communist countries where religion was prohibited or suppressed, as was in general suppressed any civic initiatives we observe the reverse phenomena. In post-communist European countries, China, and Russia, religiosity has a renaissance and more people openly practice their faith, belong to a religious community, and slowly engage in volunteer work (Mitrokhin 2006). This trend, however, is in its infancy and often faces political opposition, and its future impact is unclear.

10. Main barriers to religious volunteering

Two key barriers are identified that limit the scope and magnitude of religious volunteering. First, as noted above, there has been a decline in interest in

religion in many Western countries, and without the individual religiosity component, religious volunteering rarely takes place. This can be viewed as an issue of supply. Second, in many parts of the world, religious organizations, particularly if they are part of the public welfare and funded mainly by the state (state-based religion; *state churches*), prefer to rely on professionals and avoid the reliance on volunteers. This is also true for many faith-based organizations and especially the large-scale ones. This can be viewed as an issue of demand. While the supply issues are similar to problems facing many NPOs, for religious groups conversion and retention are strongly associated with maintaining a volunteer pool. As for the demand issue, in some instances it is indeed wiser to rely on professionals; however, often it is not the case. Directors of faith-based organizations should know the merit of working with religious volunteers and how to recruit them from local congregations. In some parts of the world such as Russia, various religious nonprofits are also discouraged from collaborating with congregations or with other faith-based organizations and as such are discouraged from using religious volunteers (Knorre 2012).

11. Religious volunteering and public policy

In some countries, most notably the United States, United Kingdom, and Australia, governments changed policies to encourage religious organizations to use volunteers and help poor and needy people. In the United States, the passage of Welfare Reform in 1996 introduced charitable choice that was predicated on transferring welfare contracts to religious organizations that employ volunteers (Cnaan and Boddie 2002a). In England, the Blair government pushed for what they called welfare mix (Taylor 2004), and in Australia the Howard government transferred welfare services to churches, instructing them to use religious volunteers (Garran 2004; Maddox 2005). Though religious charitable organizations had been important parts of the welfare state in many European countries for a long time, recently and despite the secularization process "the role of the churches in the delivery of welfare is expanding rather than contracting" (Bäckström and Davie 2011:155). Other governments around the world are also looking to religious bodies and their pools of volunteers and assess how to harness them into the public social services delivery system.

In other countries, like China and Russia, religion is still not fully embraced by the government and although many religious organizations provide social services and also use volunteers, governments view it with suspicion and there is no interest in recognizing religious services and religious volunteering. However, in congregations, volunteering that sustains the place of worship is accepted and allowed. Furthermore, in many such countries religious volunteers are engaged in the provision of many public goods, but without any special public policy or legal arrangement.

E. Usable knowledge

Community leaders and directors of secular organizations should pay close attention to the phenomena described in this chapter. If high levels of volunteerism are found in religious congregations, these are good sites for recruitment. Almost all NPOs are in need of hardworking volunteers. Collaboration with religious organizations may enable the recruitment of a group of volunteers and not just one at a time. In times of disaster, governments and large organizations such as the Red Cross should approach religious congregations in the area and faith-based service organizations to help in the recovery process. There is no other group of people who can give so much for so long as religious volunteers responding to disaster. Most importantly, it is not faith alone that brings people to volunteer. It is the group experience of belonging to a place of worship that values volunteering and service that produces this high rate of religious volunteering. People who are religiously strong but practice their faith alone are as active in volunteering as all others in society.

F. Future trends and needed research

Religion produces much energy among its active adherents. In the name of religion, people volunteer to do wonderful deeds such as helping strangers in times of disaster and also the most horrible deeds such as killing, maiming, and suicide bombing. In both cases, members of the religious group are giving themselves, their time, and their resources in a manner unparalleled. Since the dawn of civilization, religion managed to extract labor from its members. While in some countries secularization is on the rise, in other countries religiosity is on the rise. It is unlikely that in the 21st century religion and religious organizations will not play central roles in most countries. The challenge, thus, for most religious groups and governments is how to channel the energy embedded in religious participation into pro-social targets.

Comparative multi-national research is needed in all key world regions that seeks to understand and explain the full set of motivations and influences on religious volunteering and other religious activities. This needs to be done in the context of studying many other types of associations, so that valid comparisons can be made and also so that the mutual influences of religious and secular associations can be carefully studied. Current research rarely has large samples from such a variety of nations. The insights and research on motivations and other influences from Handbook Chapters 30 and 31 should be utilized, along with Handbook Chapters 25–29. Comparative multinational research is also needed in all key world regions, which seeks to understand and explain the internal structure and functioning of religious congregations in such societies. At present, only the United States has been well-studied

in this regard with large sample surveys of congregations (e.g., Chaves 2004; Hodgkinson, Weitzman, and Kirsch 1988).

G. Cross-references

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