This book is a second revised edition. As the title makes plain, it deals, in considerable detail, with the historically neglected economic, social and cultural rights. It makes a significant contribution to the emerging writings on socio-economic rights.

Part I traces the development of economic, social and cultural rights from the margins to mainstream human rights discourse. The authors convincingly contend that these rights are human rights and have legal force. Not only does the book orientate the reader to the international protection mechanisms of economic, social and cultural rights, but a full chapter is also dedicated to their protection in municipal legal systems. This is commendable given that the increasing internationalisation of human rights has detracted attention from the fact that states must provide the primary means of protecting human rights.

It is striking that Part I is not exclusively dedicated to socio-economic rights. Two chapters deal with the right to self-determination and the right to development. This serves to highlight the interdependence and indivisibility of human rights.

Part II discusses selected economic, social and cultural rights on a chapter-by-chapter basis. They include the right to an adequate standard of living, cultural rights and the rights to food, housing, health, property, social security, education and work. There is also a chapter-long discussion of the environment and human rights. This section is a substantial contribution to the development of the precise content of economic, social and cultural rights, the absence of which has been a major criticism of these rights.

Part III discusses the economic, social and cultural rights of selected beneficiaries and situations. There is little room for disputing that women, children, minorities, indigenous peoples and migrant workers deserve a special place in this section. The proliferation of armed conflicts also justifies an in-depth discussion of the economic, social and cultural rights issues involved in such situations.

Predictably, the last part focuses on implementation and realisation. The monitoring mechanisms available at the UN level and within the European Union are discussed in detail. Part III is particularly notable in that it tackles crucial topics such as the role of the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, and multinational corporations, in the realisation of economic, social and cultural rights.

However, if a chapter could be added to this book in the next edition, one would suggest a discussion of regional protection mechanisms.

As this brief overview makes clear, this book is an important and valuable resource for researchers, advocates, activists, academics, field workers and other role-players in economic, social and cultural rights. It has utilised the expertise of a wide range of internationally recognised authors. Also striking is the book’s stable compromise between theory and practice, a challenge that few writings meet.