

## **Abstract**

This thesis examines the phenomenon of humanitarian intervention in the context of its process of legitimizing the initiation. Specifically, it focuses on the relationship of U.S. domestic politics to the legitimation of the initiation of humanitarian intervention abroad. Using three case studies of the launch of humanitarian intervention from the Middle East region, it aims to explain and answer the question of how U.S. politics influences American society's perception of the justification for the launch of humanitarian intervention abroad. The case studies analyzed are the 1958 U.S. intervention in Lebanon, the 1991 intervention in Iraq, and the unlike intervention in Syria. The Middle East cases are chosen because of the prevailing threat to civilians in the region, which has the potential to spread to other countries.

Using the three approaches of humanitarianism, *realpolitik*, and mixed motives, it then with the use of discourse analysis evaluates the arguments and approaches of U.S. policymakers in the case studies and how they influenced the justification of the humanitarian intervention in question. The thesis puts this in context with the nature of American political culture and US foreign policy towards the Middle East.

While the topic of humanitarian intervention has been explored by many authors, this thesis adds to the existing literature by its focus on the arguments and attitudes of domestic U.S. politics towards humanitarian intervention in the Middle East.