



Contemporary States of Emergency: The Politics of Military and Humanitarian Interventions

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From natural disaster areas to zones of political conflict around the world, a new logic of intervention combines military action and humanitarian aid, conflates moral imperatives and political arguments, and confuses the concepts of legitimacy and legality. The mandate to protect human lives -- however and wherever endangered -- has given rise to a new form of humanitarian government that moves from one crisis to the next, applying the same battery of technical expertise (from military logistics to epidemiological risk management to the latest social scientific tools for "good governance") and reducing people with particular histories and hopes to mere lives to be rescued. This book explores these contemporary states of emergency. Drawing on the critical insights of anthropologists, legal scholars, political scientists, and practitioners from the field,

Contemporary States of Emergency examines historical antecedents as well as the moral, juridical, ideological, and economic conditions that have made military and humanitarian interventions common today. It addresses the practical process of intervention in global situations on five continents, describing both differences and similarities, and examines the moral and political consequences of these generalized states of emergency and the new form of government associated with them.

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Editorial Review

Review

Contemporary States of Emergency demands that we rethink the very nature of violence, benevolence, and vulnerability in the face of what Paula Vasquez Lezama felicitously calls 'compassionate militarization.'

(Gil Anidjar, author of *Semites: Race, Religion, Literature*)

About the Author

Didier Fassin is James Wolfensohn Professor of Social Science at the Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton, New Jersey, and Director of Studies in Anthropology at the École des hautes études en sciences sociales. His recent publications include *When Bodies Remember: Experience and Politics of AIDS in South Africa*. Mariella Pandolfi is Professor in the Department of Anthropology at the University of Montreal.

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