



Human Rights and Empire: The Political Philosophy of Cosmopolitanism

By Costas Douzinas

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Erudite and timely, this book is a key contribution to the renewal of radical theory and politics. Addressing the paradox of a contemporary humanitarianism that has abandoned politics in favour of combating evil, Douzinas, a leading scholar and author in the field of human rights and legal theory, considers the most pressing international questions.

Asking whether there 'is an intrinsic relationship between human rights and the recent wars carried out in their name?' and whether 'human rights are a barrier against domination and oppression or the ideological gloss of an emerging empire?' this book examines a range of topics, including:

1. the normative characteristics, political philosophy and metaphysical foundations of our age
2. the subjective and institutional aspects of human rights and their involvement in the creation of identity and definition of the meaning and powers of humanity
3. the use of human rights as a justification for a new configuration of political, economic and military power.

Exploring the legacy and the contemporary role of human rights, this topical and incisive book is a must for all those interested in human rights law, jurisprudence and philosophy of law, political philosophy and political theory.

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Review

'A key contribution to the renewal of not only radical theory, but also radical politics' - Slavoj Zizek

'A truly compelling argument ... one of the most original contributions to the question of the moral and legal status of human rights' - Drucilla Cornell

'beautiful and clearly written... the author's combination of erudition, passion and lively style makes the work a contantly fascinating read. ...a worthwhile introduction to the history of political philosophy.' - *Cardozo Law Review, March 2008*

'Human Rights and Empire represents a valuable and interesting contribution to political and legal theory. The author's position is unique insofar as he is at once a virulent critic of human rights and one of its most ardent supporters. Whereas there is no shortage of literature on the many failures and hypocrisies of human rights, Human Rights and Empire makes a real and positive contribution by avoiding the trap of seeking solutions by tinkering around the edges. Furthermore, the innovative perspective of the author is brought to life through the vibrancy and colourfulness of his language?infused with passion, frustration, personal experience and humour throughout.' - *Thomas Goldup, King's College London, King's Law Journal (20.3) 2009*

About the Author

Costas Douzinas is Professor of Law at Birkbeck College, London and Dean of the Faculty of Arts. He is the author of numerous books on legal theory and human rights.

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