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978-0-521-66072-3 - The Globalisation of Charismatic Christianity: Spreading the Gospel of Prosperity

Simon Coleman

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THE GLOBALISATION OF CHARISMATIC CHRISTIANITY

This book analyses the revival of charismatic Protestantism as an example of globalisation. Simon Coleman shows that, along with many social movements, these religious conservatives are negotiating their own interpretations of global and post-modern processes. They are constructing an evangelical arena of action and meaning within the liminal, chaotic space of the global. The book examines globalisation not only as a social process, but also as an embodied practice involving forms of language and ritualised movement. Charismatic Christianity is presented through its material culture – art, architecture and consumer products – as well as its rhetoric and theology. The book provides an account of the incorporation of electronic media such as television, videos and the Internet into Christian worship. Issues relating to the conduct of fieldwork in contexts of globalisation are raised in an account which is also the first major ethnography of a Faith ministry.

SIMON COLEMAN is lecturer in anthropology at the University of Durham. His books include *An Introduction to Anthropology*, co-written with H. Watson (1990), *Pilgrimage: Past and Present in the World Religions*, co-written with J. Elsner (1995), *Discovering Anthropology*, co-edited with R. Simpson (1998) and *The Anthropology of Friendship*, co-edited with S. Bell (1999). He serves on the editorial board of a number of journals.

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Religion increasingly is seen as a renewed force, and is recognized as an important factor in the modern world in all aspects of life – cultural, economic, and political. It is no longer a matter of surprise to find religious factors at work in areas and situations of political tension. However, our information about these situations has tended to come from two main sources. The news-gathering agencies are well placed to convey information, but are hampered by the fact that their representatives are not equipped to provide analysis of the religious forces involved. Alternatively, the movements generate their own accounts, which understandably seem less than objective to outside observers. There is no lack of information or factual material, but a real need for sound academic analysis. Cambridge Studies in Ideology and Religion meets this need. It attempts to give an objective, balanced and programmed coverage to issues which – while of wide potential interest – have been largely neglected by analytical investigation, apart from the appearance of sporadic individual studies. Intended to enable debate to proceed at a higher level, the series should lead to a new phase in our understanding of the relationship between ideology and religion.

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Acknowledgements

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