

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-65093-9 - The Power of Human Rights: International Norms and Domestic Change
Edited by Thomas Risse, Stephen C. Ropp, and Kathryn Sikkink

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The Power of Human Rights

International Norms and Domestic Change

On the fiftieth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, this book evaluates the impact of these norms on the behavior of national governments in many regions of the world. Have the principles articulated in the Declaration had any effect at all on the actual behavior of states towards their citizens? What are the conditions under which international human rights norms are internalized in domestic practices? And what can we learn from this case about why, how, and under what conditions international norms in general influence the actions of states? This book tackles these questions. A five-phase “spiral model” of human rights change is developed to suggest a socialization process by which international norms are internalized in the domestic practices of states. The model links the interactions among transnationally operating advocacy networks, international organizations, Western states, domestic opposition groups, and norm-violating national governments in one unified concept. The book applies the model in the various empirical chapters to eleven countries representing five different world regions – Northern Africa, Sub-Saharan Africa, Southeast Asia, Latin America, and Eastern Europe. Finally, practical lessons are drawn from the analysis that provides fresh perspectives for activists and policy makers concerned with preserving and extending the human rights gains made during the past fifty years.

Thomas Risse is Chair of International Relations at the Robert Schuman Centre and the Department of Social and Political Sciences of the European University Institute, Florence. He is the author of *Cooperation among Democracies: The European Influence on US Foreign Policy* (1995), editor of *Bringing Transnational Relations Back In* (1995), and co-editor (with Richard N. Lebow) of *International Relations Theory and the End of the Cold War* (1995).

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CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS

Cambridge, New York, Melbourne, Madrid, Cape Town, Singapore, São Paulo

Cambridge University Press

The Edinburgh Building, Cambridge CB2 8RU, UK

Published in the United States of America by Cambridge University Press, New York

www.cambridge.org

Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9780521650939

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First published 1999

Seventh printing 2007

A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library

Library of Congress Cataloguing in Publication data

The power of human rights: international norms and domestic change /
edited by Thomas Risse, Stephen C. Ropp, Kathryn Sikkink.

p. cm. – (Cambridge studies in international relations: 66)

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 0 521 65093 3 hbk ISBN 0 521 65882 9 pbk

I. Human rights. I. Risse-Kappen, Thomas. II. Ropp, Stephen C.
III. Sikkink, Kathryn, 1955–. IV. Series.

JC571.H769673 1999 323 – dc21 98-42345 CIP

ISBN 978-0-521-65093-9 hardback

ISBN 978-0-521-65882-9 paperback

Transferred to digital printing 2007

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Preface

This book results from a sustained transatlantic cooperation over more than five years. It all began in 1993 when Thomas Risse and Steve Ropp were both teaching at the University of Wyoming and started developing some common research interests in the area of human rights and democratization. Thomas then left Wyoming and returned to Germany to teach at the University of Konstanz. But he and Steve kept in touch and held a first German–American workshop on international human rights norms and their domestic effects at Laramie, Wyoming, in the spring of 1994. At about the same time, Thomas ran into Kathryn Sikkink at the annual meeting of the American Political Science Association and they started talking about transnational relations, principled issue networks, and the like. At this point, the three of us joined forces, with an extraordinary team of young German scholars gathered together by Thomas at the University of Konstanz: Sieglinde Gränzer, Anja Jetschke, and Hans Peter Schmitz. We held a second workshop on how to study the domestic impact of international norms in the human rights area in June 1995, this time in Germany, at the Catholic Academy of the Diocese of Rottenburg-Stuttgart, in the beautiful town of Weingarten. We then decided to work on an edited volume. Drafts of the chapters were presented at a third workshop in equally beautiful Jackson, Wyoming, in March 1997. We also presented the draft chapters at the 1997 Annual Convention of the International Studies Association in Toronto, Canada. This book is the product of our previous collective work in a variety of areas such as human rights, transnational relations, and domestic regime change in developing nations (cf. Risse-Kappen 1995; Ropp 1992; Sikkink 1993a and b; Keck and Sikkink 1998).

We received a lot of support and helpful suggestions from many people along the way. First, Marty Finnemore read the entire manu-

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script and provided excellent comments that improved the final product considerably. We also thank an anonymous reviewer from Cambridge University Press for constructive suggestions. Second, we received crucial input from many people at the various workshops and conferences. In particular, we wish to thank Stephanie Anderson, Mike Barnett, Henning Boekle, Tanja Börzel, Lothar Brock, Ann Clark, Andrea Czepek, Francois Debrix, Brigitte Hamm, Wolfgang Heinz, David Holiday, Patrick Ireland, Douglas Johnson, Margaret Keck, Beth Kier, Audie Klotz, Elizabeth Lira, Michael Marks, Rainer Öhlschläger, David Patton, Frank Schimmelfennig, Siegmund Schmidt, Joachim Schmitt, Philippe Schmitter, Thomas Seitz, Michael Shifter, Nina Tannenwald, Ann Towns, Cornelia Ulbert, and many others. John Haslam and Steve Smith agreed to take the book in the Cambridge International Relations series and helped steer it through the production process. Last but not least, special thanks go to Martin Marcussen who did a tremendous job in producing the list of references at the end of the book, and to Jean Field for her splendid copy-editing work.

The empirical findings reported in this book mostly result from extensive (and expensive!) field research over many years. The “German team” (Sieglinde Gränzer, Anja Jetschke, Thomas Risse, Hans Peter Schmitz) received funding from the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft (German Research Association). The “US team” was supported by the McKnight-Land Grant Professorship at the University of Minnesota and the University of Wyoming’s International Studies Program. Finally, we are particularly grateful to the Transcoop Program of the German–American Academic Council for co-funding our joint conferences.

We dedicate this book to the many thousands of human rights activists working in and with international organizations, national governments, political parties, foundations, churches, trade unions, and other non-governmental organizations around the globe. This book is ultimately about their work. We show that their efforts and their frustrations have not been futile, but have contributed to substantial improvements in human rights conditions all over the world. This is what the “Power of Human Rights” is all about.