

Humanitarian Intervention
and the Responsibility
to Protect

Birsen Erdogan

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Turkish Foreign Policy Discourse

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*This book is dedicated to the brave and beautiful people
of Syria and Libya.*

PREFACE

I am writing the last parts of this book when I am in a small Turkish town by the Aegean. I see beautiful nature, on the one hand. Trees are full of fruits. Sea is crystal clear. Northern wind is bringing some coolness from the green mountains. Some Greek islands with little white houses, just a couple of miles away. But I can't help thinking about the bad things happening in the world at that very moment: wars, killings, terror, poverty, hate speeches, increasing surveillance, securitisation, militarisation, racism, xenophobia, homophobia, misogyny, hatred, genocides, growing animosity between societies, clashes within societies, lost individuals, lost children, lost nations and so on.

At that very moment while I was writing Conclusion, a Syrian person was trying to escape from war, in a small plastic boat in the Aegean Sea. In spite of obstacles and hindrances on the way, she/he was going to run. Border officers were going to stop her/him. Rain was going to exhaust her/him. Fear was going to chase her/him. Some people were going to call her/him bad names. Some governments were going to tell her/him to go away. Horrific memories of what was happening back at home accompanied with the cold, heat, hunger, distress, deprivation, uncertainty and restlessness were not going to leave her/his side. Nor was hope. In spite of everything, focused on one goal, she/he was going to be strong and will try. Because there was no other option. Not only there is pain but also hope. Hope for a better future. She/he was going to run from something bad towards a goal: prospect of a peaceful country, a safe city. Promise of a warm soup, a comfortable bed, a decent job and a secure life. Possibility of making her/his dreams come true. It is this hope that was keeping her/him alive. We have no

right to kill her/his dreams, her/his right to a better future. Because only by sharing, giving, listening and feeling, we can make our world a better place.

Many of us silently watch what is going on in the world. Many of us see, know and feel the pain of people. Many of us are angry. Not only because we are governed and represented by warmongers and a bunch of greedy people, but also because we feel helpless. We want to believe that we are not weapons, wars, hatred, violence, greed alone. We hope we are more than these. We need hope too. That is why we have many things to learn from Samer, Ahmed, Sami, Zeinah, Amira, Fatima, Hassan, Rania, Aya, Aisha and many others coming to us for help and for a place where they can live just like us.

We can start by giving them everything we can and by hearing their stories. In order to tell others. In order not to forget what humanity is, what it should be. Most importantly, we can learn from their strength and hope. Because we have almost forgotten them.

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Falk Ostermann, Oxana Slobozhan, Hein Dries, I am grateful for your comments and precious support. Thank you!

My family, thank you for your endless support in all parts of my life, for your endless love, for being there when I needed it and for teaching me what conscience means. Love you!

Thank you, my friends: Phyllis, Tuba, Gaye, Bahar, Selcen, Jasper, Demet, Dilek. Without you, life would have been lonely and very, very boring.

Eric, you are everything to me. Magical love, amusing company, mini-family, a wise guide, a powerhouse, a lighthouse, a northern star, a peaceful sailboat, a model, my *koca* man with endless patience and exceptional intelligence. I have never met someone like you. And yes, you are also very funny. If there was one word synonymous with ‘happiness’, ‘peace’ and ‘love’, to me that word would be ‘Eric’.

The main source of inspiration for this book and everything I study, read, teach, learn and think for the last seven years has come from my students at the University College Maastricht (UCM). It is an honour to teach there. UCM is my second home. Every day I went there with a big smile on my face. Every evening I walked back home with the fulfilment of being in the tutorial rooms with these wonderful students. I was not only teaching; I was learning and having a great time with them. My work

at the UCM has been the most rewarding, gratifying and enjoyable part of my life. Thank you all! Thank you, the amazing people of the UCM, for being so nicely critical, very sincerely analytical, endlessly tolerant, instinctively democratic, inclusive, respectful and maturely responsible. UCM is the school of our dreams where real education and dreams are made possible.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AKP	Adalet ve Kalkinma Partisi (Justice and Development Party)
BDP	Baris ve Demokrasi Partisi (Peace and Democracy Party)
CDA	Critical Discourse Analysis
CHP	Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi (Republican People's Party)
EU	European Union
IS	Islamic State
MENA	Middle East and North Africa
MFA	(Turkish) Ministry of Foreign Affairs
MHP	Milliyetçi Hareket Partisi (Nationalist Action Party)
PKK	Kurdistan Worker's Party
PM	Prime Minister
PYD	Democratic Union Party
R2P	Responsibility to Protect
UN	United Nations
YPG	People's Protection Units

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