Decolonization, Self-Determination, and the Rise of Global Human Rights Politics

This volume presents the first global history of human rights politics in the age of decolonization. The conflict between independence movements and colonial powers shaped the global human rights order that emerged after World War II. It was also critical to the genesis of contemporary human rights organizations and humanitarian movements. Anti-colonial forces mobilized human rights and other rights language in their campaigns for self-determination. In response, European empires harnessed the new international politics of human rights for their own ends, claiming that their rule, with its promise of “development,” was the authentic vehicle for realizing them. Ranging from the postwar partitions and the wars of independence to indigenous rights activism and postcolonial memory, this volume offers new insights into the history and legacies of human rights, self-determination, and empire to the present day.

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Acknowledgments

The editors would like to acknowledge Nikolas Kompridis, Samuel Moyn, and Glenda Sluga for the critical role they played in the launching of this project and its conceptualization. We extend our thanks to Steven L. B. Jensen, Meredith Terretta, Eric D. Weitz, and Jess Whyte for critical comments on drafts of the introduction to this volume, as well as to other colleagues for suggesting references and revisions. We are also appreciative of the anonymous reviewers’ constructive suggestions for improvements to the original typescript.

The transnational research networks and intellectual collaborations that gave rise to the present volume would not have been possible without funding provided by the University of Sydney, Western Sydney University, and New York University. These included grants from the University of Sydney’s China Studies Centre, International Program Development Fund, ‘International Society’ Faculty of Arts Research Cluster, the School of Philosophical and Historical Inquiry, and the Sydney Intellectual History Network. We are grateful for their generosity and support. Aspects of the final preparation of the manuscript were supported by funding from the Australian Research Council (DP170100291).