Law and Development

Law and Development emerged in the United States in the 1960s and rapidly spread throughout the world. Its intellectual origins can be traced back to the boundless confidence of some American legal academics about the possibilities of achieving democratic change in developing countries through legal means. Financial assistance from the US government and US-based foundations enabled the launch of scores of ambitious research projects and the rapid growth of legal education programmes in the newly independent states of Asia and Africa, as well as in several countries in Latin America. Thus, by the late 1960s and early 1970s, as the number of academic lawyers with direct knowledge of developing countries grew, the Law and Development movement was recognized as an important new trend in American legal education. During the 1960s Law and Development had a crucial impact on lawyers and law schools in a variety of countries, including Ethiopia, Sri Lanka, Chile, Perú, and Colombia. By the early 1970s, however, the movement lost its momentum, as some of its leading figures came to realize that American liberal legalism could not easily be replicated in developing countries. They refocused their attention to domestic legal issues and soon became the precursors of the enormously successful Law and Society and Socio-Legal Studies movements. By the late 1980s, however, Law and Development made a remarkable comeback, as the World Bank and bilateral donors began to acknowledge the crucial role of legal institutions in the process of development. As a consequence, Law and Development today occupies a prominent place on the agenda of all major international and national development agencies. It has also been firmly embraced by most developing countries, as they adapt their institutions and procedures to the demands generated by the process of globalization. The four volumes in this new collection from Routledge's Major Works series, Critical Concepts in Law, bring together carefully selected materials that trace the evolution of the Law and Development movement; identify the key theoretical texts that have served as inspiration to this movement; provide a representative collection of articles written by specialists from various disciplines; and offer a selection of case studies and policy-based papers on the implementation of Law and Development projects. Edited by a leading scholar in the field, the collection also contains an extensive Introduction that examines the past, present, and future of Law and Development and will enable users to place the collected materials in their historical and intellectual context.



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