

## **Humanitarian intervention as an instrument of international peacekeeping?**

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One might interpret the long 19th century as the ‘century of humanitarian intervention’. From the international fight against the transatlantic slave trade to repeated interventions by the major European powers in internal conflicts in the Ottoman Empire in order to protect Christian minorities, a certain state practice became established in international politics – that of enforcing humanitarian standards with military force and restoring precarious balances of peace. This pattern of action by the major European powers ultimately helped the US government to legitimise its 1898 military intervention during the Cuban war of independence and the ensuing declaration of war against Spain, which ended with the US occupation of Cuba, Puerto Rico, Guam and the Philippines. The paper asks whether humanitarian interventions were able to contribute to international peacekeeping or whether they were not in fact an instrument of imperial power, under the guise of humanitarianism, throughout the long 19th century. Its aim is to consider the Janus-faced character of humanitarian intervention and to examine the consequences of this for international relations.