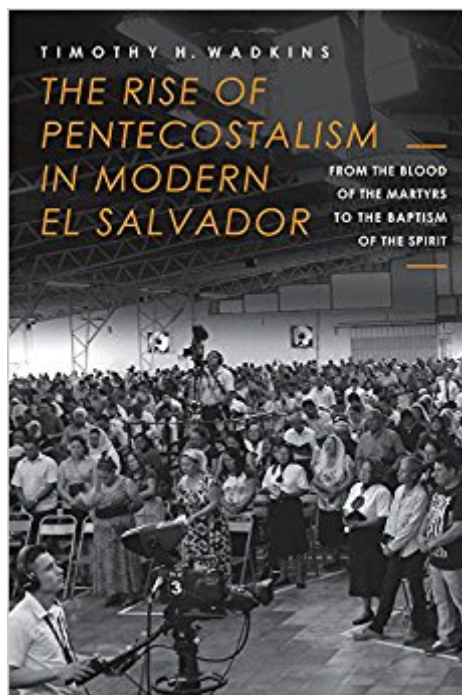




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The Rise Of Pentecostalism In Modern El Salvador: From The Blood Of The Martyrs To The Baptism Of The Spirit (Studies In World Christianity)



Synopsis

El Salvador has experienced a dramatic religious transformation over the past half-century. In what was once an almost exclusively Catholic nation, more than 35 percent of the people are now evangelical Protestants, mostly identified as charismatic or Pentecostal. While having some roots in Protestant missions from North America and Europe, the religious renaissance overtaking El Salvador is both homegrown and closely related to the nation's social, cultural, and economic upheavals. Since the end of the Salvadoran Civil War, the traditional social order—which was established in colonial times, ruled by elites, enforced by the military, and supported by the Church—has been overturned. Once a world of haciendas, plantations, and old merchant firms, El Salvador is now home to new factories, shopping malls, fast food restaurants, and call centers. Modernization has brought new ideas too—about asserting individual rights and making choices, forming communities, voting in elections, consuming material goods, employing technology, and engaging with global culture. *The Rise of Pentecostalism in Modern El Salvador* explores how this vast social transformation has opened the gates to runaway religious creativity and competition. In weaving together the lively and complex story, author Timothy Wadkins employs the scholarly tools of historical reconstruction, theological analysis, and ethnographic interviews, as well as the results of a pioneering national religious survey. The outcome is a comprehensive and detailed picture of El Salvador's religious renaissance against the backdrop of El Salvador's fitful path toward modernization and democratization.

Book Information

Series: Studies In World Christianity

Hardcover: 272 pages

Publisher: Baylor University Press (July 7, 2017)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1481307126

ISBN-13: 978-1481307123

Product Dimensions: 6.3 x 1 x 9.2 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.3 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

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Best Sellers Rank: #1,458,916 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #56 in Books > History >

Americas > Central America > El Salvador #1842 in Books > History > Americas > Mexico

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Customer Reviews

"Grounded in detailed historical and ethnographic research, this book makes an outstanding contribution to our understanding of the roots and current expressions of Pentecostalism in El Salvador. Timothy Wadkins also describes in lucid prose the growth of the Catholic charismatic movement, the reasons Liberation Theology failed to connect with the very population it was seeking to empower, and various expressions of socially engaged Protestantism." •Donald E. Miller, Leonard K. Firestone Professor of Religion, University of Southern California

"This thoughtful, engaging, and surprising book opens up the world of Salvadoran Pentecostalism. Carefully researched and clearly written, it highlights the strengths, weaknesses, and tensions that have developed in important Pentecostal movements in the encounter with modernity. Particularly stimulating is the analysis of megachurch pastor Mario Vega's esteem for Catholic Archbishop Oscar Romero and of Vega's growing commitment to social justice." •Todd Hartch, Professor of History, Eastern Kentucky University

"Profound religious changes have been remaking Latin America for years. If you want to understand those changes—and even more if you think you already understand them—The Rise of Pentecostalism in Modern El Salvador is a must-read. Wadkins reveals a new socially engaged, even liberationist, branch of Pentecostalism that may reshape evangelical Christianity in our lifetimes. He draws on deep research, strong interpretive work, and interviews with Salvadoran pastors and evangelical leaders to offer new insight that will contradict much of what outside observers thought we knew of religion in Latin America. Some will agree with him, others will be inspired, and others will argue vociferously with his findings. But you do not understand contemporary Latin America until you come to terms with Wadkins' view of the deep religious and cultural changes happening in the face of modernity and neoliberalism in El Salvador." •Richard L. Wood, University of New Mexico, Author of A Shared Future: Faith-Based Organizing for Racial Equity and Ethical Democracy

Timothy H. Wadkins is Professor of Modern Christianity and Director of the Institute for Global Study of Religion at Canisius College.

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