



Surya P. Subedi QC

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# HUMAN RIGHTS IN EASTERN CIVILISATIONS

Some Reflections of a  
Former UN Special Rapporteur



## HUMAN RIGHTS IN EASTERN CIVILISATIONS

*'Surya P. Subedi, now Professor of International Law at the University of Leeds, was born in a simple Nepali village and received a Sanskrit education until the age of 13. This book records his passionate and very personal attempt to bridge two worlds, to bring the world of his Brahmin ancestors, the Hindu civilization that they embodied, into harmony with the modern world of human rights and to show that there need be no contradiction, and indeed that human rights can receive succour from the well-springs of Hinduism and Buddhism.'*

David N. Gellner, University of Oxford, UK

Based on the author's first-hand experience as a UN Special Rapporteur, this thought-provoking and original book examines the values of Eastern civilisations and their contribution to the development of the UN Human Rights agenda.

Offering an authoritative analysis of Hindu and Buddhist traditions, Surya P. Subedi, QC, focuses on the norms underpinning these two seminal Eastern philosophies to assess the extent to which the ancient civilisations already have human rights values embedded in them. Chapters explore the expression of values in the scriptures and practices of these philosophies, assessing their influence on the contemporary understanding of human rights. Rejecting the argument based on "Asian Values" that is often used to undermine the universality of human rights, the book argues that secularism, personal liberty and universalism are at the heart of both Hindu and Buddhist traditions.

The unique perspective offered by *Human Rights in Eastern Civilisations* will appeal to students, academics and researchers in a wide range of disciplines, including human rights, international law and relations, and religious studies.

**Surya P. Subedi** is Professor of International Law at the University of Leeds, UK, a Member of the Institute de Droit International and a Former UN Special Rapporteur for Human Rights in Cambodia.

Cover image: Remi Yuan on Unsplash.

**Edward Elgar**  
PUBLISHING

The Lypiatts, 15 Lansdown Road, Cheltenham, Glos GL50 2JA, UK

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[www.e-elgar.com](http://www.e-elgar.com) [www.elgaronline.com](http://www.elgaronline.com)

ISBN 978-1-80088-361-1



9 781800 883611

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CONTACT Andy Driver JOB NO 3377 DATE SENT 12.11.2020 TITLE Human Rights in Eastern Civilisations EDITOR Hetty Mosforth  
TEL 07944 643920 PRODUCTION Controller Ilsa Williamson ORDER 73531 SPINE BULK 18mm JACKET SIZE Royal PPC 236mm x 154mm COLOURS CMYK  
EMAIL [andy@ombdesign.co.uk](mailto:andy@ombdesign.co.uk) PLEASE NOTE Colours on printed laser proofs may differ slightly to those viewed on PDFs due to the nature of laser printing compared to the colour values seen on screen.