

**Justified Cause? Assessing the Humanitarian Outcomes of  
U.S. Foreign Aid and Intervention Since the Cold War**

Yicheng Shen

Carleton College

Advising Professor: Greg Marfleet

Fall 2021

KEYWORDS: Post-Cold War U.S. foreign policies; military and economic aid distribution; human rights norms and protection; humanitarian crisis; War on Terror; Afghanistan and Syria.

## **I. Introduction.**

In 1823, the Monroe Doctrine first openly asserted the preeminent and unilateral claim of the United States to hegemony in the Western hemisphere (Gilderhus, 2006). Eight decades later, Theodore Roosevelt ambitiously claimed that the U.S. had a “moral mandate” to enforce proper behaviors among nations (Lipset, 1996). The world has thus seen an increasingly active U.S. participation in the international society in a variety of ways: some were confrontational and hostile in nature, with others being more indirect and milder in their methods (Aidt & Albornoz, 2011). Ushered by President Bush’s New World Order narrative in 1990, the scope of foreign policy has expanded much more broadly for the United States as a prosperous global superpower. This unique post-Cold War hegemonic position has facilitated frequent military and economic actions to build, promote and secure peaceful and democratic governments overseas. Humanitarian motives, in particular, have replaced the threat of communism expansion since the 1990s to become the primary reason for U.S. foreign interventions (Choi & James, 2016; Dixon, 2019). However, the efficacy of the U.S. efforts have long been questioned and debated among professional scholars as well as the general public domestically and internationally (Humpage, 1999; Dell & Querubin, 2018).

This study utilizes both explicit statistical models and qualitative case studies to explore the research question: Do U.S. foreign aid and humanitarian intervention bring positive impacts to the human rights of the recipient or host states? To approach this question, I propose multiple linear regression models that suggest the extent of intervention exerts significant impacts on how much a target state’s human rights conditions could either improve or decline in the years following the operations. Case-based explorations, in the context of Afghanistan and Syria, provide additional evidence of control variables from institutional, socioeconomic, and international relation perspectives. My resulting refined models demonstrate the relationship between the scales of

current U.S. foreign assistance and the states' future human rights: specifically, more economic aid and less military aid are the major factors associated with good human rights conditions of the recipient states, with negative abuse of military resources more likely to overshadow any progress of human rights from Western guided economic reforms. The findings of this study offer rich theoretical implications to policy makers in terms of how to avoid potential pitfalls of wasting critical resources and to maximize the positive influences of foreign aid and intervention on human rights. The paper ends by proposing future research directions and outlining constructive ways to create a favorable condition for humanitarian missions to make a difference in the long run.

## **II. Human rights Norms, Aid Giving, and Interventions.**

As Cold War ideological rivalry diminished as a legitimating doctrine for intervention (Morales, 1994), the complexity and diversity of the goals of U.S. foreign aid and intervention expanded widely. Choi and James (2016) identify human rights, democracy promotion, and counter-terrorism as the most prominent issues in the contemporary U.S. foreign and security policy. Their study subsequently illustrates that the United States is more likely to engage in military campaigns for broader humanitarian reasons rather than for its own national security interests. The humanitarian motive, in specific, refers to a set of reasons for intervention aimed at stopping or reversing a humanitarian crisis such as massacres and abuses of civilians, forced displacement of populations, large-scale sexual violence, or other significant violations of human rights (Walzer, 2008; Sharp & Blanchard, 2016). Since the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights by the United Nations (UN) General Assembly in 1948 and the establishment of International Year for Human Rights in 1968 (McCaffrey, 1992; Lillich, 1969), much attention has

been given in the U.S. foreign policies to the violation of human rights and concrete measures to address this urgent and serious problem worldwide.

The international human rights norms are closely related to the U.S. government's foreign aid programs. Scholars have long recognized that aid could serve as a strategic instrument of statecraft and foreign policy interactions, used to promote various donor countries' foreign policy interests (Dietrich & Murdie, 2017), for example facilitating economic cooperation and democratic political reforms (Hook, 2008; Bearce & Tirone, 2010). Existing research in the field has conducted multivariate quantitative and qualitative studies to examine the linkages between states' past human rights practices and the amounts of bilateral assistance they obtained from the United States (Poe, 1990; Lebovic & Voeten, 2009). The majority of the previous literature on U.S. aid has attempted to figure out the power of human rights in the decision-making rationales behind the distribution of economic and military assistance. According to Cingranelli and Pasquarello's research on U.S. foreign aid to Latin American countries (1985), the importance of human rights and political freedom considerations in the bilateral aid decisions has steadily increased since the mid-1970s. Neumayer (2003) further confirmed and expanded the claim that the respect for human rights plays a significant role for most donors as the gatekeeper at the aid eligibility stage. In contrast, fewer experts have focused on discussing the actual changes in human rights after the distribution of resources, nor has any consensus regarding the issue been reached. Fortunately, an increasing volume of literature in the past decade has been dedicated to filling in the blank and analyzing the outcomes of specific aid giving programs (Regilme, 2018; Cole, 2012), with most of these contemporary research pointing to an eventual democratic decay in those recipient states that raises widespread and continuing human rights abuses by both state and nonstate actors.

Intervention through direct deployment of military forces abroad, as a seemingly more forceful foreign policy option in response to human rights crises, has been argued as necessary by liberal hawk advocates usually for its benefit of quickly limiting the spread of conflicts and minimizing suffering (Choi, 2013). Foreign policy analysts evaluating U.S. led interventions in the post-Cold War era, especially based upon humanitarian causes, have also concentrated more on the role of the host state's human rights status in triggering a potential intervention, rather than its subsequent changes after an intervention had occurred (Robert, 1993; Tasioulas, 2009). Questions regarding the legitimacy of intervening sovereign states for humanitarian reasons, in particular, have been the core of most literature on analyzing these interventions (Reisman, 1990; Walling, 2015), while the impacts brought by the interventions to the local societies in the long run have often been overlooked. Several in-depth case studies of geopolitical hotspots since 2000 have found that U.S. interventions, although often undertaken with the justified moral responsibilities and genuine aim of preserving human rights norms, in fact served to undermine efforts to build a sustainable human rights culture in those regions (Mertus, 2001; Peksen, 2012; Valentino, 2011; Murdie & Davis, 2010). Nevertheless, their findings, which are exclusive to certain temporal and geopolitical contexts, have not led to the formation of a generalizable conclusion on how the human rights conditions of post-conflict states would evolve after the U.S. intervened.

Despite more and more efforts being invested to advance the understanding of human rights as an indispensable issue among the U.S. foreign policy priorities, little evidence has been found to support the existence of a substantial correlation between aid or intervention and observable improvement of human rights afterward. Indeed, this theoretical gap has caused many academic scholars and policy makers to disagree on what type of leadership role the United States should assume in response to humanitarian crises overseas. Hence, this paper is an attempt to unravel the

effects of aid and intervention and examine the validity of three essential hypotheses from different theoretical backgrounds through robust statistical modeling techniques and detailed case studies.

### **III. Theoretical Hypotheses.**

Choi and James's assertion of America's heavy priority for human rights is based mostly on liberal international theory. Most liberals argue that the goal of a typical humanitarian intervention should be to protect the victims of human rights violations, with an underlying purpose to preserve the established international liberal norms and moral values rather than for pursuing narrow national interests (Choi, 2013). Supporters of this theoretical approach emphasize the non-destructive, cooperative and reciprocal aspects of humanitarian interventions, which are supposedly undertaken to enforce the good will of the international community (Ayoob, 2002; Tesón, 2001) as well as to encourage rogue states to develop more acceptable human rights institutions (Goldsmith, 2001). Jones and Tarp, for example, have found in their analysis that more stable flows of aid have a largely positive and moderately significant association with institutional outcomes in human rights protection (2016). The hypothesis, consistent with this liberal point of view, predicts that active usage of U.S. aid and intervention would be a justified and effective tool of foreign policy that deters rogue states with poor human rights records and creates better living conditions and social environment for the victims (Pearson Baumann & Pickering, 1994).

Some scholars, for example the dove minority among liberals, have put forth their criticism that the proactive U.S. involvements, even well intended and prepared, usually generate undesirable and sometimes chaotic political, economic, and social consequences, which in fact threaten the liberties and freedoms of the U.S. and foreign citizens (Humpage, 1997; Coyne & Hall-Blanco, 2016). Furthermore, a neorealist international relations perspective regards countries as unitary

actors with given preferences for maximizing their own utility without regard to the welfare of other actors (Neumayer, 2005). From this theoretical foundation, all interventions are defined as coercive interference in the internal affairs of another state, likely involving the use or threat of force and debilitating economic coercion, causing the more serious deterioration of human rights (Donnelly, 1984; Magesan, 2013). Large scale humanitarian interventions and aid, especially pertaining to military and strategic purposes, could contribute to the rise of state repression by enhancing the state's coercive power and encouraging more repressive behavior (Peksen, 2012). For scenarios in which aggressive Great Powers confront with each other and recipient states are uncooperative towards the U.S., realists argue that supplying aid and forcible interventions only weaken regional security and corrode the overall indigenous political structures needed for preserving righteous human rights institutions and national wellbeing (Goldsmith, 2001). The recent examples of this pattern, including Libya and Syria which are substantially worse than they were before the United States and its NATO allies began to intervene, show the consistent and devastating failures of the U.S. led international humanitarian missions in addressing their key objectives (Carpenter, 2020). According to Valentino (2011), the most problematic side effect of U.S. aiding of defenseless civilians is that it inevitably involves empowering certain local armed factions claiming to represent these victims, groups that are responsible for major and flagrant human rights abuses of their own.

In addition, realists also argue that for reelection-minded members of Congress, armed humanitarian interventions are usually high-risk and low-return compared with other domestic policies (Schultz, 2003). Intervention is a domain where there is little electoral advantage in claiming credit for policy initiatives among constituents, but there is a danger of being blamed if things go badly (Kull, Destler, & Ramsay, 1997). Thus, the desire to avoid the reputational costs for potential failures results in legislators' incentives toward frequent opposition and inaction when

genuine support for the continuation of foreign aid and intervention is most needed. Consequently, the execution of human rights missions overseas often suffers failure when the Congress initially supported the causes for which the aid is used to address but could not reach consensus of augmenting the foreign assistance budget later (Dietrich, Hyde & Winters, 2019). The hypothesis that generalizes the concepts of the realists suggests that, without sufficient motivations, strong resolve and domestic support to initiate fundamental changes and actively contribute in the long term, most of the U.S. aid and humanitarian intervention offer only minimal, if not counterproductive, improvement to the recipient or host state's human rights status.

Finally, constructivists recognize human rights as both an emerging element of international laws and, more importantly, an accepted norm in the practice of international relations (Cardenas, 2004; Barkin, 1998). One notable case is that the United States, in the immediate aftermath of the Gulf War, adopted a liberal interpretation of Security Council Resolution 688 to justify the creation of safe havens in northern Iraq. Although both Russia and China had grave misgivings about the legality and morality of the intervention, there was very little outright opposition to the use of force in international society due to the established norm of "humanitarian exception" (Bellamy, 2004). In this sense, the United States, as the leader of the Western democracies, is obliged to support and assist human rights declarations worldwide, but meanwhile it has to ally with dictatorships and transitional regimes out of strategic foreign policy interests, resulting in a mixture of successes and failures in solving human rights crises in the recent decades (Moravcsik, 2000). Constructivists in general also view the results of foreign interventions to be long and variable, meaning that there is no accurate mapping of interventions to immediate ramifications in domestic liberties or freedoms without analyzing the processes of interaction (Coyne & Hall, 2014). The exact impacts could differ when the United States is hostile, supportive or neutral toward the target government. Its theoretical



hypothesis would distinguish different incidents and factors of U.S. aid and intervention by looking at the foreign policy goals, external threats and identities of the two parties (Katzenstein, 1996), and seek to provide a diversified and fluctuant portfolio of the outcomes.

As portrayed in the above sections, the conflicting theoretical stands and the current absence of conclusive research on resolving the true effects of foreign aid and intervention on the states' human rights call for the need of an in-depth exploration into this topic. The outcomes of this research paper should provide valuable insights for policy makers and analysts who seek to estimate the human rights effects of a wide variety of institutional changes and foreign policies including economic and military aid, humanitarian intervention, structural adjustment and democratization.

#### **IV. Empirical Strategy.**

In order to systematically investigate the effects of U.S. foreign aid and intervention on the status of human rights in the recipient or host states, my research first takes a large N statistical approach to the question. The two main quantitative sources employed are the U.S. Military Aid and Recipient State Cooperation (USMARSC) data set collected by Sullivan, Tessman and Li in 2011 and the CIRI Human Rights data (Cingranelli & Richards, 2014). In addition, the Quality of Government (QOG) Institute and International Country Risk Guide (ICRG) provide state level data related to control variables in the analysis.

In 2006, Dr. Sullivan and her team took an insightful look at the impacts of U.S. military aid on the recipient state behavior toward the United States, accounting for the effects from economic aid and military interventions as control variables. Their finding points out the counterintuitive outcomes that military aid significantly reduces recipient states' cooperative foreign policy behavior towards the United States. Their publicly accessible data set consists of the annual observations of

184 unique country dyads formed by the United States and a foreign state between 1990 and 2005, a period which largely coincides with the post-Cold War era and early years of the War on Terror.

Accounting for missing values of certain dyads and unspecified recipient states in some years, there are 2586 dyad-year observations available in the panel data set, thus giving a detailed record of U.S. aid and interventions in these 15 years.

Sponsored by the National Science Foundation, Cingranelli and Richards created their CIRI Human Rights Dataset containing standards-based quantitative information on government respect for 15 internationally recognized human rights in more than 200 countries, annually from 1981 to 2011. It includes evaluations of government practices with respect to a wide range of human rights issues, such as physical integrity, civil liberties and women's suffrage.

Cingranelli and Richards documented 2,569 EMP indexes for 171 countries across a 17-year period. The unit of analysis that results from the combination of these two data sets is one dyad-year case. The basic structure of the dyad, a two-actor interaction, is often regarded as a useful simplification for multiple key questions in the field of conflict and foreign policy research (Diehl & Wright, 2016). The response variable draws from the latest version of the Empowerment Rights Index from the CIRI data set. This is an additive index constructed from the foreign movement, domestic movement, freedom of speech, freedom of assembly & association, workers' rights, electoral self-determination, and freedom of religion indicators. It ranges from 0 (no government respect for these seven rights) to 14 (full government respect for these seven rights).

The independent variables are designed to portray different aspects of U.S. foreign aid and intervention. In terms of the foreign aid, there are both amounts of U.S. economic and military aid offered to a state in a given year measured by constant 2006 U.S. dollars from the USMARSC data set. The magnitude of a direct intervention is assessed by the number of American troops stationed

in the country at the given time. Due to the highly right skewed distribution of the above variables, the subsequent multiple regression models use data after natural logarithm transformation to better reveal the potential statistical relationships between them.

Control variables are a significant component of the model to account for extra variations in the responses. The concept of the constructivists envisions a complex and entangling structure regarding the outcomes of foreign aid and intervention based on states' identities and foreign policy goals. As a result, I incorporated several country level factors that summarize the recipient state's political and socioeconomic status. The level of democracy, the most salient characteristic of a regime's identity, is measured by QOG's democratic index and included in the model as most existing studies posit and identify a linear and negative relationship between democracy and the violation of human rights (Davenport & Armstrong, 2004). To describe the country's economic power, I used the value of GDP per capita measured in constant USD in 2000 to represent the productivity of the state on an individual scale. The Composite Index of National Capability, denoted as CINC score, is a measurement of the national strength created by J. David Singer for the Correlates of War project, which is employed for being more fitted to the perception of the overall state power beyond GDP (Singer, 1980). The score is derived from an average of percentages from six components, which are the country's total population, urban population, iron and steel production, primary energy consumption, military expenditure, and military personnel (Rauch, 2017). Lastly, in order to represent the state's foreign policy orientation, I placed the relationship with the U.S, which is indicated by the existence of any formal alliance treaty recorded by USMARSC, into the model. These variables are designed to better explain the targeted government's actions on coping with its domestic human rights issues. Therefore, it is necessary to include these variables in order to build a comprehensive multivariate model.

The final dyadic data set incorporates 15 variables from USMARSC, CIRC, QOG and ICRG. An example data set for Turkey is shown in Table 1. After accounting for missing entries, there are up to 1,804 cases ranging from 1990 to 2006. Most variables are quantified into numeric variables, while *allies*, *demsrc* and *sep11* are categorical variables with 2 levels.

Country	year	EMPindex	logmilitaryaid	logeconomicaid	logtrps	CINC_score	allies	demsrc	loggdp2000	corruption	religion	external	internal	sep11
Turkey	1990	5	6.574378	3.0910425	8.385489	0.012260	1	1	11.85084	2.000000	3.000000	8.250000	5.916667	0
Turkey	1991	8	6.886123	5.8452821	8.755107	0.013555	1	1	11.86006	2.416667	3.000000	8.750000	6.166667	0
Turkey	1992	6	6.516785	1.0647107	8.481566	0.013493	1	1	11.91818	4.000000	3.750000	10.000000	7.666667	0
Turkey	1993	7	6.461624	5.5759492	8.306472	0.014117	1	0	11.99554	4.000000	3.666667	10.333333	8.166667	0
Turkey	1994	7	6.274574	0.4700036	8.313362	0.015339	1	0	11.93944	4.000000	4.000000	10.833333	7.500000	0
Turkey	1995	8	6.120956	5.3490105	8.043021	0.015432	1	0	12.00887	3.666667	4.000000	9.500000	7.250000	0
Turkey	1996	9	6.282080	3.7704594	7.980366	0.016223	1	0	12.07658	2.000000	3.583333	9.083333	7.416667	0
Turkey	1997	8	5.374352	3.3843904	7.960324	0.016808	1	0	12.14918	2.000000	3.000000	9.583333	7.000000	0
Turkey	1998	7	2.066863	2.6246686	7.831617	0.017053	1	0	12.17963	2.000000	3.000000	8.250000	4.250000	0
Turkey	1999	6	2.965273	2.0918641	7.746301	0.017169	1	0	12.13139	2.000000	3.916667	9.250000	4.250000	0
Turkey	2000	5	1.667707	1.0647107	7.604396	0.015605	1	0	12.20240	2.583333	4.000000	9.500000	7.666667	0
Turkey	2001	5	1.131402	1.7917595	7.675082	0.014609	1	0	12.12451	2.833333	4.000000	8.541667	8.375000	0

**Table 1.** Example Data set of U.S. aid and deployment in Turkey

## V. Modeling Empowerment Rights Index.

Multiple linear regression models have long been applied in quantitative Political Science and International Relations research to summarize how the mean of the outcome changes with the values defined by a linear function of explanatory variables (King, 1986; Box-Steffensmeier & Jones, 1997). Ideally, the goal of this research is to build a model that is able to estimate the changes of a state’s future human rights situations based on current levels of U.S. aid and intervention. Therefore, the regression-based statistical method is an appropriate tool for analyzing the variables of interest, which are mostly measured in numeric forms, in this study.

Since the humanitarian outcomes of distributing aid and conducting interventions are usually revealed a certain period after they are executed, it is important to take the span of time into consideration when constructing the model. In order to comprehensively analyze the motivation, execution, and long-term impacts of any U.S. actions, I joined Sullivan’s data and the EMP index of

recipient states at different time points from CIRI data set. Specifically, for a particular dyad's foreign aid or humanitarian intervention, I matched the levels of aid or intervention with the state's EMP index ranging from zero to seven years after the action. At each time point after the U.S. action, I calculated the difference of the EMP indexes between that of the current year and the year when aid or intervention happened to reflect the changes in the state's human rights conditions. For instance, one of the dyads in the data set documents 86.5 million USD economic aid to Haiti in 1990. To observe its impacts on Haiti's human rights in 1997, I will use the difference of the EMP index between 1990 and 1997 as the response variable, defined as  $\Delta EMP = EMP_T - EMP_{T-X}$ .

Therefore, a typical multiple regression model used in the study is:

$$\Delta(\text{EMP index}) = \beta_0 + \beta_1 \log(\text{militaryaid}) + \beta_2 \log(\text{economicaid}) + \beta_3 \log(\text{troops}) + \beta_4 \log(\text{GDP2000}) + \beta_5 \text{CINC-score} + \beta_6 \text{allies} + \beta_7 \text{democracy}$$

The exact response variable varies when different approaches are considered for the model. In the subsequent section, I first present four time points which are one, three, five and seven years after the aid or intervention. The changes of EMP index focus on revealing how aid and intervention affect the level of improvement or deterioration of human rights. Afterwards, my analysis looks into the lagged EMP index, rather than year-to-year difference, defined as  $EMP_{\text{Year } Y}$  where Year Y is the number of years after the operations. By modeling the EMP index in zero, three and five years following the occurrence of the actions, I expect to analyze what human rights conditions would be like after interactions with the U.S. The corresponding multiple regression model structure is:

$$\text{EMP index}_{\text{Year } X} = \beta_0 + \beta_1 \log(\text{militaryaid}) + \beta_2 \log(\text{economicaid}) + \beta_3 \log(\text{troops}) + \beta_4 \log(\text{GDP2000}) + \beta_5 \text{CINC-score} + \beta_6 \text{allies} + \beta_7 \text{democracy}$$

Notice that for consistency, the corresponding control variables in these models are always selected at the time when the analyzed U.S. aid and intervention took place since we are mostly interested in their long-term lag effects on human rights, controlling for other conditions.

## VI. Analytical Results.

Exploratory data analysis (EDA) is a commonly used procedure in previewing the breadth and complexity of models for subsequent statistical hypothesis testing (Behrens et al., 2012). In this study, it provides an overall picture of the distributions of response variables of interests as well as key explanatory variables. First of all, the average EMP index of all states that the U.S. has offered aid or intervened exhibits a deteriorating direction of recipient states' human rights conditions over time as shown in Figure 1. This preliminary trend supports the neorealist hypothesis of a likely counterproductive result of U.S. aid and humanitarian interventions.



**Figure 1.** Distributions of the Main Variables of Interests across the time span of this study. Average EMP index maintained between 8 and 9, with consistent drop since 1999. Both aid and deployment of forces rapidly increased after 9/11.

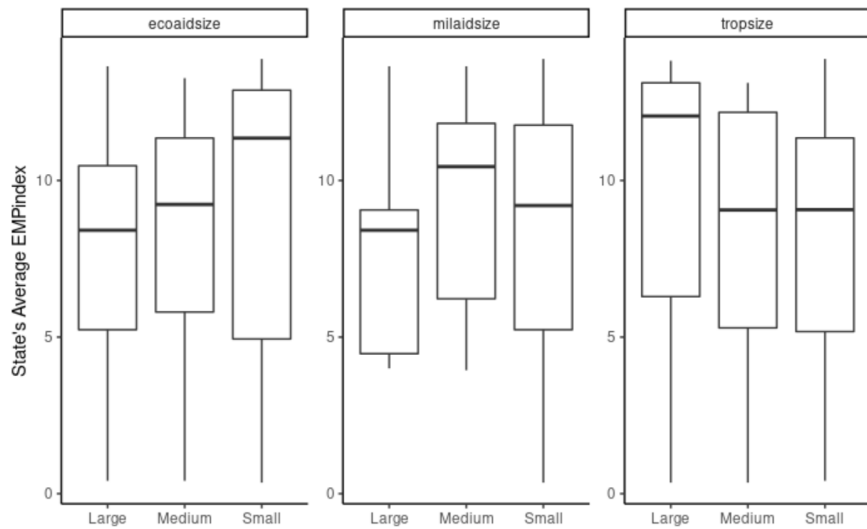
As for explanatory variables, the foreign deployment of U.S. forces for humanitarian interventions shows a sharper decline immediately after the end of the Cold War. This phenomenon, when put into a greater historical context, is consistent with the transforming power dynamics in the 1990s. For example, the major post-Cold War drawdown of U.S. troops in Europe occurred soon after the collapse of the Soviet Union, when hundreds of thousands of American soldiers were brought home from Germany and Asia (Kane, 2004). The total number of foreign deployments hit its lowest point in 1995, and remained a stable trend at this relatively inactive level until 2002, the year right after the tragic event of September 11 attacks and Bush's declaration of War on Terror. Scholars have attributed the drastically increasing presence of American troops around the globe in

numerous countries for the past two decades to a variety of reasons, including fulfilling the needs of multilateral military operations during the War on Terror, supporting humanitarian missions, and securing America's geopolitical interests in strategically important regions (Dalby, 2003). Moreover, more recently developed linear and nonlinear forecast models of troop levels agree that total deployed U.S. troops will return to a downward trend before the mid-century (Kane, 2016).

The amounts of U.S. foreign aid, on the other hand, have shown a different trendline from the end of the Cold War to the early 21st century. The pattern of the steady and sizable increase of economic aid per country that began in the mid 1990s and ultimately peaked in 2005 has been referred to as the “War on Terror's effect” on the aid budget by Fleck and Kilby (2010). Shortly after the series of terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001, President Bush’s administration sent Congress an antiterrorism bill that lifted many restrictions on aid and resources transfers to foreign governments in cases where such assistance could “help fight terrorism” (Sullivan et al., 2011). Fleck and Kilby’s empirical research on the political economy of the U.S. aid allocation agrees on the trend exhibited in my graph, and they further contributed the soaring aid levels to the substantial development funds for the reconstructions in Iraq, Afghanistan, and other important allies (notably Pakistan and Jordan) during this period. In contrast, military aid has been a more conservative and constrained area. Sullivan argues that the U.S. tends to use military assistance more as a leverage to compel recipient state’s cooperation. Despite more military operations taking place after 9/11, foreign policy analysts have found that military aid may not be effective at eliminating or disarming terrorist groups, thus raising concerns of mounting new arms transfer agreements (Bapat, 2011).

The next phase of my EDA process divides all recipient or host states in the data set by the levels of three major predictors (size of economic aid, military aid and the number of troops stationed) and computes in each category the average EMP index of states at the time when aid

giving or intervention took place. The plots in Figure 2 below show that states that were given large annual economic or military aid, which is defined as having a total amount exceeding one billion USD over 15 years, tend to have worse human rights conditions than those what were given smaller allocations of aid, while larger deployment of the U.S. troops (over 1000 personals) usually happens in states with more promising human rights conditions.



**Figure 2.** EMP index at Different Levels of Aid and Intervention. Notice that this EDA has not taken control variables into account.

With a basic understanding of the underlying patterns of variables, my study proceeds to the construction of the first set of multiple regression models. As presented in Table 2, this is a model with the difference in EMP indexes as the response and eight explanatory variables. The results of the models fitting differences in one, three, five and seven years are shown below.

According to the output of this series of models, it could be observed that none of the variables appears to be significant when predicting the change of EMP index one year after the actions. However, as we move on to three years later, the size of stationed troops becomes statistically significant to the response at the 5% threshold, and its significance shows gradual increments as the time span is adjusted to five and seven years later, while military and economic aid stays insignificant. Considering the positive coefficients of this variable, the models indicate a



long-term effect of the presence of American troops to the improvement of human rights in the local regions. A quantitative interpretation of the coefficient states that every doubling of the troop deployment size is associated with an around 0.1 increase in the positive change of the EMP index of the host state over a seven-year period.

**Table 2.** The Multiple Regression Output of EMP Change Model

	Dependent variable:			
	1 year EMPindex difference (1)	3 year EMPindex difference (2)	5 year EMPindex difference (3)	7 year EMPindex difference (4)
logmilitaryaid	0.010 (0.030)	-0.009 (0.036)	-0.042 (0.040)	-0.055 (0.044)
logeconomicaid	-0.001 (0.023)	-0.001 (0.027)	0.017 (0.030)	-0.009 (0.033)
logtrps	0.031 (0.021)	0.043* (0.026)	0.072** (0.028)	0.101*** (0.031)
loggdp2000	-0.038 (0.029)	-0.044 (0.035)	-0.051 (0.039)	-0.050 (0.042)
CINC_score	1.273 (3.232)	1.938 (4.001)	1.843 (4.418)	0.123 (4.824)
allies	-0.009 (0.097)	0.064 (0.117)	0.022 (0.129)	-0.073 (0.142)
demsrc	-0.041 (0.099)	-0.048 (0.119)	-0.018 (0.132)	-0.175 (0.144)
Constant	0.304 (0.254)	0.240 (0.305)	0.146 (0.336)	0.0004 (0.367)
Observations	1,680	1,678	1,681	1,683
R2	0.002	0.003	0.005	0.008
Adjusted R2	-0.002	-0.002	0.001	0.004

Note: \*p<0.1; \*\*p<0.05; \*\*\*p<0.01

Admittedly, the substantive significance of troops, although positive, is not as strong as its statistical significance. Nevertheless, the implication is that, since a big factor change is more easily achieved with small numbers, deployment at the early stage has a particularly strong effect on the improvement of human rights, suggesting that immediate humanitarian interventions could exert observable impacts on the crisis. As the existing size of personnel gets larger, the marginal benefit of deploying more troops into the area quickly dissipates.

After establishing a statistically significant relation between the magnitude of intervention and changes in human rights conditions, I furthered this analysis to explore the potential links

between aid and recipient states' EMP index. In the next part of the model construction, I use the present and future EMP indexes as direct responses rather than differences between them.

**Table 3.** The Multiple Regression Output of Future EMP Model

	Dependent variable:		
	EMPindex in Current Year	EMPindex 3 Years Later	EMPindex 5 Years Later
	(1)	(2)	(3)
logmilitaryaid	-0.283*** (0.061)	-0.265*** (0.061)	-0.285*** (0.060)
logeconomicaid	0.223*** (0.045)	0.194*** (0.044)	0.175*** (0.044)
logtrps	0.005 (0.042)	0.060 (0.042)	0.063 (0.041)
loggdp2000	-0.242*** (0.058)	-0.328*** (0.057)	-0.348*** (0.055)
CINC_score	-26.648*** (6.398)	-20.722*** (6.405)	-19.120*** (6.367)
allies	3.768*** (0.195)	3.794*** (0.195)	3.827*** (0.192)
demsrsc	4.551*** (0.199)	4.462*** (0.200)	4.463*** (0.199)
Constant	8.488*** (0.502)	9.200*** (0.488)	9.369*** (0.473)
Observations	1,701	1,748	1,780
R2	0.465	0.453	0.452
Adjusted R2	0.463	0.451	0.450

Note: \*p<0.1; \*\*p<0.05; \*\*\*p<0.01

Under new response variables, the multiple regression models, shown in Table 3, confirm the role of current human rights practices in the allocation of U.S. aid. The amount of aid given could also be an important determinant of how the country's human rights situation is going to turn out in three or five years afterwards. Specifically, every 100% increase in economic aid from the United States is associated with a 0.194 rise of the recipient state's EMP index in three years, after accounting for other factors. What appears to be surprising is the reverse relationship between the amount of military assistance and future EMP index. For example, when holding other variables constant, every 100% increase in military aid is associated with a 0.285 drop of the recipient state's

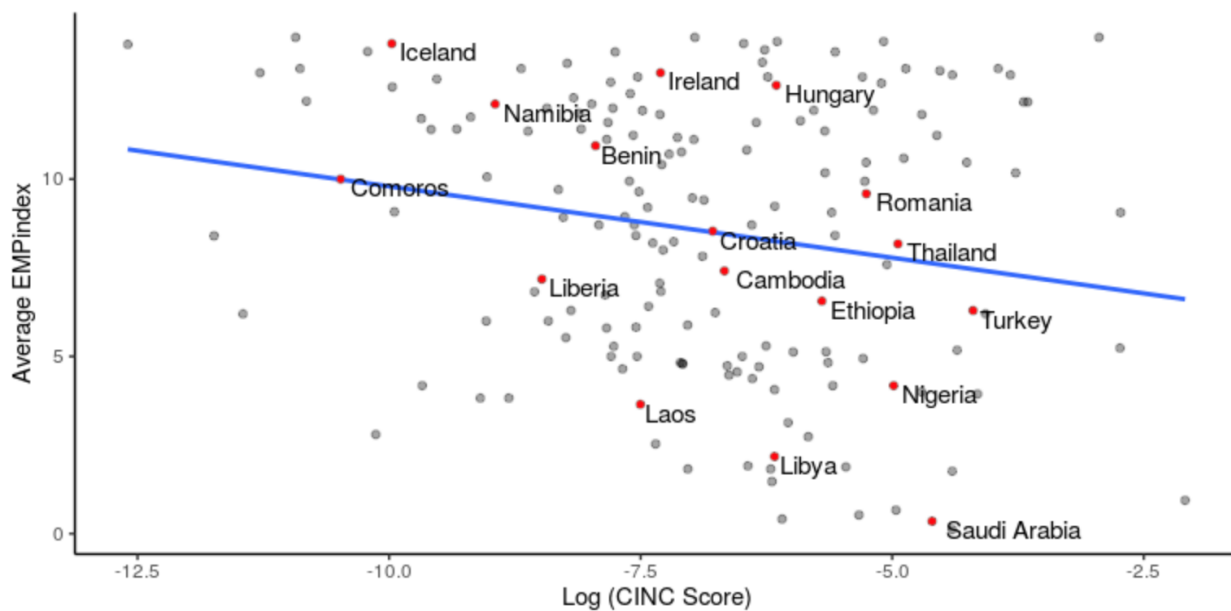
EMP index in five years, as opposed to the liberal hypothesis which predicts a beneficial effect of the continuing and more active U.S. military assistance to the recipient states.

Researchers analyzing aid allocation have given their field observations as the potential explanation for this discrepancy between types of aid. Dube and Naidu's study of U.S. military aid and political violence in Colombia (2015) yielded a similar finding: the increase of military assistance leads to differential increases in paramilitary attacks and homicides. They remark that foreign military assistance may strengthen armed non-state actors and instigate civil conflicts, undermining domestic political institutions. Economic aid, on the other hand, exhibits a more persistently positive influence on long-term national growth and could serve as a useful instrument in the promotion of international human rights standards (Cunliffe, 1989).

These claims in particular are where the decade-long controversy between the contemporary liberal hawks and doves resides, with the former justifying military humanism in the name of protecting freedom, human rights and democracy, even when it is often pursued unilaterally by a self-appointed imperialist power (Ahn, 1998; Bartholomew & Breakspear, 2004). The doves, as a product of the post-Cold War peace, focus on more constructive, economic, and mutually-beneficial negotiations to resolve international conflict and have opposed the increasingly militant role of the U.S. in the Gulf War, NATO intervention of Kosovo and full invasion of Taliban-held Afghanistan (Starr, 2007). While this research's findings also align with the positive effects of the peaceful aid approach promoted by doves and growing volumes of literature in international relations, doves remain as the minority in the development of liberal humanitarianism and internationalism.

It is worth pointing out that the regression models presented in Table 3, although bearing strong statistical significance for aid-related variables, do not provide enough evidence for a robust causal relationship between aid and EMP index. In other words, aid is not necessarily a direct cause

of a good or bad EMP index in the coming years. It is again important to be aware of how human rights initially play a role in the decision making process of aid allocation, especially at the gatekeeping stage: nations with poor and unstable human rights records often were excluded (Cingranelli & Pasquarello, 1985; Omelicheva, 2017), as clearly stated in the Foreign Assistance Act in 1974: “No security assistance may be provided to any country the government of which engages in a consistent pattern of gross violations of internationally recognized human rights.” For the approved countries with relatively better or praised human rights practices and political stabilities, it is natural for them to remain at good levels of human rights afterwards regardless of how much U.S. aid has been offered. Therefore, we should remain cautious with the quantitative evidence and carefully interpret the correlation between significant variables.

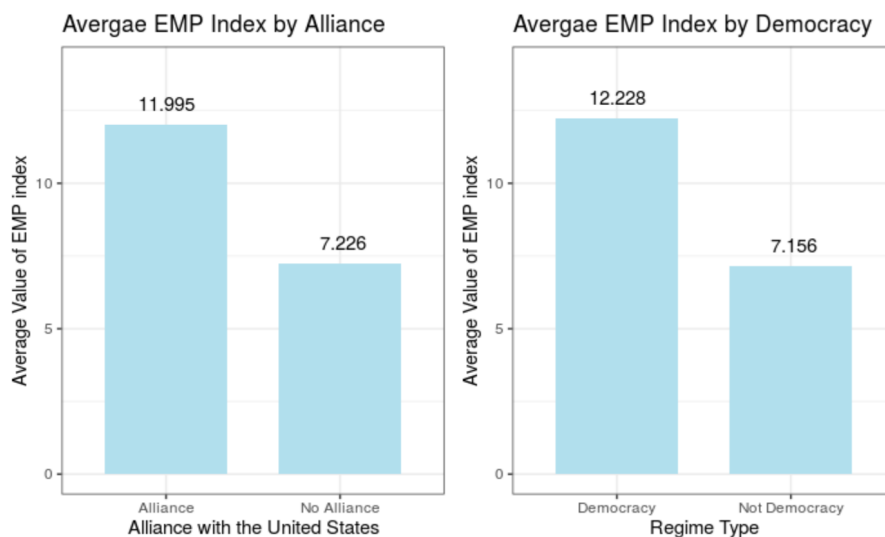


**Figure 3.** Average EMP index of Recipient States from 1991 to 2006 versus Log CINC Scores: CINC scores are indicators of a country’s overall national powers. Though a log transformed version, a higher value still means stronger strength.

Moreover, the control variables also provide us with some valuable insights as to how other factors can be associated with human rights conditions. A state’s socioeconomic powers, as measured by its annual GDP in constant 2000 USD and the CINC score after natural logarithm

transformation, show a negative correlation with the average EMP index in Figure 3. A higher level of economic prosperity and national strength, accounting for the effects of other variables, are in fact detrimental to states' future human rights conditions. Consistent with neorealist concepts outlined in previous sections (Peksen, 2012), growing powers are likely to encourage states to conduct coercive actions against human rights, contributing to the descending EMP index.

Last but not the least, more aspects of constructivist ideology are also proven to be very significant indicators of human rights in this model. The national role conception stipulates that the identity, political orientation and existing interactions with others motivate state actors to act in conformity with their respective norms (Holsti, 1970). As demonstrated in Figure 4, both alliance and democracy are positively correlated with higher EMP index, confirming the constructivist hypothesis: states that ally with the United States and agree with the established Western democratic norms have both strategic and moral interests to invest in the promotion and protection of human rights. To verify and extend the applicability of these findings, I then focus on employing qualitative methodologies to examine human rights developments of two post-conflicts states, Afghanistan and Syria, both of which are notable receivers of substantial U.S. aid and military presence.



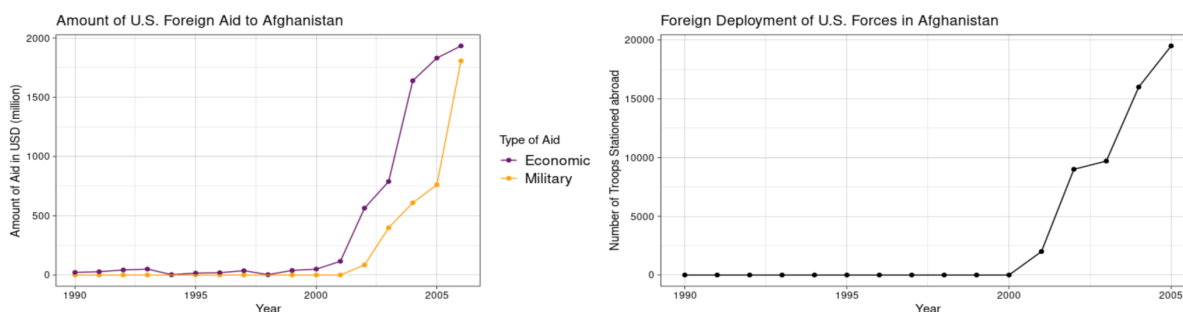
**Figure 4.** Average EMP index of Recipient States vs Foreign Policy Orientation

## VII. Qualitative Case Studies

### A. Case 1: Afghanistan (2001-2009)

As illustrated in Figure 1, the September 11 attacks marked one of the most critical watersheds in the history of U.S. foreign policy. With broad bipartisan agreement on the moral and geopolitical significance of aid and interventions overseas, the levels of aid and interventions expanded sharply in comparison with the post-Cold War decade (McBride, 2018). The case of Afghanistan, as a country which observed a steady rise of U.S. troop presence and aid, both economically and militarily, immediately after 9/11, represents the American foreign influences on post-war, developing ally states in the early 21st century.

After the toppling of the Taliban regime at the end of 2001 and the establishment of diplomatic cooperation between the UN and major local factions (Chesterman, 2002), the country experienced the decade-long rule of the internationally backed interim government of Hamid Karzai. Evoking the post-World War II Marshall Plan, the Bush administration began its ambitious endeavor in the efforts to facilitate the reconstruction of Afghanistan in 2002. The U.S. Congress appropriated over \$38 billion in economic, humanitarian and infrastructure assistance to Afghanistan over the decade after 9/11 (Hooker & Collins, 2015). Meanwhile, in response to terrorism and insurgency, the military presence, led by the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF), increased to a staggering degree. Figure 5 also shows that the Afghan government received



**Figure 5.** U.S. aid and troops deployment to Afghanistan from 1996 to 2006: Both saw dramatic rises in the years immediately after 9/11 with generally more allocation of economic aid.

rising foreign military aid in training and equipping the national army and police.

According to the empirical results of analysis in Section VI, Table 2, such rapid increase of initial U.S. military presence in the region would usually be linked to improvements of human rights in following years. Economic and military aid are associated with positive and negative subsequent human rights conditions respectively, though, as the models in Table 2 suggest, the negative effect of more military aid allocation overshadows that of economic aid. For Afghanistan, however, the influx of foreign economic aid continuously exceeded the growing amount of military aid in face of security challenges. Therefore, it is worth exploring how empirical results could apply to the complexity of post-9/11 Afghanistan.

### ***Human Rights Protection on Institutional Basis***

The Afghan governance framework during this period could generally be described in terms of pluralism, where different normative systems such as tribal customs, shari'a (Islamic law), constitutional laws and principles deriving from existing international standards of human rights coexisted (De Lauri, 2013). On January 25, 2004, as a positive step towards legitimacy and democracy, a new 162-article Constitution of Afghanistan was ratified and signed into law by Karzai. The new constitution included a variety of commitments to internationally recognized human rights and institutional mechanisms to ensure their protection (Rubin, 2004). Economic aid played an indispensable role in this process of promulgating regime stability and government laws as nearly 90% of Afghanistan's 2005 budget was externally funded, reflecting the war-torn country's institutional dependence on international donors (Ghufran, 2006).

In contrast to economic aid that mainly encouraged community-based structures and initiatives for peace, anti-poverty and national growth, the U.S. military assistance and direct counter-insurgency operations sparked more controversy in their real contributions to the UN

peacebuilding task (Suhrke, 2012). In spite of strong foreign resources and military presence, the long fragmentation of Afghanistan authority was unable to guarantee sustainable peace and security of citizens across its territory (Rubin, 2006). The increase in budgets maintaining the deployment of U.S. troops and a sizable Afghan Security Force was not only poorly supervised and plagued by bureaucratic corruption and profitable private businesses, but also proved to be instigative and ineffective against the Taliban resurgence, with mounting attacks, civilian casualties and army's attrition (Chaudhuri & Farrell, 2011; Livingston & O'Hanlon 2012). The weakness of the security apparatus had thus inflicted serious threats to maintaining functional human rights institutions and protecting basic human security of civilians in the region.

### ***Human Rights in the Clash***

With continuing economic and military support, there had been some active progress in enhancing human rights by both government ministries and non-state actors, for example the Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission (AIHRC) that played an instrumental role in building provincial reconstruction teams (Sajjad, 2009). Unfortunately, though there appeared to be strong *de jure* support for human rights by state laws, the concerns by critics were that vague and conflicting provisions in the western-style constitution along with their interpretations and executions limited the *de facto* realization of such rights (Sadat, 2004; Houlihan & Spencer, 2017). When conflicts arose from tribal and Islamic traditions, especially religious and women's rights, both economic aid and foreign troops stationed were powerless in helping local Afghans in need to properly assert and secure human rights.

With a clear commitment to respecting a wide range of civil, political, economic and social rights and prohibiting forced labor, torture, and other inhumane punishments, the Afghan constitution deliberately underestimated the necessity of religion freedom for the Hindu, Sikh and



other minorities (Sadat, 2004). While most Afghans belong to either the Sunni or Shi'a Muslims, the constitution does not guarantee non-Muslim citizens the right to dissent with Islamic beliefs or interpretations, nor does it have any explicit declaration of equality between religions, resulting in dominance of shari'a over state laws in guiding local policies and judicial decisions. Despite enormous economic and military resources invested to reinforce the rule of law and basic human rights from judicial reform, most citizens, spread across 34 provinces, have been relying on the judgements of trusted elders and religious leaders, or even the Taliban in remote regions, in forming biased and harsh community-based resolutions (Singh, 2019). The discrimination was exacerbated by religious extremists and warring factions in rural areas where economic influences and military powers projected by the U.S. were further weakened.

Given wide international attention and assistance, the condition of Afghan women in the post-Taliban era had undoubtedly been improved. The Afghan Women and Children Relief Act of 2001 was a major development emphasizing the human rights of Afghan women and girls. The efforts of a coalition of U.S. women's groups led by the Feminist Majority resulted in the allocation of \$60 million for programs for Afghan women and girls and \$5 million for AIHRC in 2003 (Samar, 2019). Within the administration, women also started to voluntarily vote, contest parliamentary elections and win seats (Ghufran, 2006), raising hopes to strengthen the property rights and reduce the marginalization of women and young girls.

However, with little success in reconciling the Islamic law with modern international women's rights standards, the reality of most Afghan women throughout the first decade after the Taliban regime was still struggling, urgently calling for more equal access to education and career opportunity, gender parity, and upward mobility (Cole, 2003; Shah, 2005). With the absence of public service and security, females were in fact largely excluded from the social benefits of

international economic aid and instead suffered from high maternal mortality rates, poor and inaccessible health care, and lack of financial independence (Alvi, 2012). The efforts for promoting justice and gender equality could even incur more tragedies, as women who helped consolidate and expand aid programs were subject to more threats, intimidations and violence by discriminatory gangs, criminals and extremists (Chishti, 2011).

### *Lessons from Afghanistan*

While the neoconservatives and liberal hawks appraised the success of the U.S. in ousting the Taliban from power in 2001 (Casla, 2018), the case of post-9/11 Afghanistan illustrates the failure of abundant international aid and decade-long military deployment to foster a market-centered, self-sufficient democracy. Although arguably there had been significant improvement of human rights for many Afghan citizens after Taliban's rule, the basic human rights of the vulnerable groups, for instance religious minorities and females, were still challenged and often violated due to deteriorating social stability, staggering socioeconomic disparity, limited enforcement of state laws and dominance of Islamic doctrines in most aspects of life.

As Bizhan points out, the War on Terror led by the U.S. focused on short-term objectives and delivering quick results, especially on winning the hearts and minds domestically and abroad (2018). Therefore, it is easy to overlook how the aid distribution and outcomes were deeply entangled in counter terrorism and peacebuilding politics. Without a peaceful, collaborative and equal environment, foreign resources and troops could not exert desirable influences on the recipient states, particularly post-conflict and multireligious nations.

This case study adds more valuable insights to the dynamics of aid, interventions and human rights by revealing that when both economic and military aid increase rapidly and substantially, negative impacts that often resulted from corruption, social and economic disparity, and

incompatibility between western ideologies and local customs could counteract any positive progress made to recognize and protect human rights. Military presence, with the lack of local cooperation and support, would also be quickly exhausted from insurgency and demonstrate diminished impacts on human rights betterment than empirical predictions.

### **B. Case 2: Syria (2010-2019)**

Although the U.S. Congress mandates that foreign aid should be used in a manner that distances the U.S. from regimes which consistently violate the human rights of their populations, evidence has shown that aid helps the survival of autocrats more than democrats (Regan, 1995; Yuichi & Montinola, 2009). As a non-aligned country whose human rights has been considered egregiously poor among many international observers (Human Rights Watch, 2016), the Syrian Arab Republic under Bashar al-Assad's regime is one of the most recent and developing examples in evaluating the impacts of U.S. aid and intervention strategies. To some extent, it resembles some similarities to Afghanistan as a protracted, internationalized conflict fought between multiple armed parties, including government and rebel militants backed by different states, and transnational actors. However, with Russia's open involvement in supporting the incumbent government and multilateral consensus on combating the Islamic State (ISIS), the case of Syria symbolizes considerable Western efforts to employ soft interventions, namely more humanitarian assistance, limited military operations, and material and political support, in order to establish a "good" brand of rebel governance in the Middle East (Carnegie et al., 2021).

In as early as 2013, the UN described Syria as "the worst humanitarian disaster since the end of the cold war" (LaFranchi, 2013). For a country of approximately 22 million people, the bloody and prolonged civil war has resulted in over 200,000 casualties, 7.6 million internally displaced persons and an additional 3.2 million refugees internationally (Berti, 2015; Price et al., 2015). As

tension and violence intensified, the Obama Administration began to expand sanctions against the regime and its supporters, while providing both non-lethal material supplies and intelligence to the Syrian opposition (Sharp & Blanchard, 2012). Today, the United States claims to be by far the largest donor of humanitarian assistance to the Syrian crisis. Since FY2012, it has allocated nearly \$5.6 billion to meet humanitarian needs using existing resources from global humanitarian accounts and some reprogrammed funding (USAID, 2016). These programs, often described as civilian stabilization or local governance, mostly took place in opposition-held areas as a major component of broader American efforts to advance its policy objectives in Syria.

Interestingly, there has always appeared to be little U.S. public support for the escalation of war or to sustain a large-scale military intervention in Syria (Dixon, 2019). Even after the controversial chemical weapons attack that killed over 1,400 people in Damascus on August 21, 2013, the U.S. had refrained from external military interference (Glanville, 2014). While the coalition forces have been launching missiles and airstrikes against both terrorist networks and Syrian government forces since 2014, the U.S. has kept only a limited number of contingency troops on the ground consisting mostly of special operation forces (Humud et al., 2016).

In summary, Syria serves as a distinct case in this project for its unique mechanism: the U.S. troops not only were scarce in number, but also garrisoned for mostly training and rescue missions. Foreign aid concentrated heavily on non-state actors, such as various rebel factions and the U.S. backed Kurdish forces. Theoretically, previous regression models predict that with the lack of democracy and dwindled military presence, economic aid alone is unlikely to enhance human rights protection in the entire region. Nevertheless, it is worth examining whether international awareness and emphasis on the humanitarian crisis and the U.S. support of the rebel governance rather than a hostile regime could alter the outcomes of the decade-long operations.

### ***Human Rights Dilemma of Soft Intervention***

Ever since protests and armed confrontations initially erupted, many health-care workers and professionals in Syria have been deliberately targeted and became frequently victimized or exiled, leading to the rapid collapse of the country's public health system (Fouad et al., 2017). The declining economic and agricultural activities, harsh winter, and sieges around large civilian areas also caused nationwide famine and malnutrition (Taleb et al., 2015). All these conditions pointed to the immediate need to restore people's rights to life, health and personal security. On the positive side, the quick establishment of humanitarian safe zones amid the flood of refugees mitigated the crisis, where America, Europe and neighboring countries of Syria collaborated on supplying and distributing aid directly to the displaced people in the border regions (Akbarzada & Mackey, 2018). A study by Carnegie et al. (2016) demonstrates that with steady supplies, aid significantly boosted citizens' perceptions of the local governing body supported by the U.S.

Unfortunately, aid traffic in conflict zones was challenging due to the complex situation of Syria. Despite billions of assistance funding being appropriated by the U.S, the majority of resources had been limited to relatively stabilized areas and parts of remote provinces directly across the border from the refugee-hosting countries (Grisgraber & Reynolds, 2015). According to the U.S. congressional report in 2016, an estimated 5.5 million Syrian people in besieged and hard-to-reach areas were blocked from lifesaving aid delivery due to regional violence and insecurity, government and opposition interference, the closure of key border points, bureaucratic procedures, and resource shortfalls (Humud et al., 2016). Besides official efforts, independent humanitarian organizations were also difficult to operate, even in the country's most populated city of Aleppo, which was repeatedly overrun by militants. As a result, the basic health and safety of millions of Syria's homeless or forcibly displaced citizens were still in jeopardy.

In addition to the lack of access to food, shelters, and health care services, both the U.S. and the UN Human Rights Council have admitted that during the Syria conflict, systematic and forceful violations of international humanitarian law (IHL), particularly war crimes, have been widespread among all parties (Sharp & Blanchard, 2012; McCormack, 2016). Little progress were made to prevent, stop or deter the indiscriminate attacks, mass executions, sexual violence, torture, and detention of civilians (Nebehay, 2018). The usage of incendiary, toxic and chemical weapons that are widely prohibited or condemned by IHL, as well as brutal and lasting siege warfare, further exacerbated the deterioration of human rights of the civilian population (Van, 2016). These increasing reports of crimes against humanity not only delegitimized all warring factions involved, but also cast doubt on the capability of U.S. military presence and assistance.

### ***Humanitarian Response amid Strategic games***

Since 2015, the insecure and impoverished living conditions of most Syrians and the involvement of foreign and regional powers, including Russia, Turkey, Iran, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, triggered new debate over whether soft intervention could effectively protect human rights and American interests in Syria (Khoury, 2018). With the preceding failures in achieving desirable human rights improvements in Kosovo, Afghanistan, Iraq and Libya, there was a high risk that active or aggressive attempts would drag the U.S. into a more extensive and futile involvement later (Borghard, 2013). Cautionary aid programs, on the other hand, were unable to tip the scales to the rebel governance's advantage against government forces. In the later stage of the conflict, neither authorizing the CIA to train moderate rebels nor increasing food and medical aid provided promising solutions to the worsening humanitarian crisis (Hamid, 2015).

As situations evolved, the main opposing alliances forming from substantial Western and Russian commitments added new complexities and difficulties to humanitarian missions in Syria

(Heydemann, 2020). Rebel belligerents, for instance the loosely structured Northern Alliances cooperating with the U.S, were highly factionalized and divided across multiple fronts and fighting groups (Hashemi & Sahrapeyma, 2018). The prospect of military aid and intervention could lead the competing rebels to escalate violence and provoke atrocity, threatening the safety of civilian population and wearing out efforts against transnational terrorism (Ekşi, 2017).

The Great Power politics in Syria negatively affected human rights relief in more aspects. While the U.S. strategies had to be more restricted due to concerns of infringing on Syria's sovereignty and fueling diplomatic tensions, independent human rights NGOs also saw more obstacles and potential risks without sufficient institutional assistance (Elkahlout & Elgibali, 2020). The access, support and feedback for humanitarian NGOs were tampered with by long approval processes (Hemsle, 2019). Reduced aid delivery due to donors' disappointment with current political transition, main supply routes being cut off by conflicts, and deadly attacks on the medical facilities and personnel were common in government-controlled and opposition-held areas (Zarocostas, 2016). According to the World Bank, the delayed reconstruction and resource shortage caused all prices and unemployment to increase strikingly near warzones while poverty rates more than doubled, reflecting the deepened mismatch between the U.S. aid and millions of fragile Syrians in desperate need of humanitarian assistance.

### ***Lessons from Syria***

The U.S. strategies taken in the first few years of the Syrian war aimed to enable better local governance and regional allies to take root in the transitional period immediately after the envisioned departure of President Bashar al-Assad's regime (Brown, 2018). Under this liberal objective, sporadic military engagement and generous aid distributions were capable of winning early appreciation for the U.S. backed opposition forces and helped facilitate local stability in

certain parts of the country. The deep struggle and antagonistic relations between the Sunni majority and the Alawite minority (Tan & Perudin, 2019), however, were not actively dealt with and continued to instigate serious human rights abuses by state and non-state perpetrators.

When the initial goal essentially turned out to be impracticable after Russian intervention, the aid programs, along with arming and training of rebel fighters, gradually started to serve realist geopolitical interests more than humanitarian purposes. Consequently, throughout the decade since fighting broke out, though the world witnessed the triumph over ISIS in battlefields, the fundamental human rights crisis in Syria was not addressed by rounds of aid, leaving most of its population facing security threats, resource scarcity and poor living standards to this day.

This case study first agrees with the scholarly consensus on the ineffectiveness of U.S. strategies to politically and materially support a stable rebel governance in the long run without a feasible and cost-effective plan to ensure its survival or self-sustainability. It further indicates the limitation of the existing models that exclusively focus on the repercussions of American aid and interventions and lack the components that account for actions of other major foreign donors that may have differing foreign policy objectives in the recipient country. The conflicting strategic interests and concerns of great powers, in the context of Syria, are wasteful of critical resources to refugees, obstructive to the international coordination of humanitarian assistance, and thus devastating to any potential development of human rights protection in the region.

## **VIII. Model Refinement**

The lessons of Afghanistan and Syria provide rich content and theoretical insights into how the dynamics of aid, intervention and human rights are entangled and what other complexities of the situations could inhibit human rights protection. These findings shed new light on the regression



models built in the previous sections. Based on the insights from both case studies, I investigate the additional variables that may contribute to more variations in human rights.

As my exploratory data analysis and multiple established studies have suggested, 9/11 was a critical turning point of U.S. foreign policies that not only led to the declaration of War on Terror, but also ushered a series of evolutions in political alliances, institutional arrangements and practices, and strategic developmental implementations across the world (Howell & Lind, 2009; Miles, 2012; Shahzad et al., 2020). As Dixon (2019) argues, the liberal hawks have often used the human rights based narrative to legitimize and promote foreign aid and interventions. Therefore, adding a *sep11* variable to differentiate aid and interventions before and after 9/11.

In the case of Afghanistan, institutional fragility and religious tensions added serious impediments to any potential progress of human rights. The Syrian civil war reflects a worsening humanitarian crisis that has been intensified by both internal conflicts and external pressure after the escalation of U.S. ground actions and Russian airstrikes in 2015. In order to account for these factors, I used the International Country Risk Guide (ICRG), a data set comprised by PRS researchers and published online that covers over 140 countries in the past 40 years (2017). For each of the four variables, *internal*, *external*, *corruption* and *religion*, ICRG conducts the corresponding risk assessments by measuring a rating that ranges from 0 to 12. A higher score indicates low risks associated with this aspect. For example, a risk score of 10 for internal conflicts means a relatively stable domestic environment; a risk score of 2 for corruption means very high risks of corruption that threaten the political and financial systems.

Furthermore, in both cases, dramatic increases in economic and military aid at the same time are frequent, making it worthwhile to examine whether an interaction effect exists. Qualitative studies have shown that the negative effects seem to be more pronounced, but the previous

regression models produced higher positive coefficients for economic aids. Therefore, having an interaction term is meaningful in unraveling their interdependency.

The updated model with newly incorporated explanatory variables is shown below.

$$\text{EMP index}_{\text{year } Y} = \beta_0 + \beta_1 \log(\text{militaryaid}) + \beta_2 \log(\text{economicaid}) + \beta_3 \log(\text{troops}) + \beta_4 \text{sep11} + \beta_5 \text{allies} + \beta_6 \text{democracy} \\ + \beta_7 \text{internal\_conflict} + \beta_8 \text{external\_conflict} + \beta_9 \text{corruption} + \beta_{10} \text{religion} + \beta_{11} \log(\text{militaryaid}) \times \log(\text{economicaid})$$

### *New Perspectives on Aid, Intervention & Human Rights*

As the improved regression model illustrates, newly added variables such as external conflicts (mainly affected by foreign pressures), corruption levels, and religious tensions have strong statistical significance to the recipient country's future EMP index, while military aid and internal conflicts are less important after accounting for other variables. Both statistical and substantive significance of economic aid have major improvements when keeping more environmental factors constant, suggesting that its direct positive effects on human rights should be acknowledged. The interaction of military and economic aid is significant and negative, which aligns with the scenario of post-9/11 Afghanistan. When observing rises in both types of U.S. assistance to recipient countries, the negative impacts of the inappropriate usage of military resources would be likely to aggravate the challenges of humanitarian missions. These results cast more doubt on the rationales of liberal hawks and their aggressive interests in transforming non-democratic states and defending liberal principles in the name of human rights.

Similar claims have also been put forth by scholars criticizing the repeated ineffectiveness of aid and interventions when entangling with national security interests in the region (Bearce & Tirone, 2010; Winters, 2010; Elayah, 2016): aid and interventions fail to initiate targeted economic and social reforms for a wider population because donor governments lack the credibility to hold recipient state actors accountable due to strategic goals and unchecked and corrupt local bureaucrats were more interested in securing their positions and profits.

Meanwhile, 9/11, as a pivotal time point, signifies an interesting time dependency in this model, as its coefficients turn from positive to negative as we look into longer time spans. The positive coefficient in the current year model corroborates the gatekeeping role of human rights in the post 9/11 period, meaning that more aid distribution is associated with better current human rights conditions. After several years, however, it is predicted that aid and intervention usually cause worsening humanitarian crises, as compared with operations conducted before 9/11.

**Table 4.** The Multiple Regression Output of Refined Future EMP Model

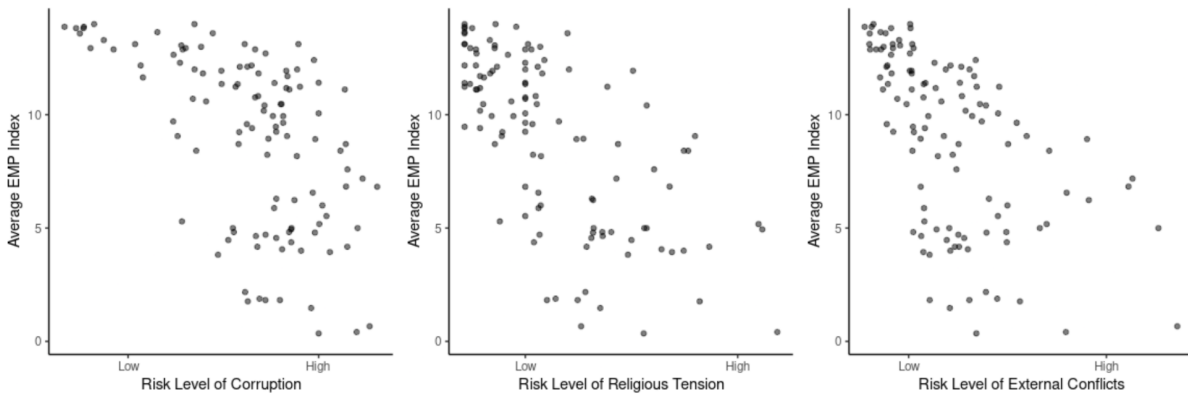
	Dependent variable:		
	EMPindex in Current Year (1)	EMPindex 3 Years Later (2)	EMPindex 5 Years Later (3)
logmilitaryaid	-0.146* (0.080)	-0.114 (0.079)	-0.112 (0.080)
logeconomicaid	0.431*** (0.044)	0.445*** (0.044)	0.424*** (0.045)
logtrps	-0.189*** (0.032)	-0.183*** (0.032)	-0.182*** (0.032)
allies	2.843*** (0.170)	2.833*** (0.169)	2.893*** (0.170)
demsrc	2.863*** (0.163)	2.681*** (0.162)	2.778*** (0.163)
internal_conflict	0.012 (0.037)	0.018 (0.037)	0.002 (0.037)
external_conflict	0.330*** (0.045)	0.216*** (0.045)	0.186*** (0.044)
corruption	0.617*** (0.065)	0.677*** (0.064)	0.638*** (0.065)
religion	0.653*** (0.060)	0.679*** (0.060)	0.668*** (0.060)
sep11	0.166 (0.150)	-0.165 (0.149)	-0.543*** (0.150)
logmilitaryaid:logeconomicaid	-0.018 (0.016)	-0.031** (0.016)	-0.036** (0.016)
Constant	-1.703*** (0.460)	-0.868* (0.457)	-0.236 (0.456)
Observations	1,776	1,794	1,804
R2	0.596	0.586	0.584
Adjusted R2	0.594	0.583	0.581

Note: \*p<0.1; \*\*p<0.05; \*\*\*p<0.01

In addition, the models offer strong theoretical proof about how the effectiveness of aid and intervention may be impacted by political and social factors. In Figure 6, the increasing risks associated with corruption, religious tensions and external conflicts, namely diplomatic pressure,

<sup>1</sup> Newly added variables are risks of internal and external conflicts (0-12), risks of corruption (0-6), risks of religious tensions and tensions (0-6), before or after Sept.11, and the interaction between military and economic aid.

economic sanctions and restrictions, territorial disputes, and cross-border conflicts, can adversely affect any positive humanitarian improvement to the local communities. Religious tensions possess the highest substantive significance, often showing a strong obstructive force against humanitarian work. Corruption risks expand quickly once the level reaches a certain threshold, causing serious threat to constant aid flows and humanitarian resources. The coefficient of external conflicts decays as time span extends, which is reasonable as current risks to international and cross border conflicts are less likely to be impactful after more than five years, whereas bureaucratic corruption and religious hostilities exert more enduring influences on the local communities.



**Figure 6.** Higher risks from corruption, religious tensions and conflicts significantly inhibit any potential progress of human rights protection.<sup>2</sup>

In summary, the influences of U.S. foreign aid and interventions on human rights vary substantially across countries. Arguably, my models establish several significant factors that explain the variations of effects: The provision of economic and military support to a functional governing body matters, especially in situations where basic supplies and safety are in jeopardy, while the regime type, alliance, external conflict, domestic corruption and religious tensions also contribute extensively to human rights conditions and could either create a favorable local environment that facilitates improvements or blocks genuine efforts to protect human rights.

<sup>2</sup> The exploratory data analysis of corruption and religious tensions seems to imply an exponential or quadratic relationship. The process of fitting multiple regression models, however, shows that the nonlinear pattern is not significant when accounting for other factors.

## **IX. Direction of Future Research.**

Several weaknesses and limitations of the current models should be acknowledged. As the “U.S. Military Aid and Recipient State Cooperation” data set records aid and intervention that took place all around the world, it should not be considered as a set of independent and identically distributed random variables; in other words, multiple occurrences in certain states or periods are not completely random events. Aid and human rights records of a single country may be better grouped together and analyzed using linear mixed-effects models to avoid model heteroscedasticity. The endogeneity of the inherently correlated data, although undermining one of the key regression model assumptions, is also mostly inevitable in the quantitative research of foreign policies as well as other major areas of comparative politics.

The use of the Empowerment Rights Index in the models implies that the analysis only takes a limited number of human rights into account, while the scope of human rights in real life is far broader. Several additional human rights such as the right to privacy, fair trial, and freedom from torture, slavery and discrimination are not well incorporated in the evaluation of EMP index. The quantified annual score also lacks the specificity of clarifying which human rights are in threat, adding risks of overgeneralizing the true levels of human rights.

Causality is another potential vulnerability of regression models. Although it is attempting to claim a causal link in which human rights conditions are dependent upon U.S. actions like aid-giving or intervention, we should be careful about interpreting the statistical outcomes, which only guarantee a close quantitative association between variables of interest. Meanwhile, the values of adjusted  $R^2$  reported by the models hint at more unexplained variation in the changes of future human rights conditions. More sophisticated models and case studies should be conducted to better reveal how states’ human rights develop under various factors.

## **X. Conclusion.**

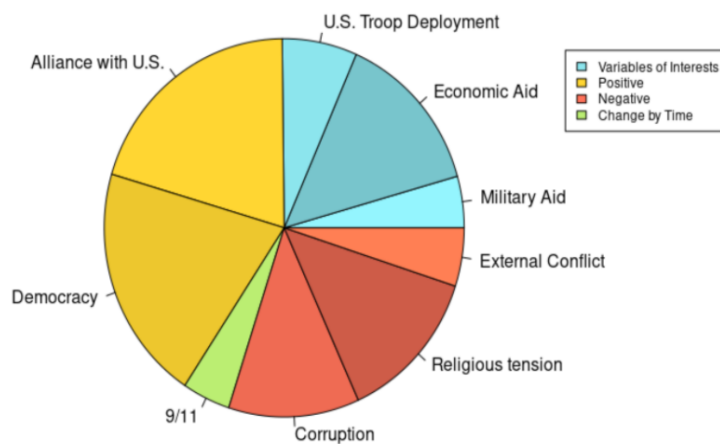
Relying on the comprehensive collection of data, reports from multiple sources and detailed human rights records, along with statistically robust analytic tools, this research sheds new light on both the short-run and long-run effects of U.S. foreign aid and humanitarian interventions on the human rights of recipient or host states, specifically in physical security, freedom of speech and assembly, workers' rights, electoral self-determination, and religious liberty. In particular, the results point to the complex nature of aid-giving and humanitarian interventions and offer support to a mixture of theoretical stands, with stronger evidence leaning towards neorealist and constructivist hypotheses. As suggested by the multivariable models, the level of U.S. involvement is the most influential factor in determining the changes in human right conditions in the long run. The initial presence of military personnel for humanitarian relief missions is justified and could bring positive impacts to the extent of improvements, though the marginal benefit of subsequent deployments quickly decays in comparison to the early stage of intervention.

The models further confirm the gatekeeping role of human rights in the decision-making of aid allocation and establish a significant relationship between amounts of current U.S. foreign aid and the states' human rights records in the following years, strengthening the notions of liberal internationalism in general. Greater amounts of reliable economic resources, material supplies and cooperation from independent humanitarian organizations are associated with more promising human rights in the recipient states. The military aid, on the contrary, is found to be negatively associated with human rights and weakens economic and social reforms through their interactions. The rationales emphasize the role of foreign military assistance in instigating domestic tensions and political conflicts between armed factions, often resulting in uncontrollable and undesirable

consequences for human rights victims, a phenomenon that is partly in juxtaposition with a realist understanding of foreign aid and intervention.

As shown in Figure 7<sup>3</sup>, a systematic examination of control variables in the multivariate models not only validates most perspectives from constructivists in explaining the complex nature

**Major Factors Affecting Human Rights of Recipient States**



**Figure 7.** Significance of explanatory and control variable to the variation of human rights.

of aid and intervention, but also points out new possible directions in future research. The socioeconomic powers of states, counterintuitively, are stronger among aid recipients with worse human rights records, which could be explained by rogue states' enhanced confidence in resorting to violent and coercive means. The national role of a state is

essential when constructing its behaviors. Certain national identities would facilitate willingness to conform to the international human rights norms as alliance with the U.S. and functioning democratic political institutions show positive correlations with better human rights conditions. The risks of recipient states in face of continuing institutional corruption, historical religious tensions, and external foreign pressure due to the power struggles of international rivals are the major barriers that restrain well-intentioned aid and intervention from realizing their full positive potential.

The complexity and variability of rational and non-rational actors' choices bring practical difficulties for arriving at a definitive and accurate description of the way in which human rights

<sup>3</sup> Among the variables of interest, economic aid and the early stage of troop development exhibit the most positive impacts, whereas military assistance and protracted interventions are linked to less desirable consequences.

conditions are shaped and affected. The ongoing debate between and sometimes within various schools of political theories will continue as Americans walk into the third decade since the end of the Cold War and 20 years after waging the War on Terror. Amid the renewed crises in national security, public health, economic globalization, natural resources, and climate changes in recent years (McAdam, 2020; Forman & Kohler, 2020; Evans et al., 2020), emerging threats to human rights around the globe are undoubtedly rising at an unprecedented pace, calling state leaders and international organizations for actionable solutions regarding the violations. As the United States is facing more imminent challenges from both great power competitions and transnational threats, aid and interventions are still by far the most important strategic approach to uphold the U.S. led international order and advocate the idea of liberal democracy and sound human rights norms worldwide. The findings observed from models and case studies in this paper illustrate how aid and intervention could be employed effectively and possess the potential to become the foundational groundwork for more in-depth studies of constructing foreign policies and supporting human rights protection in the contemporary world.

## **Acknowledgment**

I want to express my sincere gratitude to Professor Greg Marfleet for offering me important advice, guidance and revision suggestions throughout this project. I would also like to show my appreciation to Sean Leahy, Gould Library's reference & instruction librarian for Social Sciences for helping me research relevant resources and databases for my analysis.



## Reference.

- Ahn, B. (1998). When Hawks Are Doves and Doves Are Hawks: Domestic Conditions and Foreign Conflicts. *Journal of International and Area Studies*, 21-44.
- Aidt, T. S., & Albornoz, F. (2011). Political regimes and foreign intervention. *Journal of Development Economics*, 94(2), 192-201.
- Akbarzada, S., & Mackey, T. K. (2018). The Syrian public health and humanitarian crisis: a displacement in global governance?. *Global Public Health*, 13(7), 914-930.
- Alvi, H. (2012). Women in Afghanistan: a Human Rights Tragedy a Decade After September 11. *Meria Journal*, 16(3).
- Ayoob, M. (2002). Humanitarian intervention and state sovereignty. *The international journal of human rights*, 6(1), 81-102.
- Bapat, N. A. (2011). Transnational terrorism, US military aid, and the incentive to misrepresent. *Journal of Peace Research*, 48(3), 303-318.
- Barkin, J. S. (1998). The evolution of the constitution of sovereignty and the emergence of human rights norms. *Millennium*, 27(2), 229-252.
- Bartholomew, A., & Breakspear, J. (2004). Human Rights as Swords of Empire?. *Socialist Register*, 40.
- Bearce, D. H., & Tirone, D. C. (2010). Foreign aid effectiveness and the strategic goals of donor governments. *The Journal of Politics*, 72(3), 837-851.
- Behrens, J. T., DiCerbo, K. E., Yel, N., & Levy, R. (2012). Exploratory data analysis. *Handbook of Psychology, Second Edition*, 2.
- Bellamy, A. J. (2004). Motives, outcomes, intent and the legitimacy of humanitarian intervention. *Journal of Military Ethics*, 3(3), 216-232.
- Berti, B. (2015). The Syrian refugee crisis: Regional and human security implications. *Strategic Assessment*, 17(4), 41-53.
- Bizhan, N. (2018). Aid and state-building, Part II: Afghanistan and Iraq. *Third World Quarterly*, 39(5), 1014-1031.
- Borghard, E. (2013). Arms and influence in Syria: the pitfalls of greater US involvement. *Cato Institute Policy Analysis*, (734).
- Box-Steffensmeier, J. M., & Jones, B. S. (1997). Time is of the essence: Event history models in political science. *American Journal of Political Science*, 1414-1461.
- Brown, F. Z. (2018). Dilemmas of stabilization assistance: The case of Syria. *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace*.
- Bush, G. H. (1991, March). New World Order. In *speech to Congress, March* (p. 16).
- Cardenas, S. (2004). Norm collision: Explaining the effects of international human rights pressure on state behavior. *International Studies Review*, 6(2), 213-231.
- Carnegie, A., Howe, K., Lichtenheld, A., & Mukhopadhyay, D. (2021). The effects of foreign aid on rebel governance: Evidence from a large-scale US aid program in Syria. *Economics & Politics*.
- Carpenter, T. G. (2020, February 25). Failed Humanitarian Interventions and the "Good Intentions" Dodge. Retrieved January 30, 2021, from <https://www.cato.org/blog/failed-humanitarian-interventions-good-intentions-dodge>
- Casla, K. (2018). Realism: Human Rights Foe?. *Realism in Practice: An Appraisal*.
- Chaudhuri, R., & Farrell, T. (2011). Campaign disconnect: operational progress and strategic obstacles in Afghanistan, 2009–2011. *International Affairs*, 87(2), 271-296.
- Chesterman, S. (2002). Walking softly in Afghanistan: the future of UN state-building. *Survival*, 44(3), 37-45.
- Chishti, M. (2010). Gender and the development battlefield in Afghanistan: Nation builders versus nation betrayers. *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East*, 30(2), 250-261.
- Choi, S. W. (2013). What determines US humanitarian intervention?. *Conflict Management and Peace Science*, 30(2), 121-139.
- Choi, S. W., & James, P. (2016). Why does the United States intervene abroad? Democracy, human rights

- violations, and terrorism. *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 60(5), 899-926.
- Cingranelli, D. L., & Pasquarello, T. E. (1985). Human rights practices and the distribution of US foreign aid to Latin American countries. *American Journal of Political Science*, 539-563.
- Cingranelli, David L., David L. Richards, and K. Chad Clay. (2014). "The CIRI Human Rights Dataset." <http://www.humanrightsdata.com>. Version 2014.04.14.
- Cole, J. R. (2003). The Taliban, women, and the Hegelian private sphere. *Social Research: An International Quarterly*, 70(3), 771-808.
- Cole, W. M. (2012). Human rights as myth and ceremony? Reevaluating the effectiveness of human rights treaties, 1981–2007. *American Journal of Sociology*, 117(4), 1131-1171.
- Collins, J. J. & Hooker, R. D. (2015). *Lessons encountered: Learning from the long war*. Government Printing Office.
- Coyne, C. J., & Hall, A. R. (2014). Perfecting tyranny: foreign intervention as experimentation in state control. *The Independent Review*, 19(2), 165-189.
- Coyne, C. J., & Hall-Blanco, A. R. (2016). Foreign intervention, police militarization, and minorities. *Peace Review*, 28(2), 165-170.
- Cunliffe, S. A. (1989). Economic aid as an instrument for the promotion of international human rights. In *Human Rights and Foreign Policy* (pp. 115-129). Palgrave Macmillan, London.
- Dalby, S. (2003). Calling 911: geopolitics, security and America's new war. *Geopolitics*, 8(3), 61-86.
- De Lauri, A. (2013). Access to justice and human rights in Afghanistan. *Crime, law and social change*, 60(3), 261-285.
- Davenport, C., & Armstrong, D. A. (2004). Democracy and the violation of human rights: A statistical analysis from 1976 to 1996. *American Journal of Political Science*, 48(3), 538-554.
- Dell, M., & Querubin, P. (2018). Nation building through foreign intervention. *The Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 133(2), 701-764.
- Diehl, P. F., & Wright, T. M. (2016). A conditional defense of the dyadic approach. *International Studies Quarterly*, 60(2), 363-368.
- Dietrich, S., Hyde, S. D., & Winters, M. S. (2019). Overseas credit claiming and domestic support for foreign aid. *Journal of Experimental Political Science*, 6(3), 159-170.
- Dietrich, S., & Murdie, A. (2017). Human rights shaming through INGOs and foreign aid delivery. *The Review of International Organizations*, 12(1), 95-120.
- Dixon, P. (2019). Endless wars of altruism? Human rights, humanitarianism and the Syrian war. *The International Journal of Human Rights*, 23(5), 819-842.
- Donnelly, J. (1984). Human Rights, Humanitarian Intervention and American Foreign Policy: Law, Morality and Politics. *Journal of International Affairs*, 311-328.
- Dube, O., & Naidu, S. (2015). Bases, bullets, and ballots: The effect of US military aid on political conflict in Colombia. *The Journal of Politics*, 77(1), 249-267.
- Ekşi, M. (2017). The Syria Crisis As a Proxy War and the Return of the Realist Great Power Politics. *Uluslararası Kriz ve Siyaset Araştırmaları Dergisi*, 1(2), 106-129.
- Elayah, M. (2016). Lack of foreign aid effectiveness in developing countries between a hammer and an anvil. *Contemporary Arab Affairs*, 9(1), 82-99.
- Elkahlout, G., & Elgibali, K. (2020). From Theory to Practice: A Study of Remotely Managed Localised Humanitarian Action in Syria. *Journal of Peacebuilding & Development*, 15(2), 235-249.
- Evans, D. P., Queen, E. L., & Martin, L. S. (2020). Health and human rights in conflict and emergencies. *Foundations of Global Health & Human Rights*, 373.
- Fleck, R. K., & Kilby, C. (2010). Changing aid regimes? US foreign aid from the Cold War to the War on Terror. *Journal of Development Economics*, 91(2), 185-197.
- Forman, L., & Kohler, J. C. (2020). Global health and human rights in the time of COVID-19: Response, restrictions, and legitimacy. *Journal of Human Rights*, 19(5), 547-556.
- Ghufran, N. (2006). Afghanistan in 2005: the challenges of reconstruction. *Asian Survey*, 46(1), 85-94.
- Gilderhus, M. T. (2006). The Monroe doctrine: meanings and implications. *Presidential Studies Quarterly*, 36(1), 5-16.

- Glanville, L. (2014). Syria teaches us little about questions of military intervention. *Into the Eleventh Hour*, 45.
- Goldsmith, A. A. (2001). Foreign aid and statehood in Africa. *International organization*, 123-148.
- Grisgraber, D., & Reynolds, S. (2015). Aid Inside Syria: A Step In The Right Direction? *ReliefWeb*.
- Hamid, S. (2015). What is Policy Research For? Reflections on the United States' Failures in Syria. *Middle East Law and Governance*, 7(3), 373-386.
- Hashemi, S. A., & Sahrpeyma, M. (2018). Proxy war and US's smart-power strategy (the case of Syria, 2011-2016). *The Quarterly Journal of Political Studies of Islamic World*, 6(24), 83-101.
- Hemsley, M., & Achilles, K. (2019). Aid in Limbo: Why Syrians deserve support to rebuild their lives.
- Heydemann, S. (2020). The Syrian Conflict: Proxy War, Pyrrhic Victory, and Power-Sharing Agreements. *Studies in Ethnicity and Nationalism*, 20(2), 153-160.
- Holsti, K. J. (1970). National role conceptions in the study of foreign policy. *International studies quarterly*, 14(3), 233-309.
- Hook, S. W. (2008). Ideas and change in US foreign aid: Inventing the millennium challenge corporation. *Foreign Policy Analysis*, 4(2), 147-167.
- Houlihan, E., & Spencer, W. (2017). *Rule of Law, Governance, and Human Rights in Afghanistan, 2002 to 2016*. United States Institute of Peace.
- Howell, J., & Lind, J. (2009). Changing donor policy and practice in civil society in the post-9/11 aid context. *Third World Quarterly*, 30(7), 1279-1296.
- Human Rights Watch. (2016). *World Report 2016: Events of 2015*. Policy Press.
- Humpage, O. F. (1997). Recent US intervention: is less more?. *Economic Review-Federal Reserve Bank of Cleveland*, 33, 2-10.
- Humpage, O. F. (1999). US intervention: assessing the probability of success. *Journal of Money, Credit, and Banking*, 731-747.
- Humud, C. E., Blanchard, C. M., & Nikitin, M. B. D. (2016). Armed conflict in Syria: Overview and US response.
- International Country Risk Guide (ICRG) (2017), "ICRG Researcher's Dataset", The PRS Group.
- Jones, S., & Tarp, F. (2016). Does foreign aid harm political institutions?. *Journal of Development Economics*, 118, 266-281.
- Kane, T. (2004). *Global US troop deployment, 1950-2003*. Washington, DC: Heritage Foundation.
- Kane, T. (2016). The decline of American engagement: Patterns in US troop deployments. *Economics working paper*, 16101.
- Katzenstein, M. F. (1996). *The culture of national security: Norms and identity in world politics*. Columbia University Press.
- Khouri, R. G. (2018). The Implications of the Syrian War for New Regional Orders in the Middle East. *Middle East and North Africa Regional Architecture*, 1-17.
- King, G. (1986). How not to lie with statistics: Avoiding common mistakes in quantitative political science. *American Journal of Political Science*, 666-687.
- Kull, S., Destler, I. M., & Ramsay, C. (1997). *The Foreign Policy Gap: How Policymakers Misread the Public. Report of a Study by The Center for International and Security Studies at the University of Maryland and its Program on International Policy Attitudes*.
- LaFranchi, H. (2013). World Refugee Day: UN calls Syria "worst humanitarian disaster" since cold war. *The Christian Science Monitor*.
- Lebovic, J. H., & Voeten, E. (2009). The cost of shame: International organizations and foreign aid in the punishing of human rights violators. *Journal of Peace Research*, 46(1), 79-97.
- Lillich, R. B. (1969). Intervention to protect human rights. *McGill LJ*, 15, 205.
- Lipset, S. M. (1996). *American exceptionalism: A double-edged sword*. WW Norton & Company.
- Livingston, I. S., & O'Hanlon, M. (2012). Afghanistan index. *The Brookings Institute*.
- Magesan, A. (2013). Human rights treaty ratification of aid receiving countries. *World Development*, 45, 175-188.
- McAdam, J. (2020). Protecting people displaced by the impacts of climate change: The UN human rights

- committee and the principle of non-refoulement. *American Journal of International Law*, 114(4), 708-725.
- McBride, J. (2018). How Does the US Spend Its Foreign Aid?. *Council on Foreign Relations*, 1.
- McCaffrey, S. C. (1992). A human right to water: Domestic and international implications. *Geo. Int'l Evtl. L. Rev.*, 5, 1.
- McCormack, T. (2016). Chemical Weapons and Other Atrocities: Contrasting Responses to the Syrian Crisis. *International Law Studies*, 92(1), 16.
- Mertus, J. (2001). The impact of intervention on local human rights culture: a Kosovo case study. *The Global Review of Ethnopolitics*, 1(2), 21-36.
- Miles, W. F. (2012). Deploying development to counter terrorism: Post-9/11 transformation of US foreign aid to Africa. *African Studies Review*, 55(3), 27-60.
- Morales, W. Q. (1994). US Intervention and the New World Order: Lessons from Cold War and post-Cold War Cases. *Third World Quarterly*, 15(1), 77-101.
- Moravcsik, A. (2000). The origins of human rights regimes: Democratic delegation in postwar Europe. *International organization*, 217-252.
- Murdie, A., & Davis, D. R. (2010). Problematic potential: The human rights consequences of peacekeeping interventions in civil wars. *Hum. Rts. Q.*, 32, 49.
- Nebehay, Stephanie (2018), "War Crimes Evidence in Syria 'Overwhelming', Not All Can Be Pursued: U.N.," in *Reuters*, 26 March, <https://reut.rs/2ITysbl>.
- Neumayer, E. (2003). Do human rights matter in bilateral aid allocation? A quantitative analysis of 21 donor countries. *Social Science Quarterly*, 84(3), 650-666.
- Neumayer, E. (2005). Do international human rights treaties improve respect for human rights?. *Journal of conflict resolution*, 49(6), 925-953.
- Omelicheva, M., Carter, B., & Campbell, L. B. (2017). Military aid and human rights: assessing the impact of US security assistance programs. *Political Science Quarterly*, 132(1), 119-144.
- Pearson, F. S., Baumann, R. A., & Pickering, J. J. (1994). Military intervention and realpolitik. *Reconstructing Realpolitik*, 205-225.
- Peksen, D. (2012). Does foreign military intervention help human rights?. *Political Research Quarterly*, 65(3), 558-571.
- Poe, S. C. (1990). Human rights and US foreign aid: a review of quantitative studies and suggestions for future research. *Hum. Rts. Q.* 12, 499.
- Price, M., Gohdes, A., & Ball, P. (2015). Documents of war: Understanding the Syrian conflict. *Significance*, 12(2), 14-19.
- Rauch, C. (2017). Challenging the power consensus: GDP, CINC, and power transition theory. *Security Studies*, 26(4), 642-664.
- Regan, P. M. (1995). US economic aid and political repression: an empirical evaluation of US foreign policy. *Political Research Quarterly*, 48(3), 613-628.
- Regilme, S. S. F. (2018). Does US foreign aid undermine human rights? The "Thaksinification" of the war on terror discourses and the human rights crisis in Thailand, 2001 to 2006. *Human Rights Review*, 19(1), 73-95.
- Reisman, W. M. (1990). Sovereignty and human rights in contemporary international law. *The American Journal of International Law*, 84(4), 866-876.
- Roberts, A. (1993). Humanitarian war: military intervention and human rights. *International Affairs (Royal Institute of International Affairs 1944-)*, 429-449.
- Rubin, B. R. (2004). Crafting a constitution for Afghanistan. *Journal of Democracy*, 15(3), 5-19.
- Rubin, B. R. (2006). Peace Building and State-Building in Afghanistan: constructing sovereignty for whose security?. *Third World Quarterly*, 27(1), 175-185.
- Sadat, M. H. (2004). The implementation of constitutional human rights in Afghanistan. *Human Rights Brief*, 11(3), 14.
- Sajjad, T. (2009). These Spaces in Between: The Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission and Its Role in Transitional Justice. *International Journal of Transitional Justice*, 3(3), 424-444.

- Samar, S. (2019). Feminism, Peace, and Afghanistan. *Journal of International Affairs*, 72(2), 145-158.
- Schultz, K. (2003). Tying hands and washing hands: The US Congress and multilateral humanitarian intervention. *Locating the proper authorities: The interaction of domestic and international institutions*, 105-142.
- Shah, N. A. (2005). The constitution of Afghanistan and women's rights. *Feminist Legal Studies*, 13(2), 239-258.
- Shahzad, U., Sarwar, S., Farooq, M. U., & Qin, F. (2020). USAID, official development assistance and counter terrorism efforts: Pre and post 9/11 analysis for South Asia. *Socio-Economic Planning Sciences*, 69, 100716.
- Sharp, J. M., & Blanchard, C. M. (2012, August). Armed conflict in Syria: US and International response. Library of Congress Washington DC Congressional Research Service.
- Singer, J. D. (1979). Correlates of war. *New York*, 1980.
- Singh, D. (2019). The management of legal pluralism and human rights in decentralized Afghanistan. *The Journal of Legal Pluralism and Unofficial Law*, 51(3), 350-380.
- Starr, P. (2007). War and liberalism. *The New Republic*, 3, 21-23.
- Suhrke, A. (2012). Waging war and building peace in Afghanistan. *International Peacekeeping*, 19(4), 478-491.
- Sullivan, P. L., Tessman, B. F., & Li, X. (2011). US military aid and recipient state cooperation. *Foreign Policy Analysis*, 7(3), 275-294.
- Taleb, Z. B., Bahelah, R., Fouad, F. M., Coutts, A., Wilcox, M., & Maziak, W. (2015). Syria: health in a country undergoing tragic transition. *International journal of public health*, 60(1), 63-72.
- Tan, K. H., & Perudin, A. (2019). The "Geopolitical" Factor in the Syrian Civil War: A Corpus-Based Thematic Analysis. *SAGE Open*. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2158244019856729>
- Tasioulas, J. (2009). Are human rights essentially triggers for intervention?. *Philosophy Compass*, 4(6), 938-950.
- Tesón, F. R. (2001). The liberal case for humanitarian intervention. *FSU College of Law, Public Law Research Paper*, (39).
- USAID, H., & Estimates, A. I. D. S. (2016). USAID. *Washington, DC, USA*.
- Valentino, B. A. (2011). The true costs of humanitarian intervention-the hard truth about a noble notion. *Foreign Aff.*, 90, 60.
- Van Schaack, B. (2016). Mapping war crimes in Syria. *SSRN Electronic Journal*. 10.2139/ssrn.2748776.
- Walling, C. B. (2015). Human Rights Norms, State Sovereignty and Humanitarian Intervention. *Hum. Rts. Q.*, 37, 383.
- Walzer, M. (2008). *Arguing about war*. Yale University Press.
- Winters, M. S. (2010). Accountability, participation and foreign aid effectiveness. *International Studies Review*, 12(2), 218-243.
- World Bank. (2015). *The Kurdistan region of Iraq: assessing the economic and social impact of the Syrian conflict and ISIS*.
- Yuichi Kono, D., & Montinola, G. R. (2009). Does foreign aid support autocrats, democrats, or both?. *The Journal of Politics*, 71(2), 704-718.
- Zarocostas, J. (2016). Syrian crisis: aid delivery becoming increasingly difficult. *The Lancet*, 388(10044), 549.