

In the face of the world's disorders, moral concerns have provided a powerful ground for developing international as well as local policies. Didier Fassin draws on case materials from France, South Africa, Venezuela, and Palestine to explore the meaning of humanitarianism in the contexts of immigration and asylum, disease and poverty, disaster and war. He traces and analyzes recent shifts in moral and political discourse and practices—what he terms “humanitarian reason”—and shows in vivid examples how humanitarianism is confronted by inequality and violence.

“This is a rigorous, principled, and compelling account of the emergence of humanitarianism and of what happens when humanitarianism is put into practice. Through a tour of various humanitarian projects in France and elsewhere, Didier Fassin develops a compelling case for a sea change in our social imaginary, one in which an ethics of suffering and compassion has come to displace a politics of rights and justice.”

Michael Lambek, University of Toronto, editor of *Illness and Irony: On the Ambiguity of Suffering in Culture* and *Ordinary Ethics: Anthropology, Language, and Action*

“In this important book, Didier Fassin addresses the nature of obligation to strangers and solidarity amid inequality and connects these themes to the question of whether to think of global moral community as an attractive ideal, a problematic fantasy, or both.”

Craig Calhoun, President, Social Science Research Council

“This is a field-defining volume. Based on ten years of comparative field research and a unique combination of medical and anthropological expertise, Didier Fassin’s *Humanitarian Reason* avoids moralizing in favor of careful sociological analysis. Humanitarianism emerges both as a form of reason and as a key force in the contemporary arts of government.”

Claudio Lomnitz, author of *Death and the Idea of Mexico*



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Cover design: Sandy Drooker. Cover illustration: Rembrandt van Rijn, *The Good Samaritan*. Wallace Collection, London, 1630.

ISBN 978-0-520-27117-3



9 780520 271173

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