

Politics of Humanitarian Intervention in Europe:

Britain, France, Germany, and
Intervention in Libya



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To my family...



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Özet

Bu çalışma devletlerin silahlı insani müdahaleye dair davranışlarını analiz eder. Bu amaca ulaşmak adına realizm, sosyal inşacılık ve liberalizm gibi uluslararası ilişkiler teorilerinden hipotezler formüle edilmiştir. Bu hipotezler 2011 yılında Libya'da gerçekleşen insani krizde İngiltere, Fransa ve Almanya'nın davranışlarıyla test edilmiştir. Ampirik testin sonucu, bahse konu olan üç Avrupa devletinin davranışlarındaki varyasyonu açıklamada üç bağımsız değişkenin diğerlerine nazaran daha önemli yer tuttuğunu ileri sürer. Birinci değişken stratejik kültür, ikincisi materyal çıkarlar ve son olarak üçüncüsü ise güvenlik çıkarlarıdır. Bu çalışmanın temel gayesi egemen uluslararası ilişkiler teorilerine dayalı ve test edilebilir hipotezler formüle ederek teorik bir çerçeve oluşturmaktır. Bu çerçeve, gelecekte Libya'nın ötesinde ortaya çıkabilecek müdahale olaylarının analizine ve Avrupalı devletlerin pozisyonlarına (müdahil olması veya olmamasına) ilişkin yapılacak çalışmalara bir temel oluşturabilir. Bu çalışma, aynı zamanda, literatürde bir hayli tartışmalı olan insani müdahale konusuna ilişkin tezler öne süren farklı uluslararası ilişkiler teorilerinin açıklayıcı gücü ve süregelen geçerliliğine dair bir örnek vaka çalışması sunar. Bu alan uluslararası ilişkilerde halen yeteri derecede kuramsal açıklamaların olmadığı bir alan olarak karşımıza çıkmaktadır. Fakat yakın tarihte gerçekleştirilen müdahaleler, başat teorilerin günümüz dünyasındaki geçerliliğini test etmek için geniş bir materyal havuzu sunmaktadır ki bu durum aynı zamanda Soğuk Savaş sonrası değişen uluslararası düzen dinamiklerini anlama gayreti içerisinde olan siyaset bilimciler için önemli bir görevdir.

Anahtar kelimeler: İnsani Müdahale, Libya, İngiltere, Fransa, Almanya

Abstract

This study examines state behaviour towards armed humanitarian interventions. In order to achieve this goal, it formulates hypotheses derived from three international relations theories, namely realism, constructivism and liberalism. These hypotheses are tested using the behaviours of Britain, France and Germany vis-à-vis the humanitarian crisis in Libya in 2011. Findings of the empirical test suggest that three variables are most significant for explaining variation in the behaviours of these three European states. The first variable is strategic culture, the second is material interests, and the third is security interests. The main purpose of this study is to establish a theoretical framework while formulating testable propositions on the basis of three prevailing theories of international relations. This framework can lay the groundwork for future applications to interventions beyond the Libya case and to study the interventions and non-interventions of other European states. It provides a case study of the explanatory power and continuing relevance of different theories of international relations in the highly contested area of humanitarian intervention. This remains an under-theorized area in international relations, with recent interventions presenting ample material for testing the continuing validity of major theories, an important task for political scientists aiming to understand the still-shifting dynamics of the post-Cold War international order.

Keywords: Humanitarian Intervention, Libya, Britain, France, Germany

Introduction

On March 17, 2011, the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) adopted Resolution 1973, which authorised establishment of a no-fly zone over Libyan airspace to protect the civilians facing mass atrocities at the hands of their state.¹ The resolution is adopted under Chapter VII of the UN Charter which gives the right to the coalition to use “all necessary means/measures” to stop the violation. Britain and France orchestrated the process which led to the Resolution’s adoption. Their close European ally, Germany, however, abstained from the voting and refused to take part in the military intervention. Two days after, on March 19, the first air strikes against the regime forces in Libya were conducted by French forces, who were soon followed by other members of the coalition. This study looks into the behaviour of Britain, France and Germany in responding to the Libyan crisis and tries to answer the question of what factors can help explain the British and French intervention and German non-intervention.

There is a considerable literature on the United States’ humanitarian intervention policies (Choi 2013; Gibbs 1995; Yoon 1997). However, there is little attention in the literature regarding the humanitarian intervention policies of the European states (Rathbun 2004). This study is inspired by Rathbun’s (2004) work on the politics of humanitarian intervention in Europe in which he analyses the behaviour of Britain, France and Germany vis-à-vis the Balkans crisis in the 1990s, one of the few studies of the actions of these three key European states in the realm of humanitarian intervention. In this regard, this study aims to contribute to the literature on the European politics of

¹ UNSC Resolution 1973 can be found at [http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/RES/1973\(2011\)](http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/RES/1973(2011))

humanitarian intervention by testing Rathbun's Partisanship Hypothesis with a new case, Libya. There is also a relative absence of literature on the Libyan crisis, since its outbreak in 2011. The existing studies on the Libya case are limited to one or two theoretical perspectives and the perspectives of one or two countries and do not take a comprehensive view of the theoretical issues related to humanitarian intervention. This study hopes to make a modest contribution to closing this gap in the literature in this regard, by individually considering the explanatory capacity of variables derived from three prevailing theories of humanitarian intervention.

The primary purpose of this study is to set out testable propositions/hypotheses for state behaviour towards armed humanitarian interventions derived from the three most important theories of international relations, namely realism, constructivism and liberalism. Following this, these hypotheses will be briefly tested vis-à-vis the intervention in Libya. Due to time and space limitations, and the scope of the study, the primary attention has been devoted to hypothesis formation. These hypotheses are formulated on the basis of the existing literature by taking specific aspects of each theory into account. By formulating hypotheses, this study takes steps toward producing a comprehensive theoretical framework which can be applied beyond the Libyan case and to European countries beyond Britain, France and Germany.

This paper is organised as follows. In the first section, the dependent variable –armed humanitarian interventions- will be discussed and the variation in the dependent variable will be identified. In the second section, alternative explanations for humanitarian interventions will be assessed. Discussion of each theory will be followed by testable propositions derived from that theory. The following section introduces methodology and the data for hypothesis testing, followed by the empirical test and finally, the conclusion.

What is Humanitarian Intervention?

The dependent variable of this study is armed humanitarian intervention.² As such, the question at hand is whether a country militarily intervenes in another country or not. Since the term humanitarian intervention can have many meanings and different forms, this section will, first, conceptualize humanitarian intervention and then explain how this study considers the term and uses it in the subsequent analysis.

Humanitarian intervention is a highly debated concept and practice. Its practice is contested because, for some, it runs against one of the most fundamental principles of international order, namely state sovereignty. Regan (1998, 757), for instance, defines intervention as “convention-breaking military and/or economic activities in the internal affairs of a foreign country ...”. The “convention” Regan refers to is the traditional principle of international relations (state sovereignty) established in the Westphalian State System in the 17th century. Doyle (1998, 386) furthers this notion and defines intervention as the “dictatorial use of force, overt or covert, against the territorial integrity and political independence of another independent state”. Thus, he suggests that the practice of intervention is not compatible with the “territorial integrity and political independence” principle.

However, states sign new conventions or participate in international organizations which bring rules and regulations that may restrict their jurisdictional sovereignty over their own territories. For instance, the UNSC can authorize use of force against a state to maintain international peace and security. Likewise, the Genocide Convention prohibits genocide and gives the authority of use of force to all states in order to stop such actions (Doyle 1998, 387).

The concept of humanitarian intervention is something of an oxymoron in that it combines the concept of benevolence with the use of force that is otherwise prohibited by international law except in certain situations such as self-defence (Krieg 2012, 7; Roberts 1993). For some, an intervention can never be humanitarian. Parekh (1997, 53-

² The term “humanitarian intervention” in this study implies “armed humanitarian intervention” unless something else indicated.

4), for instance, argues that states utilize humanitarian rhetoric to mask their self-interested motives. However, for others, the notion of humanitarian intervention is a relatively new, and by implication meaningful, phenomenon which has developed in the 1990s when states tried to stop human suffering in the Balkans (Damagala 2004, 7). As Finnemore (2003, 2) argues, military interventions have most commonly been launched for humanitarian ends after the end of the Cold War. As this brief survey shows, humanitarian intervention remains a contested concept among scholars with regard to the motivations of the intervening states.

Alternative definitions of humanitarian intervention are also available. For example, Finnemore (2003, 53) defines it as “deploying military force across borders for the purpose of protecting foreign nationals from man made violence”. The objective of intervention is then, to change “political authority structure” (Finnemore 2003, 9). Pickering and Kisangani (2009, 593) also stresses the motivation of intervening states to “save lives, relieve suffering, and/or distribute foodstuff to prevent starvation”. In these two definitions and in many others the term humanitarian designates the primary purpose of the intervention as stopping violations of fundamental human rights that “shocks the conscience of mankind” (Krieg 2013, 8). However, this raises another key consideration in defining humanitarian interventions, which is whether there is consent from the state subject to the intervention. Ryter (2003, 5) defines humanitarian intervention as follows;

“... coercive action by states involving the use of armed force in another state without the consent of its government, with or without the authorization from the United Nations Security Council, for the purpose of preventing or putting to a halt gross and massive violations of human rights or international humanitarian law”

Humanitarian intervention may range from “forcible military intervention to coercive non-military (e.g. economic sanctions), to non-coercive military (e.g. peacekeeping), to non-coercive non-military (e.g. humanitarian assistance)” (Binder 2015, 713). However, humanitarian intervention is commonly understood as an armed intervention aiming to save the life of “strangers” (Wheeler 2000). It is this consensus that is used for the purposes of the dependent variable of this study: armed humanitarian intervention defined as intervening states use using military force, ranging from air strikes to deployment of

ground troops, to stop human sufferings in a foreign country without the consent of the intervened state.

The next section lays out the puzzle of the Libyan case and sets out the variation in the dependent variable.

Identifying the Variation

The uprisings against the Gaddafi government started on February 15 in 2011. Table 1 below presents a chronology of important events that took place in the country. Hundreds of civilians who participated in the protests were killed by state forces within the first week of the uprisings throughout the country (BBC News 22 February 2011). The international community became active towards the crisis immediately. On February 26, the UNSC imposed military and economic sanctions on Libya and referred the perpetrators of the crimes including Colonel Gaddafi, to the International Criminal Court (ICC) with a unanimous vote, 15 to 0 in favour of the resolution.³ This was the first time in its history that the UNSC referred a case to the ICC with unanimity.

On March 7, the Gulf Cooperation Council called upon the UNSC to establish a no-fly zone over Libyan airspace (Agence France Presse 2011) which was followed by a similar decision by the Arab League 5 days later, on March 12 (Al Jazeera 2011). In the meantime, the Gaddafi forces continued to use force against the protesters and closed in on the city of Benghazi, which was at the centre of the protests. Finally, on March 17, UNSC authorized a no-fly zone and encouraged member states to “take all necessary measures ... to protect civilians and civilian populated areas under threat of attack in Libya, including Benghazi” (UNSC Resolution 1973). French forces were among the first to start the attack on the Libyan government forces on March 19th, and this was later followed by airstrikes from the other members of the coalition⁴ including Britain. Until

³ The UNSC Resolution 1970 can be found at [http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/RES/1970\(2011\)](http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/RES/1970(2011))

⁴ Countries participated in the Operation Unified Protector are Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Denmark, France, Greece, Italy, Jordan, Netherlands, Norway, Qatar, Romania, Spain, Sweden, Turkey, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom and United States (<http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/71679.htm>).

NATO took over full command of the enforcement of the no-fly zone, Britain, Canada, France and United States conducted their separate operations against the Libyan regime forces. Eventually, on 31 March, NATO took over the command of Operation Unified Protector. Gaddafi was killed by the protesters on 20th of October and Operation Unified Protector ended on 31 October 2011.

Table 1. Chronology of Events in Libya in 2011

Date	Event
15 February	Start of uprisings in Libya
22 February	Gaddafi television appearance proclaiming brutal advancement
24 February	International community becomes active
26 February	UN Security Council imposes sanctions and refers the case of Libya to the International Criminal Court (Resolution 1970)
7 March	Gulf states endorse no-fly zone
10 March	France recognizes Benghazi rebels as legitimate government of Libya
12 March	
16 March	Arab League endorses no-fly zone
17 March	Gaddafi forces close in on Benghazi UN Security Council authorises no-fly zone and to encourages member states to ‘take all necessary measures . . . to protect civilians and civilian populated areas under threat of attack in [Libya], including Benghazi’ (Resolution 1973, para 4).
19 March	
31 March	
20 October	France starts air campaign against Gaddafi forces NATO takes over command of Operation Unified Protector Death of Gaddafi

Source: Bucher et al. (2013, 530)

As stated in the preceding section, the dependent variable of this study is armed humanitarian intervention. As such, the variation of interest is the behaviour of Britain, France and Germany with regard to their decision whether to intervene in Libya in 2011 during its humanitarian crisis.

Britain was among the most willing countries to implement the UN Security Council Resolution 1973. They voted in favour of both Resolution 1970 and 1973. The UK committed about 40 aircraft, which engaged in about 300 sorties, and 10 warships of different kinds to the Libya operation (Ministry of Defence 2012). The commitment of

Britain in the operation could be observed in the strong pronouncements by the Prime Minister David Cameron. He said “my message to Colonel Gaddafi is simple: go now” (Cameron 2011).

France became the most vehement supporter of the intervention in Libya. It was the first country to recognise the Benghazi rebels as the legitimate government of Libya on 10 March. It was also the first country to conduct air strikes on 19 March. They committed more than 70 aircraft to the mission, which engaged in more than 5700 sorties, the highest rate among the NATO coalition members, alongside dozens of naval support vessels including the aircraft carrier Charles de Gaulle (French Defence Ministry 2011). French commitment to military operations against the Libyan regime was evident from the early days of the crisis. President Sarkozy, on 23rd of February, called for a no-fly zone to be enforced over Libya to prevent the use of the country’s warplanes against its population (Watt and Wintour 2011).

Germany, like Britain and France, voted affirmatively for Resolution 1970 which authorised the imposition of economic and military sanctions on Libya but, unlike her European allies, abstained from voting on Resolution 1973 which authorized establishment of a no-fly zone and use of force. German decision-makers thus supported the idea of sanctions but opposed taking part in the military campaign against the Libyan regime. The abstention caused considerable surprise among Germany’s allies (Brockmeier 2013, 63) and drew considerable criticism at home (Lindström and Zetterlund 2012, 25). However, German Chancellor Angele Merkel made her country’s position very clear a day after Resolution 1973 passed by saying that “Germany will not take part in military measures” (Peel 2011).

Table 2. British, French and German decisions vis-à-vis Libya Crisis in 2011

<i>Countries</i>	<i>Armed Humanitarian Intervention in Libya</i>
<i>Britain</i>	Intervention
<i>France</i>	Intervention
<i>Germany</i>	Non-Intervention

As can be seen in table 2 above, Britain and France chose to intervene in Libya while Germany refused to take part in the military intervention. What factors can explain the variation of British, French and German decisions in the Libyan crisis in 2011?

Alternative Explanations of Humanitarian Intervention

With the crisis in 1990s, scholarship on humanitarian intervention has produced various explanations from a range of theoretical perspectives as to why states take part in such armed humanitarian actions. Welsh (2006, 1) begins her book by stating that the issue of humanitarian intervention “has generated one of the most heated discussions in international relations over the past decade ...”. This study takes three major international relations theories, namely; realism, constructivism and liberalism, into account to explain the factors that caused the variation in the British, French and German decisions regarding the Libyan crisis in 2011. With different ontological and epistemological foundations, these theories suggest the most compelling/powerful explanations as to why states choose whether to intervene or not. Another reason of choosing these theories is that they provide contradictory explanations and indicators of state behaviour towards humanitarian interventions. Thus the selection of theories advances the rationale of this study, which is theory-testing.

The rest of this section is structured as follows. First, realism in general will be reviewed. Then, specific aspects of realist theory concerning humanitarian intervention will be discussed which will lead to the formulation of realist hypotheses which are to be tested vis-à-vis the Libyan case. Second, constructivist international relations theory will be introduced, followed by a discussion of specific aspects regarding humanitarian intervention. Then, a hypothesis on the basis of this discussion will be formulated. Lastly, liberalism in general and its explanations concerning state behaviour towards humanitarian interventions will be discussed. On the basis of this discussion, a testable hypothesis will be generated.

Realism

Statism, survival, and self-help can be presented as the core beliefs of a realist understanding of world politics (Hehir 2010, 61). These beliefs imply that states are unitary actors functioning in a self-help system with the ultimate aim of survival. Although these beliefs are the common ground of realist theories, each version of realism puts its emphasis on different aspects of world politics in explaining why states behave in the way they do. Classical realism, for instance, is grounded on a pessimistic view of human nature (Hehir 2010, 61; Krieg 2012, 43). Without an overarching authority⁵ to impose and/or maintain the order, man and women are inclined to rely on themselves in order to survive (Hehir 2010, 61). In an environment in which there is a constant threat against one's own existence, the only way to achieve the survival is to increase one's own power. Since there is no central authority among states, they are in a constant struggle for power just like individuals (Morgenthau 1973). From a classical realist perspective, this lust for power drives state behaviour.

Structural realists (or neo-realists) put greater emphasis on the anarchic structure of the international system,⁶ rather than human nature, to explain state behaviour. Kenneth Waltz (1979), one of the most prominent scholars of this tradition, argues that states try to balance each other's power rather than pursue the maximization of power. For structural realists, states pursue power not because of human nature but due to the anarchic structure of the international system (Mearsheimer 2001). Since the anarchic structure of the international system is "probably unchangeable", international politics, from a neo-realist perspective, is characterized by "continuity, regularity and repetition" (Layne 1994, 11).

Assessing state behaviour, Morgenthau claims that states act according to their national interest which is defined in terms of power (1954, 5). However, national interest is subject to redefinition by the policy makers of the country so that it can be defended and the foreign policy of the country can be articulated accordingly (Krieg 2012, 37). Acharya

⁵ The authority refers to the state or the Leviathan in Hobbesian terms.

⁶ Meaning that there is no central authority that can maintain order in international system. Anarchy, however, does not necessarily implies chaos (Layne 1994, 11).

(2003, 2), for instance argues that national interest can vary “from increasing a state’s power to a survival of a state to upholding international legitimacy”. Overall, however, a realist notion of national interest is defined as the sum of material and security interests of a nation (Gilligan 2003, 37-39; Krieg 2012, 37).

Realism and Humanitarian Intervention

What are the realist explanations as to why states participate in armed humanitarian interventions? In order to answer this question, realist perceptions of humanitarian intervention should be laid out first. Realism suggests that the primary responsibility of a state is to its own citizens. Therefore, as Bellamy argues (2003, 10) “the realist tradition opposes the norm of humanitarian intervention”. This does not mean that realists deny the fact that states participate in humanitarian interventions (Lechner 2010). Rather, it implies that the states are not willing to sacrifice their own soldiers overseas for purely humanitarian reasons (Choi 2013, 2; Mearsheimer 2001; Morgenthau 1967). Fordham (2008) and Feste (1992), for instance, argue that humanitarian interventions, from a realist perspective, are seen as simply another foreign policy tool of states used for pursuing their own national interests. Thus, they only intervene when it is in their national interest/self-interest to do so.

For this study, the question is when do states choose intervention from a realist perspective? Bull (1984) and Feste (1992), for instance, focus on the geopolitical factors which shapes the state behaviour whether to intervene or not. The inaction by the international community in Somalia during its humanitarian crisis in 1990s is explained by the lack of geopolitical interest of states in that country. Safe access to the natural resources of the conflict-ridden state, especially access to the oil resources (Beardsley and Schmidt 2013), could be a significant factor for the decision makers regarding whether to intervene or not. The threat of refugee inflow (Dowty and Loescher 1996) and related to this, the potential increase of terrorism and security threats could be other factors from a realist point of view.

What are the conditions that realists emphasize in order to explain state behaviour towards armed humanitarian interventions? This study takes two explanatory variables derived from realist theories into account, namely material and security interests.

Material Interest

The material interests of a state can be threatened by a humanitarian crisis in another country. Since the conflict-ridden country experiences destabilization due to the crisis, the supply of certain natural resources from that country could be disrupted. Realists question the selectivity of humanitarian interventions asking why, if the interventions are for purely humanitarian reasons, we see interventions in some places but not in others (Binder 2009, 331). For this reason, Chomsky (1999) argues that selective international interventionism cannot be motivated by humanitarian concerns but power interests.

Many realist scholars argue that humanitarian interventions are used to secure the supply of resources that are vital for the economy (Choi 2013, 124-26; Davidson 2011, 16; Krieg 2013, 113). Bove et al. (2015), in their large-N analysis, find that if the potential intervener has a higher demand for oil, the likelihood of intervention in that country increases. As such, this factor recommends that the material interest of a state, oil in the case of the intervention in Libya, will have a paramount effect on the decision making of whether to intervene or not.

Hypothesis 1: States will be more likely to choose intervention when they are highly dependent on the conflict-ridden state for their oil supply.

Security Interest

Security interests are of vital importance for states. A humanitarian crisis in a country might produce security threats to other countries, especially those neighboring the conflict-ridden country. A state's territorial integrity or the safety of its citizens could be threatened by a humanitarian crisis (Davidson 2013, 312). Moreover, such a crisis increases the likelihood of massive refugee inflow, of terrorism, and of weapons inflow (Biehl et al. 2013; Davidson 2013; Dowty and Loescher 1996). Refugee inflow might not

present a direct security threat to a state. However, refugee flows could also cause negative spillovers, such as a spread of terrorism, fighters, and radical ideologies to the country that they are migrating to (Pattison 2010; Weiner 1996). As such, this factor proposes that the security threats, such as refugee inflow, plays a significant role in explaining state behavior towards armed humanitarian interventions.

Hypothesis 2: States will be more likely to choose intervention if the humanitarian crisis poses considerable security threat.

Constructivism

Constructivism is a relatively new theory to international relations compared to realism and liberalism. The end of the Cold War paved the way for an intellectual space for scholars to challenge the existing theories (Finnemore and Sikkink 1998, 889-90). Like all theories in international relations, there are many versions of and approaches to constructivism. However, all approaches within the theory share the notion that constructivism is grounded against the materialistic understanding of realism and neo-liberalism. Wendt (1992, 396), as one of the prominent scholars of constructivism, argues that “a fundamental principle of constructivist social theory is that people act toward objects, including other actors, on the basis of the meanings that the objects have for them.”. The essential logic of constructivism is, thus, that the “meaning” is socially constructed. Behaviour of states is subject to the perceived meaning of the objects.

Constructivism challenges the realist understanding of national interest which is defined in terms of power. The realist understanding of national interest is closely related to the self-interest of that country. What constitutes a state’s self-interest are its material and security interests which are seen by realists as something objectively given since the ultimate aim of states is survival. National interest, from a constructivist perspective, is not something objectively given but is shaped by international norms (Finnemore 1996). Finnemore and Sikkink (1998, 891) define norms as standards of “appropriate behaviour for actors with a given identity”. International norms are produced as an outcome of the intersubjective relationship between and among the actors, and not only states, of international politics (Wendt, 1995). However, as ideas and identities may change over

time, the international norms are also subject to change. These norms and subsequently produced “rules” are followed by the states because they are seen as “natural, rightful, expected, and legitimate” (March & Olsen 2004, 2).

What shapes state behaviour if it is not material and security interest? The short answer to this question from a constructivist perspective is norms. Sovereignty, as a norm constructed with the Westphalian state system, is an example of how norms shapes state behaviour. This is changing, however. With the end of the Cold War a new norm started to emerge—the norm of humanitarian intervention. Sovereignty and intervention are seen in the literature as two norms that run against each other. The norm of humanitarian intervention in constructivist theory will be discussed in greater detail in the next section.

Constructivism and Humanitarian Intervention

What are the constructivist explanations as to why states participate in armed humanitarian interventions? In order to answer this question, constructivist perception of humanitarian intervention should be outlined first. Constructivism is a theory suggesting that the primary factor shaping the state behaviour is norms. Humanitarian intervention, for them, is a newly emerging norm in international politics especially with the grave crises all over the world that unfolded with the end of the Cold War. Wheeler (2000, 7-8) exemplifies this point by giving three examples of intervention that took place during the Cold War, namely Indian intervention in East Pakistan in 1971, Vietnam’s intervention in Pol Pot’s Cambodia in 1978-79, and Tanzanian intervention in Idi Amin’s Uganda in 1979. In each case, interventions annihilated gross human sufferings but none of the intervener states defended their intervention on humanitarian grounds. Finnemore (2003, 73) and Wheeler (2000, 8) argue that the reason why these interveners did not base their interventions on humanitarian ground is the absence of humanitarian norms regarding intervention. Yet, the interventions in the 1990s such as Northern Iraq, Somalia, Bosnia and Kosovo are backed with humanitarian claims.

Thus, constructivists argue that the rise in humanitarian intervention from 1990s onwards can only be explained by the emergence of the norm. Weiss (2004, 136) observes that the

number of UNSC resolutions regarding humanitarian issues between 1990 and 1994 is twice the number of humanitarian resolutions passed in the 45 years prior. Moreover, in the last two decades, concerning the response to humanitarian crises, there have been increases in humanitarian assistance (Macrae 2002), peacekeeping operations (Human Security Centre 2005), economic sanctions (Cortright et al. 2000; Staibano and Wallensteen 2005), and the number of military interventions and peace enforcement operations (Human Security Centre 2005; Sandholtz 2002). These empirical findings are interpreted by constructivists as states' changing responses to humanitarian crises due to changing norms of conduct.

In which case, what are the conditions that constructivists emphasize in order to explain state behaviour towards armed humanitarian interventions? This study takes two explanatory variables derived from constructivist theories into account: the norm of a responsibility to protect and the strategic culture of a state toward use of force as a tool in solving humanitarian crisis.

Responsibility to Protect

As stated in the preceding sections on constructivism, norms are fundamental factors in explaining state behaviour from a constructivist perspective. The norm of responsibility to protect is considered as the norm that governs the state behaviour towards humanitarian interventions. Responsibility to protect, defined by some as the “norm of justified intervention” (Burley and Kaysen 1994), is a norm that appears to be highly institutionalized in international law (Binder 2009, 330). States agreed to the responsibility to protect principle which includes use of coercive force to stop severe human rights crises at the UN World Summit in 2005 (ICISS 2001, 69). The principle rests on three pillars: prevention, protection, and rebuilding (Dembinski and Reinold 2011, 4). The essential point of the principle is that states are sovereign units but they also have a duty to protect against genocide, war crimes, crimes against humanity, and ethnic cleansing.

Hehir (2012, 1-2) states that since the introduction of the responsibility to protect principle, discussions on humanitarian intervention in the international community have been governed by it. Bellamy and Williams (2011, 827-29) summarize what the principle suggests regarding humanitarian intervention: the fundamental claim of responsibility to protect is that when states fail to protect their citizens, the international community should take responsibility on behalf of the affected population to stop human rights violence in that country. As such, this factor proposes that states are more likely to choose intervention when they encounter a population suffering the crimes listed above.

Hypothesis 3: States are more likely to chose intervention when they believe that responsibility to protect applies to the case.

Strategic Culture

Although there is a broad consensus on the non-military side of the responsibility to protect principle, Negrón-Gonzales and Contarino (2014) observe that the implications of the principle concerning the use of force are highly controversial. This divergence, from a constructivist perspective, can be explained by taking the different domestic norms on the use of force into account. As stated earlier, norms define the appropriate behaviours for actors with a given identity. As such, the identity of a state also shapes state behaviour. The strategic culture of a country⁷, then, is a product of the identity of that state which is shaped by its past experiences.

Prantl and Nakano (2011), for instance, study the Chinese and Japanese reactions to the norm and finds that the principle of sovereignty and non-intervention still tend to be dominant principles in these countries. Brockmeier and Junk (2014) study the behaviour of European countries towards the responsibility to protect principle and claim that there are different opinions and approaches amongst Europeans as well. Due to “diverging strategic cultures based on different historical lessons on the use of force”, Germany supports military restraint and civilian crisis prevention while Britain and France consider

⁷ Please see Meyer (2005) and Biehl et al. (2013) for detailed information on strategic cultures of European states.

use of force as an acceptable tool in responding to a humanitarian crisis (Brockmeier and Junk 2014, 429). As such, this factor proposes that states are more likely to choose intervention when their history and culture predispose them to consider use of force as an acceptable foreign policy tool in responding to a humanitarian crisis.

Hypothesis 4: States are more likely to choose intervention if their strategic culture allows them to use force to stop human rights violations abroad.

Liberalism

Liberalism has many common grounds with realism when used to try and explain the structure of an international system. They agree that the fundamental actors in international politics are states but that there are other actors, such as subnational and supranational actors, which should be taken into account as well (Keohane 1984). States are rational actors trying to maximize their powers. Many approaches within liberal theory support the idea that states are power utilizers acting on the basis of self-interest. However, they differ from realism on the issue of how this self-interest, or national interest in other words, is determined.

Moravcsik (1997, 513), the founder of the state-society approach also known as neoliberalism, argues that the “configuration of state preferences matters most in world politics”. As a theory that rests on a bottom-up view of world politics, he claims “states represent some subset of domestic society, on the basis of whose interests state officials define state preferences and act purposively in world politics” (1997, 518). The state-society approach claims that state is not an actor by itself but rather a representative institution. Although this might seem contrary to the argument of some versions of liberalism, such as Keohane’s (1984) version of neo-liberal institutionalism, the state is still considered as the fundamental actor since the state decision makers define what are the “state preferences”.

What shapes state behaviour according to liberal approaches? The main determining factor is domestic politics. This view is fundamentally opposed to the realist notion of the

state as a unitary actor. Democratic peace theory⁸ can be given as an example of how domestic factors affect state behaviour in world politics. According to this theory, democratic states do not go to war against one another due to normative and institutional constraints upon the governments deriving from their domestic regime type (Rosato 2003).

What follows is a detailed discussion on how liberal theories explain state behaviour towards armed humanitarian interventions.

Liberalism and Humanitarian Intervention

What are the liberal explanations as to why states participate in armed humanitarian interventions? Smith (1997) summarizes the positions regarding armed humanitarian interventions within liberal theories. Non-interventionist liberals argue that “people should be left alone to work out their own governance,” (72) while interventionist liberals claim that the rights of the individuals are of vital importance even more so than the sovereignty principle (74). Empirical studies that apply the democratic peace theory to humanitarian interventions found that democracies do not intervene less often than non-democracies (Kegley and Hermann 1996; Pickering 2002). Thus, it seems that democratic peace theory has little explanatory power in regard to the factors that cause a state to intervene in humanitarian crises.

Hildebrandt et al. (2013) studies the role of public opinion, partisanship and ideology vis-à-vis US humanitarian intervention decisions. Their findings suggest that public opinion plays an important role while partisanship and ideology plays a less important role than does public opinion (2013). Yoon (1997) finds different results in relation to public opinion concerning US humanitarian interventions. The empirical findings of this study suggest that the material factors are of more importance than domestic factors including public opinion (1997). Another domestic factor, namely the parliamentary war power is studied by Mello (2014). He argues that parliamentary war powers, such as veto power,

⁸ See Russett (1994) and Oneal and Russett (1999) for Democratic Peace Theory.

might prevent the executive from participating in armed humanitarian interventions (2014, 19).

Lastly, theories that focus on the role of national decision makers' ideologies in explaining state behaviour in foreign policy issues base their analysis on the role of political parties in foreign policy formation. They produce explanations for state behaviour towards humanitarian intervention by applying a model which takes the role of political parties on the left and right in the conduct of foreign policy into account (Noël & Thérien 2008). They uncover significant differences between governments on the left and right in their foreign policy behaviours. For example, political parties on the left are more predisposed to consider morality in their conduct of foreign policy (Gries 2014, 114). They oppose colonialism more than parties on the right side of the spectrum (Gibbs 1995; Noël & Thérien 2008, 101–102). Some studies have also found that the left are more prone to provide foreign aid to other countries in need (Thérien 2002; Noël & Thérien 2008).

As such, what are the conditions that liberals emphasize in order to explain state behaviour towards armed humanitarian interventions? This study takes two explanatory variables derived from liberal theories into account, namely the norm of public opinion and executive's ideology.

Public Opinion

Liberals, such as Moravcsik (1997), argue that democratic states are run by people who want to maximize their party's political fortunes. In return, political parties are accountable to their citizens. Thus, since political parties' main objective is to remain in power (De Mesquita 2002), they act in accordance with public opinion. A good example of this logic in practice is the US withdrawal from Somalia in 1993. Krieg (2013, 44) explains this as follows: "when eighteen soldiers were killed in a single day the operation had to be terminated as public opinion threatened to harm the government's political standing".

Recently there have been many works on the relationship between public opinion and foreign policy (Stimson 2015; Hildebrandt et al. 2012). However, it is hard to find a consensus in the literature on whether public opinion is a significant explanatory factor in explaining state behaviour towards armed humanitarian interventions. The behaviour of the public towards issues is also subject to change (Bucher et al. 2013, 525-26). Baum (2004) and Davis (2012), for instance, claim that since the change of international security environment with the end of the Cold War, public opinion has become particularly important in guiding humanitarian interventions when there is no clear national interest at stake. Bucher et al. (2013, 526) argue that, all in all, public opinion “matters tremendously for the decision makers when deciding whether to intervene for humanitarian reasons”. As such, the hypothesis for this factor is that states tend to be more inclined to intervention when they believe that the decision will not risk removing them from office.

Hypothesis 5: States are more likely to choose intervention if there is public support for the action.

Executive’s Ideology

There are many studies which take the role of the ideology of political parties into account in explaining the foreign policy of a state and they have found significant differences. Political parties on the left, for instance, pursue more pacific strategies in their foreign policy (Rathbun 2011, 3). As a result, they are more inclined to cooperation in international politics compared to their counterparts on the right (Nincic 2008) which can be observed in their preferences for diplomatic solutions to resolve a crisis over military ones (Gries 2014, 105). With regards to conflict initiation, Arena and Palmer (2009) find in their statistical analysis that left parties are less likely to start a conflict. Koch (2009) furthers the study of Arena and Palmer and argues that when a conflict erupts, the parties on the left are more predisposed to end the conflict. Parties on the left of the ideological spectrum are also more likely to favour multilateral actions over unilateral actions (Rathbun 2004, 20).

For this variable, the unit of analysis is political parties, whereas for other variables it is states. For this reason, this study follows the theoretical framework of Rathbun (2004) in order to formulate a testable proposition for this variable. Therefore, there should be two hypotheses for each country at hand, based on a centre-right or centre-left government. However, when the Libya intervention took place in 2011, centre-right parties were in power in all three countries. Thus, this study includes one hypothesis for each country on the basis of Rathbun's work.

Rathbun suggests that the political parties on the centre-left are more likely to support armed interventions for humanitarian purposes if their respective historical experience reveals that the force can be used for inclusive purposes (Rathbun 2004, 2-7). As such, he argues that the centre-left parties in Britain and France, due to their countries "positive" history with the use of force, supports use of force to stop humanitarian crises abroad. Centre-left parties in Germany, on the other hand, opposes the use of force for humanitarian ends due to the country's "negative" history with use of force.

German and French parties on the centre-right of the political spectrum support use of force for exclusive purposes rather than humanitarian purposes while British centre-right parties oppose outright the use of force for humanitarian ends. In the German case, the exclusive purpose is to make the usage of the German military "normal" again while for the French case, it is to realise French grandeur which implies regaining the great-power status that France once used to have.

Hypothesis 6: Centre-right governments in Britain do not support armed humanitarian interventions.

Hypothesis 7: Centre-right governments in France supports armed humanitarian interventions if there is an exclusive purpose in the government's head.

Hypothesis 8: Centre-right governments in Germany supports armed humanitarian interventions if there is an exclusive purpose in the government's head.

Methodology and Data

The empirical section of this study is designed to test hypotheses derived from existing theories on state behavior towards armed humanitarian interventions. The main purpose is to explore the power of each theory in explaining the decisions of the UK, France and Germany vis-à-vis the Libya intervention in 2011. Thus, the unit of analysis in this study is states.⁹ A method of comparative case study represents a suitable way to conduct the test.

Given the nature of this study, the method of research has a strong qualitative focus. The data collection phase involves official pronouncements by the relevant government bodies (statements by the leaders of the countries as well as the statements by the foreign and defence officials in each country), parliamentary debates, and newspaper articles. Apart from these data, scientific literature on the issue and existing statistics showing the level of import and export between the interveners and Libya, such as the level of oil trade, are also included.

In order to analyse the collected data, a process tracing technique is used in this study since it allows the investigator to explore the decision-making processes by which initial case conditions are translated into case outcomes (Van Evera 1997; King, Keohane and Verba 1994). It also allows the researcher to conduct a careful tracing of the effects of the independent variables on the dependent variable at each step of the decision-making process.

⁹ Except the “executive’s ideology” variable. This problem is solved in the preceding theory chapter.

Testing and Results

Material Interest

As can be seen in Table 3 below, France is the most dependent of the three on Libya for its oil supply. Its imports from Libya make up 10 percent of the total local consumption. Germany comes second with 6 percent and followed by Britain with 3 percent. As such, hypothesis 1 suggests that France should be the strongest supporter of the intervention in Libya among these three countries and this is what occurs (Adler-Nissen and Pouliot 2014; Elliott 2011; Davidson 2013). Therefore, hypothesis 1 cannot be rejected in explaining French behaviour.

Table 3. Import Dependence on Libyan Oil

Importers	% of Libya's Oil Exports	% of Total Local Consumption
France	14%	10%
Germany	11%	6%
Britain	4%	3%

Source: EIA and ITC Trademap cited in Stratfor (2011).

According to the trade statistics above, by the same logic applied to France, Britain would not be willing to risk the lives of her soldiers and to bear the cost of the intervention. However, the causal process for Britain is different. Britain saw an opportunity in the intervention to increase its oil supplies from the country with the establishment of a good relationship with the future government of the country (Jude 2012, 50; Stratfor 2011, 6). Therefore, since the material interest, namely the oil supply, played an important role in the British decision, the hypothesis cannot be rejected for British behaviour.

Germany, on the other hand, is between France and Britain in terms of its oil dependence on Libya. Libya was not vital to the German economy as it was to the French economy (Miskimmon 2012, 402; Stratfor 2011,15). Also, when the statements of the German leaders on the Libya crisis are analysed, it can be said that Germany did not consider Libya as an opportunity as Britain did. From this perspective, it can be argued that Germany did not intervene because she did not have the considerable material interest

in doing so. Material interest plays an important role in explaining the German behaviour as well, and therefore, cannot be rejected in explaining the German non-intervention.

Security Interest

Cameron's decision to intervene in Libya is highly affected by the security threats that Libya could cause to Britain. Refugee flow from Libya to Europe in general, and to Britain in particular, was one of the most significant security issues for Britain leading up to the intervention. According to Foreign and Commonwealth Office report on the issue on 4 March, almost 200,000 refugees fled Libya since the conflict erupted in mid February (Davidson 2013, 323). The terrorism threat as a consequence of a possible refugee flow to the continent was of primary importance for Cameron's government (Blitz 2011). Hypothesis 2 cannot be rejected for British behavior.

For Sarkozy's France, the threat was no less than it was to Britain (Davidson 2013, 316). In addition to British concerns from refugee flow towards Europe, France had her own considerable Muslim population. Algerian population alone was about 600,000 at the time (Stratfor 2011, 7). A possible refugee flow to Europe would have effected France's demographics as well. These concerns were stated by different elites in France over and over again (Davidson 2013, 316-17). The hypothesis remains powerful in explaining the outcome for France and thus, cannot be rejected for French behavior.

Germany, like France, is located on continental Europe and one of the top destinations for refugees fleeing towards Europe. However, there is no evidence that speaks to how the German decision makers evaluated the refugee flow. However, when the statements of the German elites at the time are analyzed, it can be argued that the Germany looked at the refugee issue rather differently than Britain and France did. There is no direct reference to refugees with which the government's position can be understood. Unlike the situation in Libya, German leaders, for instance, were concerned with the refugee flow during the crisis in Kosovo at the end of the 1990s. German behavior can be explained by this variable since the German elites did not consider the potential for refugees as a major threat to its security as Britain and France did.

Responsibility to Protect

All three countries supported the idea that Libyan case was a humanitarian crisis and the responsibility to protect principle applies to the case (Davidson 2013; Miskimmon 2012; Stratfor 2011). Sarkozy, Cameron and Merkel made several statements about the human rights violations taking place in Libya and called for an international response to stop the suffering. All three countries, for example, voted affirmatively on the UNSC Resolution 1970 which imposed sanctions on the Gaddafi regime. As such, according to the proposition of this variable all three countries are expected to decide to intervene. Germany, however, did not support the military action. Therefore, while this variable helps explain the British and French decisions, it fails to explain the German non-intervention.

Strategic Culture

When it comes to humanitarian interventions, the variable strategic culture has been one of the most studied issue in regard to European states. Britain and France has been considered as two countries in Europe most willing to use force to stop humanitarian crisis (Davidson 2013) while Germany has always been reluctant to send their military forces abroad (Brockmeier 2012; Miskimmon 2012). This variable provides perhaps the most clear-cut explanations for the behaviors of Britain, France and Germany vis-à-vis the Libyan crisis. It helps explain each state's decisions on whether to intervene or not. As such, it sufficiently explains the behaviors of each state.

Public Opinion

Public opinion in Britain was not in favor of the intervention. An opinion poll conducted by ComRes, for ITV News, on 22 March found that about 53 percent of the people did not want British soldiers to die fighting against Gaddafi (Hope 2011). An opinion poll conducted in France on 23 March, one day after the intervention began, showed that 66 percent of the respondents were in favor of the government's decision to intervene in Libya (Le Monde 2011). Public opinion in Germany was in favor of intervention but not

by the German military: “[a]ccording to [a]...survey...62 percent think that the military operation against the Libyan dictator is correct. At the same time, 65 percent do not want the Bundeswehr to be involved in actual attacks” (Bucher et al. 2013, 534).

As such, this variable truly helps explain the outcome for France and Germany while it fails to explain that of Britain. However, as the opinion poll for Britain shows, public opinion is divided evenly. Thus, this variable does not provide a concrete explanation for the British decision as it does for France and Germany.

Executive’s Ideology

According to the Rathbun’s (2004) partisanship theory, the Conservative party in Britain would not support the intervention in Libya because right-leaning parties do not support humanitarian interventions for inclusive purposes. However, as stated in the preceding sections, the Conservative Government supported the intervention in Libya. As such, hypothesis 6 can be rejected vis-à-vis Libyan intervention.

Centre-right political parties in France and Germany would support humanitarian interventions for exclusive purposes. Sarkozy’s right wing government supported the intervention. As Davidson (2013) indicates, prestige was an important factor in Sarkozy’s decision to intervene. As such, hypothesis 7 can not be rejected.

Centre-right political parties in Germany, like one in France, would support humanitarian interventions for exclusive purposes. Merkel’s right-wing coalition government opposed the intervention. In order not to be able to reject hypothesis 8, it would have to be shown that Germany did not have any exclusive purpose in the Libyan intervention. However, the primary exclusive purpose for Germany, as Rathbun (2004, 120-21) suggests, is to make the usage of the German military normal again. Even without delving into other exclusive purposes that Germany might have on this occasion, it can be said that Germany could have used this opportunity alongside with her traditional allies. Therefore, hypothesis 8 can be rejected.

Conclusion

This study tested variables derived from three prevailing theories of international relations as possible explanations for the behaviour of Britain, France and Germany concerning the armed intervention in Libya in 2011. The variation in the outcome—intervention or non-intervention—was tested over 6 explanatory variables derived from realist, constructivist and liberal theories of international relations. The study asked whether these theories could explain the choices of France and Britain to intervene militarily, and of Germany to refrain from military intervention. The findings of the study suggest that the three most significant variables for explaining these decisions are strategic culture, material interest, and security interest. Based on the elaboration of these variables in the literature, and on the data considered in this study, these three variables showed promise as hypotheses for why states choose to support or not to support military intervention. On the other hand, responsibility to protect and public opinion showed some promise of explanatory power when it came to the behaviour of at least 2 of the 3 states, while the variable executive's political ideology was only able to explain the French behaviour sufficiently. This finding contributes significantly to the literature as it calls into question the broader applicability of Rathbun's findings, suggesting that his model may need to be readjusted to better account for centre-right political parties or other explanatory variables.

Due to limitations of time and space, the primary focus of this study has been on hypothesis formation. There is ample further ground for empirical analysis of these hypotheses across different actors and interventions. Further research, building on the findings presented here, could conduct broader empirical testing on the basis of the hypotheses set out in this study. One area for further research, following from the formulation of the hypotheses here laid out, would be studies that account for interactions of the six variables presented. The hypotheses as presented in this study provide the ground for that research and present a major contribution to the existing literature, complicating the presumptions of several prevailing theories of humanitarian intervention, presenting the complex and contested terrain of humanitarian intervention theory, and shedding some light on the most promising theories in what has been a timely

field of research and promises to remain so. Future research stemming from these findings could hope to create a decision-making model of humanitarian intervention on the basis of the findings of this study and extant literature.



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