The central purpose of this book is to re-establish the relevance of anthropological (and indeed sociological) approaches to development processes and persuading anthropology to recognise that the study of contemporary development ought to be one of its principal concerns. Professor Olivier de Sardan argues for a socio-anthropology of change and development that is a deeply empirical, multi-dimensional, diachronic study of social groups and their interactions, combining analysis of social practices and consciousness. It has, in his view, simultaneously to be a political anthropology, a sociology of organizations, an economic anthropology, a sociology of networks, and an anthropology of conceptions and belief systems. “Following its successful publication in French (where it has run through several printings), this important book will provoke much thoughtful debate about appropriate theory and practice within Anthropology, Sociology and Development Studies. It is also particularly appropriate as an advanced text for students in these fields.