Conceptualizing, Advancing & Institutionalizing Religious Freedom:

Collaborating & Coordinating between Governments & Grassroots

What is the definition of—and the relationship between—religious freedom and religious engagement?

“The teaching of Confucius has a strong point; i.e., self-improvement of personal virtue. Jesus’ Bible has a strong point; i.e., noble altruism. Marxism has a strong point; i.e., a dialectical working method. Ton Dat Tun’s doctrine has a strong point; i.e., their policies are suited to conditions in our country. Does Confucianism, Jesus, Marx and Ton Dat Tun share common points? Yes. They all pursued a way to bring happiness to human beings and benefit to society. If they were still alive today, and if they were grouped together, I believe they would live in harmony, like close friends. I try to become their pupil.” — Ho Chi Minh, 1949

Advocating

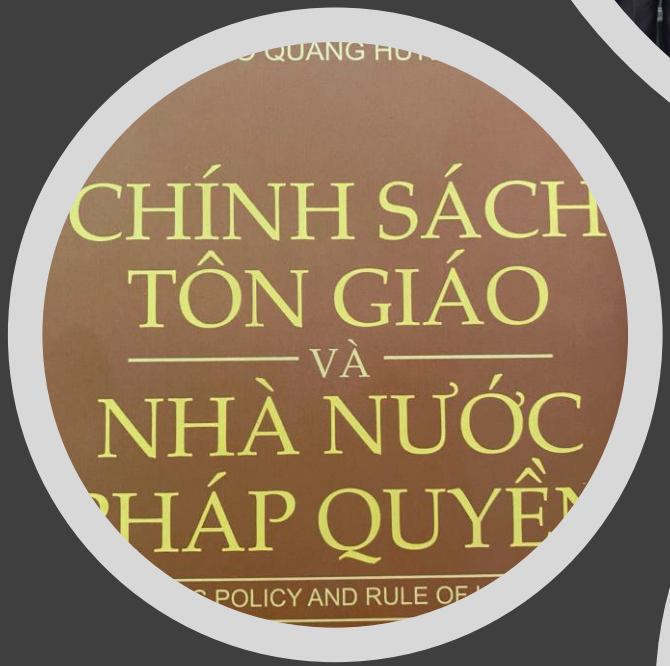
- An outside-in approach
- Positive
  - International Religious Freedom Roundtable
  - Agree on nothing—politically & theologically—except freedom of conscience or belief, and the right to choose, change, and share one's values, to include bringing those values into discussions of public policy
- Negative
  - Tendency toward single-issue advocacy
  - Name, blame & shame

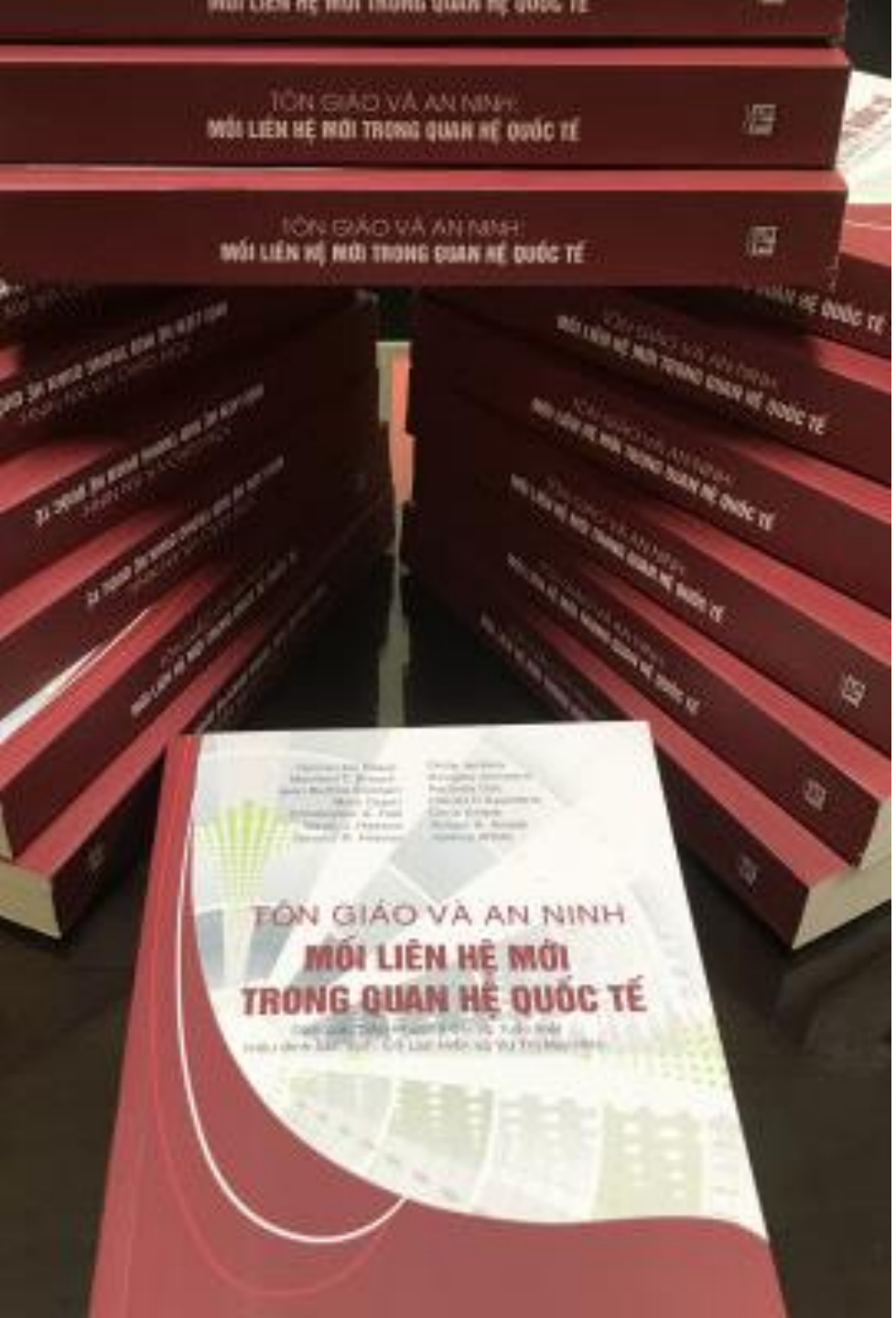
Building: Religious Freedom and the Rule of Law

- An inside-out approach...that sees the whole, placing religious freedom in local context...a theory of change:

- Space: ongoing trust-building that is deepening and expanding
- Scholarship: comparative perspectives presented (& applied)
- Standard: certificate training programs convened across sectors, educating & training, building trust
- Structure: like-minded certificate graduates equipped and connected for religious freedom and/or religious engagement
- Service: people of all beliefs/none living out their faith, serving their city/country, demonstrating good citizenship

- For more detail, please see: Chris Seiple (2014) FROM PARADOX TO POSSIBILITY: PRACTICING THE GOLDEN RULE IN A GLOBAL WORLD, The Review of Faith & International Affairs, 12:3, 55-62.





Building: Religious Freedom and Security

- Positive Cycle:
  - Create level playing field for pursuit of mutual happiness & social harmony
    - Society's choice as collective individuals: tolerate or celebrate the other?
    - State's choice as collective institutions: assimilate or integrate the other?
  - Establish narrative of citizenship for all, especially faith communities
    - Faith communities serve the poor, better society
    - Their values stand against extremism, and corruption
    - They help create stable environments attract FDI/job creation re youth bulge
- Negative Cycle:
  - Drive religious groups underground >>>Paradoxical growth
  - Create opaque atmosphere that leads to "us vs. them"
  - Strike back >>> Government and religious groups
  - Development of transnational/diasporan networks that feed the conflict

For more detail, please see: Seiple, C. & D. R. Hoover. 2012. "Religious Freedom and Global Security." In A. D. Hertzke (ed.), *The Future of Religious Freedom: Global Challenges*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Building: Religious Freedom & Business

2021
Global Business & Interfaith
Peace Award Winner

Religious Freedom & Business Foundation | UN Global Compact

FaithAndBusiness.org

REDI Index
CORPORATE RELIGIOUS EQUITY, DIVERSITY & INCLUSION INDEX
RELIGIOUS FREEDOM & BUSINESS FOUNDATION

Fortune 100

▲ 1	intel	▲ 6	DELL Technologies
▲ 2 Tie	American Airlines	7 Tie	TARGET
▲ 2 Tie	AMERICAN EXPRESS	★ 7 Tie	Cigna
4	Google	9	facebook
5	Tyson	★ 10 Tie	Fannie Mae
		10 Tie	

Fortune 200

★ 1	Texas Instruments
★ 2	PayPal
★ 3	salesforce
★ 4	aramark
★ 5	NETFLIX

Key: Top companies in 2021
▲ Increase in rank from 2020
★ 2021 is first time in Top 10

Building: Cross-Cultural Religious Literacy

*CCRL is a set of **skills***

evaluation *negotiation* *communication*

*rooted in a set of **competencies*** in

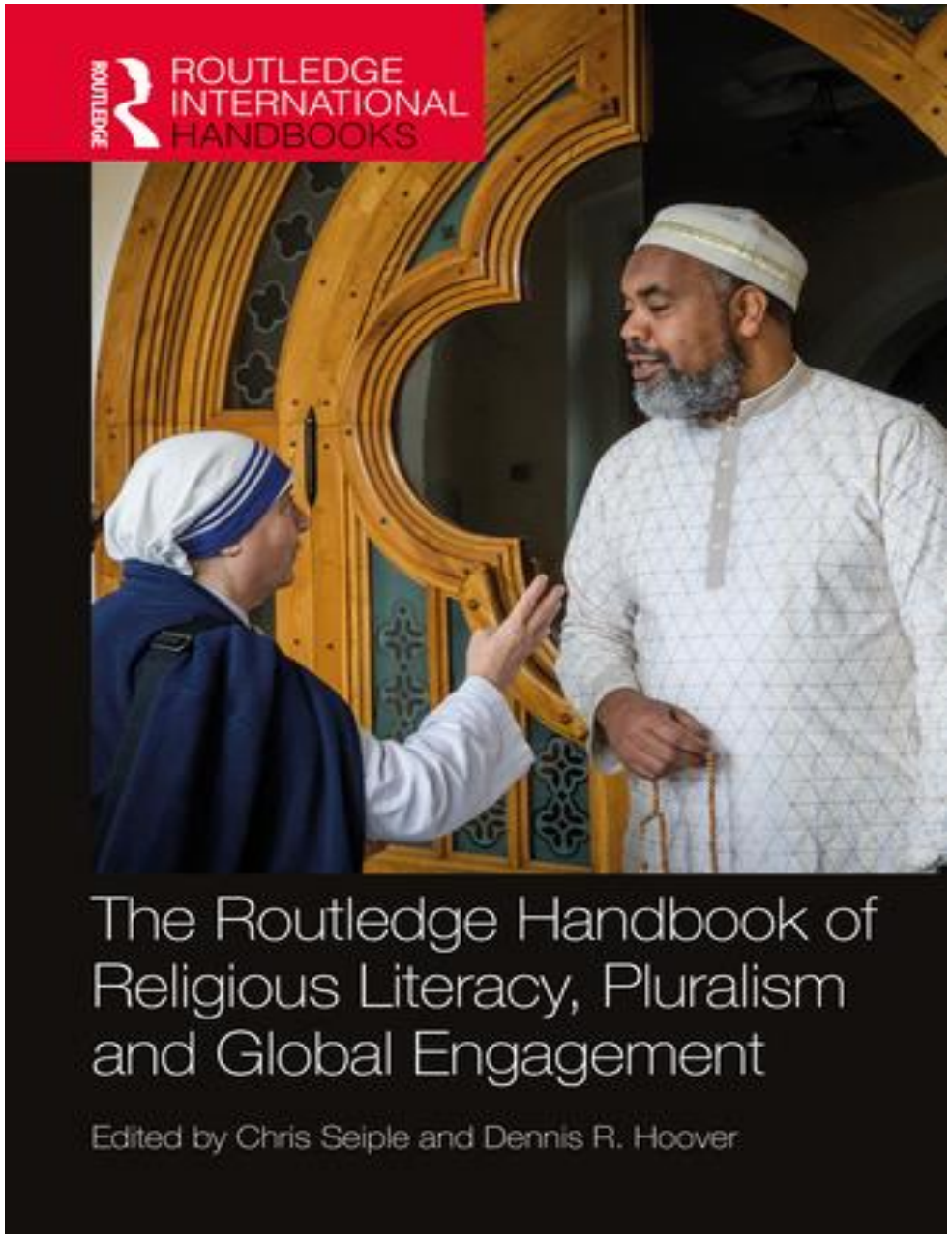
understanding oneself

understanding the religious "other"

understanding the context of potential collaboration

These skills and competencies contribute to, and are refined by, practical experiences of mutual engagement that are elicitive, empathetic & ethical, as embodied and lived in specific contexts.

For a more comprehensive understanding of CCRL, please see: Full article: A Case for Cross-Cultural Religious Literacy (tandfonline.com).



TOP-DOWN/Geo-Strategic/Track 1:

CCRL equips governments
to actively protect religious freedom
POLICY

A Track 1.5
"Covenantal Pluralism:"
A Stable State
&
A Civil Society

BOTTOM-UP/Geo-Social/Track 2:

CCRL equips citizens
to responsibly exercise religious freedom
PEOPLE

[10 Best Practices for Improving Religious Freedom... | Christianity Today]