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Edited by Barbara M. Oomen, Martha F. Davis and Michele Grigolo

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GLOBAL URBAN JUSTICE

Cities increasingly base their local policies on human rights. Human rights cities promise to forge new alliances between urban actors and international organisations, to enable the ‘translation’ of the abstract language of human rights to the local level and to develop new practices designed to bring about global urban justice. This book brings together academics and practitioners at the forefront of human rights cities and the ‘right to the city’ movement to discuss their history and also the potential that human rights cities hold for global urban justice.

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EDITORS' PREFACE

This book shows how cities, and those who live in them, increasingly claim a role in realising human rights and discusses the promises and challenges involved. The promises are compelling: with over half of the world's population living in cities, with large socio-economic challenges involved, respect for human rights by all urban stakeholders holds the potential for global urban justice. Cities are also well placed to infuse new energy into the somewhat faded ideals embodied by human rights by creating novel alliances, often across borders, which deliver upon the promises held by these rights. At the same time, challenges abound. How to move beyond the rhetoric? How to ensure equality between individuals and cities? What do these processes teach us about globalisation and human rights realisation in today's world and – ultimately – about global urban justice?

In this volume, scholars and practitioners from all over the world engage with these topics. In doing so, they bring together a wealth of experience and insight on a topic that is rising on the policy agenda, but that has received relatively little academic attention to date. It is for this reason we were delighted that when we invited scholars and practitioners to present papers on 'human rights cities' during the 2014 Law and Society Association Annual Meeting in Minneapolis, virtually everyone agreed to come. The presentations sparked in-depth discussions on comparisons amongst cases and amongst the ideologies embodied by human rights cities, human rights in the city and the right to the city movement and their theoretical relevance. The dialogue continued digitally as papers were turned into chapters and contributors reflected upon and responded to each other's work. As editors, we are deeply grateful to all authors for the degree to which they engaged with the key questions, the quality of the contributions and the timeliness with which they were handed in.

The book would not have come about without the very able support of Anneloes Hoff, a scholar in her own right, who provided key editorial assistance throughout the process. In addition, the work benefitted

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Human rights cities, and emphasis on the right to the city, hold the potential to deliver justice worldwide in times and places where it is much needed, by the people and organisations best placed to do so. It is our sincere hope that the theoretical reflections, the legal and the sociological discussions and the practical examples in the book will contribute to strengthening these processes as well as the academic reflection upon them. It is, after all, only in acquiring meaning locally that human rights reveal their true potential for global justice.