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# Haven: The Mediterranean Crisis and Human Security

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# Haven: The Mediterranean Crisis and Human Security

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*Edited by*

John Morrissey

*National University of Ireland, Galway*

NEW HORIZONS IN HUMAN GEOGRAPHY

 **Edward Elgar**  
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## Contributors

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**Michael Brunicardi** is a nineteen-year veteran of the Irish Naval Service. He has worked in many fields including Naval Operations, Naval Headquarters, Navigation and Training. He holds the rank of Lieutenant Commander and is currently the Officer Commanding the L.É. JAMES JOYCE, an Offshore Patrol Vessel. He is a graduate of the National University of Ireland, Galway with an Honours Degree in Earth and Ocean Science, and a graduate of University College Cork with a Higher Diploma in Geographical Information Systems. He also holds a Special Purpose Award for the Senior Command Operations Course from the National Maritime College of Ireland. He served on board L.É. NIAMH while deployed to the Mediterranean Sea in 2015 as part of Operation PONTUS.

**V'cenza Cirefice** is an artist, researcher and activist from the Mourne Mountains in County Down. Her research interests lie in imaginative geographies, climate justice, gender and environmental justice, and feminist political ecology. She has been involved with communities engaging in solutions to socio-ecological crises in Ireland, Greece and Cyprus and works on themes from menstruation and extractivism to migration and fossil fuel divestment. She has worked with the Women's Earth and Climate Action Network, Friends of the Earth Europe and Plan International. She holds an MA in Geography from the University of Aberdeen and an MA in Environment, Society and Development from National University of Ireland, Galway, where she is currently a PhD Candidate in Geography.

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**Dorothy Estrada-Tanck** is Assistant Professor of International Law and International Relations at the University of Murcia, Spain. She holds a PhD in Law from the European University Institute, an MSc in Political Theory from the London School of Economics and an LLB from Escuela Libre de Derecho in Mexico City. She enjoys broad academic and professional experience in the United Nations, state bodies and NGOs in Mexico, Italy, the US and Spain, focusing on issues of human rights, gender, and socio-economic justice. She is the author of *Human Security and Human Rights under International Law: The Protections Offered to Persons Confronting Structural Vulnerability* (2016).

**Des Gasper** is Professor of Human Development, Development Ethics and Public Policy at the International Institute of Social Studies at Erasmus University Rotterdam. He has worked on various aspects of human security thinking and practice, including in analyses of migration, environmental change, and its roles and relationships in regard to perspectives of human rights, human development and human needs. With Thanh-Dam Truong, he co-edited a series of volumes that use human security frameworks to inves-

tigate international migration: *Gender, Migration and Social Justice* (2014); *Trans-National Migration and Human Security* (2011); and ‘Trans-Local Livelihoods and Connections’, a special issue of *Gender, Technology and Development* (2008).

**T.J. Hughes** is a PhD Candidate in Geography at National University of Ireland, Galway. His research interests coalesce around critical geopolitical theory and the situated human geographies of refugee and asylum seeker experiences. His research examines the governmentalities of forced displacement taking place across the Global South and how they find expression in a local context in Ireland. In particular, he draws upon the UN concept of ‘human security’ as a means of insisting upon a ‘politics of solidarity’ as opposed to a ‘politics of security and risk’. He holds a BA in Geography and Sociology & Political Science, and an MA in Environment, Society and Development from NUIG. For his PhD research, he was awarded the 2018 James Flaherty Scholarship from the Ireland Canada University Foundation.

**Jennifer Hyndman** is Professor at the Centre for Refugee Studies at York University. As a geographer, her research focuses on the geopolitics of forced migration, the biopolitics of refugee camps, humanitarian responses to war and displacement, and refugee resettlement in North America. Current research examines the phenomenon of long-term private refugee sponsorship in Canada. Her most recent book is *Refugees in Extended Exile: Living on the Edge*, with Wenona Giles (2017). Hyndman is author of *Dual Disasters: Humanitarian Aid after the 2004 Tsunami* (2011), *Managing Displacement: Refugees and the Politics of Humanitarianism* (2000), and co-editor with W. Giles of *Sites of Violence: Gender and Conflict Zones* (2004). She has written several dozen articles, chapters and policy papers, and is producer of two short films.

**Gerry Kearns** is Professor of Human Geography at Maynooth University. He works on the cultural politics of AIDS, on the political geography of the Irish Catholic Church, and on the geopolitics of imperialism. His publications include works on: medical geography, *Urban Epidemics and Historical Geography* (1985); urban geography, *Urbanising Britain* (edited with Charles Withers, 1991) and *Selling Places* (edited with Chris Philo, 1993); the history of geographical thought, *Geopolitics and Empire* (2009); and social justice, *Spatial Justice and the Irish Crisis* (edited with David Meredith and John Morrissey). *Geopolitics and Empire* was awarded the Murchison Prize by the Royal Geographical Society. He is on the editorial boards of *Historical Geography*, *Journal of Historical Geography*, and *Irish Geography*.

**Valerie Ledwith** is a population geographer and co-leader of the Population and Migration Research Network in the Whitaker Institute at National University of Ireland, Galway. She completed her BA in Arts at NUIG, and her MA in Geography at University of Colorado, Boulder, where she examined patterns of protest voting in post-unification Germany. For her PhD at University of California, Los Angeles, she examined the impact of socio-economic and ethno-racial segregation on migrant access to education. Her current research continues to examine barriers to migrant access, ranging from the micro-geographies of exclusion at the school-gate to the macro-aggressions of exclusion on the borders of Europe.

**John Morrissey** is Professor of Geography at National University of Ireland, Galway, where he is Associate Director of the Moore Institute for Humanities. His research and teaching address interlinked questions of geopolitics, human security and international development, on which he has published widely, including four books: *Negotiating Colonialism* (2003), *Key Concepts in Historical Geography* (2014, co-author), *Spatial Justice and the Irish Crisis* (2014, co-editor), and *The Long War* (2017). His research has been supported by various grants, from the British Academy to the Irish Research Council, and in recent years he has held visiting fellowships at City University of New York, the University of Cambridge, and Australian National University.

**Alison Mountz** is Professor of Geography and Canada Research Chair in Global Migration at Wilfrid Laurier University, where she is also Director of the International Migration Research Centre. Before moving to Laurier, she was based at Syracuse University's Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs for eight years. She also spent two years at Harvard University's Canada Program. Her work explores how people cross borders and access migration and asylum policies, and has been funded by the John D. and Catherine T. McArthur Foundation, the Canadian Embassy, the National Science Foundation, and Canada's Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council. She is the author of *Seeking Asylum: Human Smuggling and Bureaucracy at the Border* (2010).

**Kathy Reilly** is a lecturer in Human Geography at National University of Ireland, Galway. Her research and teaching interests straddle a number of arenas within critical geography, including migration, education, media and social justice. Her work focuses on marginalized communities, centring on children, young people and families, and is underpinned by a commitment to participative field-based research practice. Recent publications include

‘Mediating Representations of Poverty and Development’ (*Third World Quarterly* 2017, co-author) and ‘Geographies of Education: Case and Context’ (*Establishing Geographies of Children and Young People*, 2018, co-author). Her most recent research grant success is an Irish Research Council award for a project entitled ‘Deconstructing Homelessness: Finding a Place for Geography?’

**Cathy Wilcock** is a postdoctoral researcher at the International Institute of Social Studies, Erasmus University Rotterdam. She has Master’s degrees from the universities of Edinburgh and Manchester and a PhD from the Global Development Institute at Manchester. She later worked as coordinator and researcher for the University of Manchester Migration Lab. Her research takes a socio-anthropological approach to the nexus of political participation and migration, with a special interest in the formation and sustainment of global communities. So far she has focused mainly on Sudanese political development and the Sudanese diaspora in Europe.

# Acknowledgements

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The ongoing humanitarian crisis in the Mediterranean Sea first came into mainstream view for Europeans and the rest of the world in 2015. Three-year-old Alan Kurdi's tragic drowning in September of that year elevated international attention, with photographs of his little body washed up and hauntingly alone on a Turkish beach eliciting shock, outrage and calls for action. Like so many, I found the images deeply affecting, but I also knew the outrage would be short-lived, as the media relentlessly moved on, public consciousness waned and, politically, the catastrophe became a *security crisis* for 'us', rather than a *humanitarian crisis* for 'them'. In many ways, this book has its origins then. Soon thereafter, I applied to the Irish Research Council for research funding for a project that I hoped would extend critical attention on the unfolding crisis. A few months later, 'Haven: Intervening for Human Security in the Mediterranean Humanitarian Crisis' was funded, and this book is the collaborative result of that project.

'Haven' was focused from the outset on developing a collaborative body of research that addresses the root causes of the crisis, critiques the dominant forms of intervention taken and offers an alternative envisioning of governmental response via the UN concept of 'human security'. The project partnered with a leading Irish NGO advocate for global justice, Galway One World Centre, in supporting graduate research on the crisis in Greece, Hungary and Ireland, and facilitated a public meeting involving academics, NGO practitioners, the Irish refugee community, Irish Aid and the Irish Naval Service. The book focuses on how strategizing for human security offers a potentially transformative envisioning of a people-centred security in responding to the Mediterranean crisis. From a range of Arts, Humanities and Social Science disciplines, and reflecting governmental, NGO and refugee perspectives, it documents the major geopolitical, economic and social issues of the crisis, and the reliance on clinical population management techniques that are frequently unethical, evasive of international law and counterproductive in their ad hoc biopolitical application. The collective chapters variously illustrate how a cooperative human security approach to issues such as displacement and migration can instructively conceptualize the intricacies of the challenges faced, and also build a politics of solidarity in fostering integrated strategies that call out the failures of top-down, technocratic security measures and herald instead the potential of bottom-up, people-centred interventions.

Working with colleagues on this book was a pleasure and inspiration from the start. My thanks to all the contributors for their wonderful writing, teaching and practice, in a world never more in need of critical knowledge and informed political and social action. In the vision for the book, the idea of a ‘haven’ is invoked as a place of safety or refuge. It also signals a conceiving of interventionism that places human security at the centre. State-centred security concerns have long been guided by military and economic priorities and unilateral interests of territorial protection. On the contrary, this book aims to insist upon alternative priorities of human security that are vital to adding *humanitarian* concerns to overly *securitarian* logics of intervention. Attending to human security requires investment in intervention of a different kind: in coordinated transnational governmental initiatives; in adequately resourced humanitarian assistance; in cooperatively adhering to human rights obligations; and ultimately in enabling security mechanisms that are human-centred. Discourses of intervention are almost always focused on an external ‘them’, who are different from ‘us’. Conceiving an interventionary strategy inspired by a human security vision recognizes instead a collective and shared precarity – a broader ‘us’, a less bounded ‘Self’, in a globalized world. This has never been more important than now. If the frightening Covid-19 pandemic has taught us anything, it is that we live in an intensely interconnected world with a new global sense of precarity.

From the beginning, the book had a firm eye on facilitating a collaborative public scholarship on how the Mediterranean crisis is being responded to. To this end, it coalesces a diversity of academic, governmental, NGO and community voices in challenging how EU and Western interventionism more broadly has dominantly but ineffectively been driven by short-sighted and ad hoc ‘state security’ approaches. In seeking to advance a more holistic and humanitarian ‘human security’ approach, it is prompted by a sense of academic responsibility to insist upon the increasingly precarious geographies of our contemporary world, to document the human consequences of the seemingly endless cycles of conflict and displacement, and to challenge the impoverished thinking of statist security agendas in dividing the world into zones of sanctuary and abandonment. The book would never have been possible without the financial and intellectual support from the project’s funder, the Irish Research Council, and I wish to extend my thanks to colleagues there, especially to Peter Brown and Maria O’Brien. At Edward Elgar Publishing, I am indebted to Katy Crossan, Stephanie Hartley, Barbara Pretty and Sue Sharpe – thank you all for your support and guidance as the book was brought to fruition – and thanks too to the book’s copy-editor, Jo North. I also wish to gratefully acknowledge the grant aid received from two publication awards for the book from the National

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