The Responsibility to Protect after Syria: Challenged or Confirmed?

Ten years after its endorsement by the U.N. world summit, the status, meaning and applicability of the responsibility to protect (R2P) as either just political rhetoric or an emerging legal norm remain disputed. Unsurprisingly, NATO’s intervention in Libya 2011 reinforced the view of critics who continue to see it as an encroachment on the sovereignty of weak states and as a hegemonic project of the West. And Western Non-Intervention in Syria raises the discussion whether the R2P is dead, or has at least failed. At the same time, however, there is a tendency among some non-Western powers to legitimize their military interventions in humanitarian terms. Russia’s interventions in Georgia 2008 and in the Crimea 2014, where humanitarian reasoning has been coupled with the politics of irredentism, are cases in point. Other examples of authoritarian interventions are Turkey’s intervention in Syria, or Saudi Arabia’s and Iran’s intervention in Yemen. The seminar sheds light on such instances of Western and non-Western military humanitarianism by asking a number of empirical, conceptual and theoretical questions: (1) Are references to humanitarian principles simply meant to disguise geopolitical motives in the abovementioned cases? Or is there an element of norm diffusion, or non-linear norm evolution at work? (2) Do military efforts to “save strangers” and to “save our people” question the cosmopolitan foundation of humanitarian ideas? Do humanitarian norms have constitutive effects on a global scale? (3) Is it still adequate, or has it ever been adequate to understand the R2P debate in terms of a divide between democratic and non-democratic or Western versus non-Western states based of an understanding of positive, linear norm evolution? The seminar encourages students of International Relations thinking and arguing within and between different theoretical traditions to discuss all these and other fundamental questions and, thus, to rethink the R2P in light of contemporary politics of human rights protection. The above-mentioned examples also require us to rethink the validity and conceptual boundaries of theories of norm entrepreneurship, diffusion and contestation. They also might lead to new analytical efforts to operationalize the concept of norm abuse (and, thus, to establish it as a scientific rather than just a political term).

BASS Modul 12 International Relations

Course Aims:

- Reconstructing the history of the R2P and the development of humanitarian interventionism from the just war tradition via the concept of the „Humanitarian Intervention“ to contemporary and new understanding of sovereignty in international law
- Discussing the ambivalence of sovereignty (anti-interventionism) and human rights protection (interventionism)
- Discussing whether the R2P is political rhetoric or an emerging legal norm – or failed/dead
- Discussing a new Authoritarian Interventionism

Performance requirements

(1) Participation in the seminar; (2) Reading and discussing the texts; (3) Presentation of a topic; (4) Thesis (10 -12 pages), deadline for submitting is 30. September 2017

Organization of the Seminar and Introduction into the Issue


1 May

I. From „Just War“ via “Humanitarian Intervention” to the R2P

2. Course (8. May)

“Humanitarian Interventions” during the Cold War


Furthermore:


3. Course (15. May)

After the Cold War: Bringing Responsible Sovereignty on the “Agenda for Peace”


Furthermore:


4. Course (22. May)

„Liberal Interventionism“ in the 1990s: Bosnia and the Kosovo War

Furthermore:

Furthermore:

II. The Idea of the Responsibility to Protect

5. Course (29. May)

The power of norms in international Politics

Guest Lecture by Dr. Melanie Coni-Zimmer (PRIF), “Norms and transnational actors in international politics“.

5 June - Pfingsten

6. Course (12. June)

The R2P within the framework of the U.N. Charter

Cater, Charles/Malone, David M 2016: The origins and evolution of Responsibility to Protect at the UN, in: International Relations 30: 3 (Special Issue on Critical Perspectives on the R2P: BRICS and Beyond), 278-297.

Furthermore:
The R2P as a Western Hegemonic Instrument? The Libya Case


Furthermore:
Verlage, Christopher 2013: Die Sicherheitsratsresolution 1973 zum Fall Libyen – Ein Meilenstein für die völkerrechtliche Verankerung der Responsibility to Protect, in: Daase/Junk (Hg.), Internationale Schutzverantwortung, 63-86.

Collapsed or failed states as a challenge for norms such as the R2P

Guest Lecture by Prof. Dr. Christian Neuhäuser (TU Dortmund), “Responsibility and failed states“.

Furthermore:
Rising Powers and the R2P

Kozyrev, Vitaly 2016: Harmonizing “Responsibility to Protect”: China’s vision of post-sovereign world, in: International Relations 30: 3 (Special Issue on Critical Perspectives on the R2P: BRICS and Beyond), 328-345.

or

Ziegler, Charles E. 2016a: Russia on the rebound: using and misusing the Responsibility to Protect, in: International Relations 30: 3 (Special Issue on Critical Perspectives on the R2P: BRICS and Beyond), 346-361.

Furthermore:

Buranovsky, Vladimir/Mateiko, Anatoly 2016: Responsibility to Protect: Russia’s Approaches, in: International Spectator 51: 2 (Special Issue on the R2P), 49-69.


Ganguly, Sumit 2016: India and the Responsibility to Protect, in: International Relations 30: 3 (Special Issue on Critical Perspectives on the R2P: BRICS and Beyond), 362-381.


Regler, Sonja 2014: Chinas Haltung zur R2P zwischen Skepsis und Offenheit, in Staack/Krause (Hg.): Schutzverantwortung in der Debatte, 229-246.


III. After Syria: Is the R2P dead?

10. Course (10. July)

After Syria: Is the R2P dead?

or

Furthermore:


Şeyşane, Volkan/Celik, Cem 2015: R2P and Turkish Foreign Policy: Libya and Syria in Perspective, in: Global Responsibility to Protect 7, 376-397.

11. Course (17. July)

The pitfalls of the R2P: Back to a New Military Humanitarianism


or
Reichwein, Alex 2017: A dangerous responsibility: Protecting national minorities, religious fellows or irredentism movements under the R2P umbrella, ISA's 58th Annual Convention, Baltimore/Maryland, 22-25 February 2017.

Furthermore:
