

Still “not worth the bones of a single Pomeranian grenadier”: What the geopolitics of the Kosovo war of 1999 revealed about U.S. hegemony, Russian insecurity and European identities.¹

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Abstract

The Kosovo war of 1999 brought the checkered history of geopolitics back to the forefront of the international relations. The war illustrated the continuities of geopolitical traditional theories and the classical problem of the final allocation of eastern Europe, to the maritime (Western) or landpower (Russian) orbit. While the legacy of pan-Slavism linking Russian to the Balkans, this cultural and political network has been uneven and is now subject to intensive debate within Russian political circles. Public opinion surveys of the NATO countries, of neutral states, and of Russians show some consistent results but question many stereotypes, especially the perception of Russian attitudes in the West. Modern geopolitics is differentiated from classical geopolitics by the insertion of public opinion into the formation of geopolitical codes and foreign-policy, in both the western countries and in Russia. In such an environment, the Balkans will remain central to the strategies of the great powers but public opinion restraints will ameliorate geopolitical confrontations.

The starting point for our geopolitical analysis is the famous comment by Otto von Bismarck, the 19th century German chancellor at the time of the Congress of Berlin (1878), who dismissed the Balkans as “not worth the bones of a single Pomeranian grenadier”. Yet, within a generation after the division of the European great powers into two alliance structures (Triple Alliance and Triple Entente), Balkan disputes had engaged the German Empire in a world war with Russia, France, the United States, and Great Britain. A century later, we have come full circle to the same dilemma that confronted the great powers of late 19th century Europe: how to resolve or confine local ethno- territorial disputes in the Balkan peninsula without significant damage to the relations of the major powers? By their military actions in Spring 1999, it is clear that the external powers in the form of NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization) achieved their aims of pushing Yugoslav military forces from the province of Kosovo without suffering any military casualties, whilst at the same time, demonstrating Western unified political and military fronts in the face of non-traditional post Cold War challenges. At a time when contemporary academic writings on the “borderless” world are filled with hyperbole about the free flow of financial, cultural and commercial goods, the war in Kosovo, and the American and British air attacks on Iraq as well as the Indian-Pakistani skirmish in 1999, served as useful reminders that traditional geopolitical alliances and interests challenge claims of globalization and geo-economic triumphalism.

Debates within NATO at the time of the 1999 Balkans war over military strategy (ground invasion, selection of targets for aerial bombing, composition of peace-keeping forces, etc.) were predicated on the larger strategic and political questions of relations between a) the American hegemon and the European states and b) between Russia and the West at the end of the “American Century”. Among the many lessons of the Kosovo war is recognition of the central role that Russia must play in any stable resolution of remaining territorial conflicts in East-central Europe. The war also highlighted a disagreement within NATO between the U.S. and Britain on the one hand and other European Union (EU) countries on the other over the geographic range and military scope of

NATO in post Cold War Europe. Any further geographic expansion of NATO to the countries of the former Soviet Union (the Baltic states stand in the front of the entry queue) and the grandiose plans of the “New Strategic Concept” for NATO that was mooted in Washington DC on the 50th anniversary of the organization in April 1999 must now be re-evaluated in light of the Kosovo war developments.

In this paper, we examine 1) the implications of the 1999 Balkan war for future relations between Russia and the west; 2) contemporary Russian geopolitical perspectives concerning NATO and American geopolitical goals; 3) support for specific NATO military and strategic actions in public opinion polls; and 4) the relationship between domestic Russian political debates and geostrategic camps. Our approach in tackling these subjects is both historical and critical-geopolitical as we revisit the region that has engaged political geographers from both the east (Russia) and the west (France, Germany, Great Britain and the United States). Though there are some obvious parallels between the reactions of the western and Russian publics and of foreign governments to fighting between Muslims and Slavs in the Balkans, we do not wish to argue that the current Balkan crisis is a replication of those of the 1870s or 1912-13. Indeed, the permanent presence of the U.S. in Europe at the end of the “American Century”, accompanying a democratic crusade has transformed the complexion of the Balkans forever.

Recent work in geopolitical analysis has shifted from advocacy of the interests of a particular state, frequently a great power, that was the norm before the 1970s to examination of the numerous Cold War developments in the economic, political, cultural and military domains that have challenged the stable world of balance of power models and territorial control assumptions. Critical geopolitical works focus on the writings of policy-makers, their advisers as well as the academics who wish to act as Mackinder’s “airy cherub” whispering advice to the prince (see O Tuathail, 1996 for an example). But as might be expected after the removal of the bi-polar Cold War division and the extension of the globalized world economy to all territories, the study of geopolitics has been dramatically affected. Newman (1999, 3-4) offers a useful identification of the key themes of contemporary

geopolitics that includes a) globalization and the changing function of state sovereignty, b) the de-territorialization of the state and the associated changing roles and functions of international boundaries, c) the study of geopolitical texts, narratives and traditions, usually from a critical geopolitical tradition; d) the geopolitical imagination, especially the “imagined territory” of states, and e) the “re-territorialization” of the state and the emergence of new ethnic, national and territorial identities, especially for minority groups. This article contributes to the themes of geopolitical imaginations and “re-territorialization” of the state. It follows the research agenda outlined in Kolossov and O’Loughlin (1997) that considers the effect of new geopolitical environment that has resulted from NATO expansion in Eastern Europe to the western borders of Russia on territorial ambitions of national groups in the classic “crush zone.” We link consideration of the public opinion in democratic states with geopolitical analysis since, at the end of the twentieth-century, popular support for a foreign policy action is the *sine qua non* of democratic and quasi-democratic regimes.

A Century of Geopolitical Rivalry: Mitteleuropa and the Balkans between Europe and Russia.

The history of geopolitics and the history of Eastern Europe are irretrievably linked. The great power rivalry in the Balkans that had begun seriously in the 1870s, with shifting alliances resting on both strategic and cultural considerations, helped to set the stage for the development of geopolitics in Britain and Germany. Sir Halford J. Mackinder attempted to influence public and governmental audiences in Britain that were familiar with ethno-national struggles, especially by Serbs and Bulgarians, in the Austro-Hungarian and Ottoman empires. After the turn of the twentieth-century, the “Cold Peace” that had existed since the 1870s between the rival alliances began to fall apart as rivalries in the Balkans intensified because of Serbian aims of uniting the south Slavs under Serbian leadership. First promulgated in 1904, Mackinder’s hearthland model was premised on the assumption that there existed no more unclaimed territory that the great powers could control;

therefore, competition would intensify for existing resources, including influence over the small states being created in the Balkans out of the ruins of the declining Ottoman empire. Mackinder's 1919 geopolitical aphorism: "Who rules eastern Europe, commands the Heartland; Who rules the Heartland, commands the World-island; Who rules the World-island, commands the World" was developed in light of the events of World War I and the German victory on the eastern front and peace terms imposed on the Bolshevik government. Mackinder was most concerned with a Russian-German landpower alliance that would unite the "Heartland" (impervious to successful attack by the oceanic powers in Mackinder's view) against the leading seapower, Great Britain.

The nineteenth-century had been a century of both revolution and of nationalism, though great power war was relatively absent. Imperial leaderships in Berlin, Vienna, St. Petersburg, and Constantinople were motivated to preserve their multi-national states and especially feared the territorial consequences of emerging national movements in the Balkans, fuelled especially by Serbian nationalism. Who would replace the Ottoman empire in the power vacuum of the Balkans? Germany feared Russia, the only other land-power capable of defeating Germany; Austria worried about a set of Russian-sponsored new nation-states (Serbia, Bulgaria, etc); and Britain worried about trade and military routes to the Middle East. The Tsar felt duty-bound to protect Orthodox Slavs from the Turks (Davies, 1996, 868-870).

The German Chancellor, Otto von Bismarck, had organized the *Dreikaiserbund* (Three Emperors' League) of Germany, Austria-Hungary, and Russia to preserve the status quo and stomp on revolution, revisiting the Metternich strategy of a half-century before. But the Balkan crisis of 1876-78 challenged this informal arrangement. The war was sparked by simultaneous revolts in the three Ottoman provinces of Bosnia, Herzegovina and Bulgaria, and British moral outrage was motivated by reports of 20,000 Bulgarians massacred and by Prime Minister Gladstone's fiery speeches. His cry, "Let the Turks carry away their abuses in the only possible manner, namely by carrying themselves off", were recently echoed by Prime Minister Tony Blair and President Bill Clinton, though the contemporary application is to Serbs in Kosovo (*Economist*, 29 May 1999, 54).

The Berlin Congress of 1878, whilst ostensibly settling the Slav-Ottoman disputes, is best known for its setting of the European stage for the subsequent great power alliances. It marked the re-emergence of Britain, now under Benjamin Disraeli's prime ministership, as an active force in European affairs after years of splendid isolation under Gladstone (Stavrianos, 1975), while Bulgaria became autonomous in the Ottoman empire, and Serbia, Montenegro, and Rumania gained complete independence and additional territory.

The *Dreikaiserbund* was fatally undermined by the first dramatic move on the chessboard of European great power strategies. The Dual Alliance between Germany and Austria (1879- later to become the Triple Alliance in 1881 with the addition of Italy) was specifically motivated by fear of Russian expansion in the Balkans. It has been estimated that Russia expanded at an average rate of 55 square miles a day between 1683 and 1914 (Thompson, 1994), though its previous feints at the Straits of the Dardenelles had been prevented by united British and Ottoman opposition. The signatures of the Triple Alliance ratified that, if any one was attacked by Russia, they promised to use their "whole war strength" against the attacked. If another power attacked any of the signatures, the others promised to remain neutral but if that power was supported by Russia, then the other Alliance members would respond. The Alliance goals foreshadowed those of NATO, though the forward basing of troops near the opponent's borders to deter invasion was a NATO extension. By signing the first permanent peacetime alliance, Bismarck initiated the system of alliances that ended with the Triple Entente (Russia, France and Great Britain) in 1907. Essentially defensive in nature, like the founding principles of NATO (1948), the alliances nevertheless had clear targets for their military responses. Davies (1996, 1312) helpfully summarizes the European "great triangle" that evolved from Bismarck's initial moves involving the "west" (US, Great Britain, and France), "center" (Germany, Austria-Hungary, and Italy) and "east" (Russia; also, the Soviet Union, 1923-91).

From the late nineteenth-century into this century, European great power alignments were in question as a resurgent Germany, after its defeat of Austria, Denmark and France, moved into the central pole of European power relations. "At the heart of the troubles lay Germany, Europe's

newest, most dynamic and most disgruntled nation-state. The fault-line of the earthquake zone ran along Germany's eastern border. ...Hence from the start, the major duel over Europe's future lay between Germany and Russia" (Davies, 1996, 871). Both world wars of the twentieth-century involved the West-East alliance against the Central powers. In 1930s, Hitler reiterated Bismarck's program for the Balkans – neutrality, economic exploitation and control. Once the Germans had embarked on this road, the British, French and Soviet counter-offensive was colored by it. Their program involved linking the Balkans together and then tying this region economically to Poland and the Baltic states (Hitchens, 1983, vii). Between the wars, periods of geopolitical transitions were marked by neutrality, departure from the rivalries, and finally, in 1945, a shift from a West-East alliance to a West-Center alliance against the Soviet Union in a bi-polar division of Europe. Since 1989, there is no oppositional alliance to the Western (NATO) powers but the Balkan wars of the 1990s may yet produce a re-alignment, as the Balkans wars of the 1870s did.

The Legacy of Pan-Slavism: Like the 1870s, the question of the strength of pan-Slavic unity re-emerged in the 1990s. Led by Russia but focussed on Serbia, Pan-Slavism traces its origins to the early eighteenth-century. The Russian leaders, Peter the Great (1682-1725) and Catherine the Great (1762-1796), invited Serbs escaping from the Ottoman oppression to settle in the southern steppes of Russia whilst Russian troops supported the Serb rebellions of 1807 and 1810-11 against the Ottoman Empire. As a result of the victory of the Russians over Turkey in 1812, Serbia was granted its first autonomous status. This status was later endorsed by even more autonomy in 1826 as a result of the pressure of Tsar Nicholas I on Turkey in favor of the Orthodox peoples in the treaty discussions at the end of the 1823 Greek insurrection. During the wars of the 1870s between the Ottoman empire with Serbia and Montenegro, numerous Slavic committees were created all over Russia to send thousands of volunteers to the Balkans, while the Serbian army was commanded by a Russian general. The Treaty of San Stefano (1878), at the conclusion of the successful Russian attack on Turkey, secured independence for Serbia, Montenegro and Romania from the Ottoman empire

while Bosnia and Bulgaria got more autonomy. While Montenegro was consistently an ally of Russia, Serbia did not formally reach that status till the eve of World War I with the accession of Peter Karageorgievich to the Serbian throne (Jelavich, 1991).

After 1876, the Italian “risorgimento” that united most Italians into a nation-state became an example for Serbs. Prince Michael’s ambition was to make Serbia the Piedmont of the Balkans, thus forming the core of an independent South (Yugo) Slav state. In the nationalist heyday of the late 19th century, ethnic classification became increasingly important. Of the 11 national groups in the Austro-Hungarian Empire, Otto Bauer (an Austrian Marxist) classified them into “historic” nations (Germans, Magyars, Poles, Italians, and Croats) and “nations without history” (Czechs, Slovaks, Serbs, Slovenes, Ruthenians and Romanians). (Mason, 1997, 10). Karl Marx believed that the Slavs (with the exception of the Poles, a people with history) should be content to remain under the more “progressive” rule of the Germans and the Magyars (Mason, 1997, 88; Hobsbawm, 1991).

Pan-slavism stressed the greater merits of Slavic (especially Russian) culture over that of the West. The first Pan-Slavic Congress, held in Prague in 1848, was confined to Slavs in the Austro-Hungarian Empire and was effectively anti-Russian. In 1858, the Slavic Welfare Society was established in Moscow, where a Slavic Ethnographic Congress was held in 1867. The cause was also popularized by books written by two prominent Pan-Slav leaders, General Rotislav Fadeyev (*Opinion on the Eastern Question*, 1870) and Nicholai Danilevsky (*Russia and Europe*, 1871) (Stavrianos, 1965). While Fadeyev wanted Russia to lead a new Pan-Slavic federation, including the Slavs under Austrian and Ottoman control, Danilevsky expected a long struggle between Russia and the states of Central Europe. The Pan-Slavic thesis held that the Slavs were younger and more vigorous than decadent West Europeans. Slavs should free themselves from Turkish and Austrian domination and, in extreme versions, unite in a great Slavic confederation with Constantinople as the capital. Austro-Hungarian leaders were fearful that Russia would inherit most of the possessions of the Ottoman empire and especially fearful that Serbia would absorb Bosnia and Hercegovina and become a

"Greater Serbia" under Russian patronage, and later would bring other South Slavs (from Austria-Hungary) into it. (Mason, 1997, 55).

Pan-Slavism was never a hegemonic paradigm in Russia and even today, its basic tenets are widely-challenged by nation-based identities. As a century ago, the Pan-Slavic ideology represents one camp of contemporary Russian geopolitical opinion. The late nineteenth-century Russian foreign minister, Prince Alexander Gorchakov, was of the opinion that "the Turkish Slavs can be made happy at the hands of the Government of Vienna, that Russian interests will not suffer from the annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina by Austria". Other Russian officials were strongly Pan-Slavic including Count Nicholas Ignatiev, who represented Russia in Constantinople between 1864 and 1877. Ignatiev believed firmly in the principle of Slavic unity, which was to take the form of common action against the arch-enemy, Austria-Hungary. "The Austrian and Turkish Slavs must be our allies, the weapons of our policy against the Germans." These contrasting views were particularly noticeable regarding the future of Bosnia-Herzegovina (Stavrianos, 1963). In the age of nationalism, it was increasingly unlikely that the union of South Slavs could be prevented; the key question was whether it would be inside or outside the Austrian-Hungarian empire. (7.3 million Slavs lived inside the monarchy and 3.3 million outside it) (Mason, 1997, 73)

. At the time of the First Balkan War (1876), Gorchakov, opposing pan-Slavic emotion in Russia, wrote to Bismarck that the Balkans problem was "neither German nor Russian, but European". Bismarck replied in a marginal note: "Qui parle Europe a tort... notion géographique." In contrast, the "patriots" in contemporary Russia, both of the left (Communist party) and right (Vladimir Zhirinovsky), argued that a successful NATO attack on Serbia would be followed by further encirclement and isolation of Russia and her exclusion from traditional zones of Russia influence in Central Europe and the former Soviet Union. At the time of the first Balkans war, Russian pan-slavism and British jingoism was pumped up by tales of ethnically motivated atrocities. As the popular song said: "We don't want to fight, but by Jingo, if we do; we've got the men, we've got the ships, we've got the money too.... The Russians shall not have Constantinople". From the

late 19th century, the uncertainties of the frontiers of the three civilizations (western-NATO/orthodox-Russian/Islamic-Turkish) persist, though the mixed ethnic regions of much of the Habsburg monarchy have been converted to mono-lingual-national zones through wars, genocides, and postwar ethnic cleansings.

NATO's New Strategic Concept and the Edge of Europe

The biggest difference between the geopolitical transition from British to American leadership about 1900 to the end of the "American Century" is, of course, the presence in Western Europe of the American hegemon. Europe has evolved from a region of five great powers (Germany, France, Great Britain, Austria-Hungary, and Russia) to (partially) an American protectorate in the guise of NATO. With the queue for admission to NATO and the EU ever lengthening in Central and Eastern Europe, only Yugoslavia (Serbia) remains as a non-applicant, whilst Russia is increasingly isolated on a territory now smaller than 100 years ago.

A comparison of contemporary Balkan conflicts (the Kosovo war of 1999) with those of the late 19th century reveals many similarities but some key differences. Among the similarities were calls for pan-Slavic unity and greater Russian involvement in the Balkans to support the Serb position; emotional appeals in the West to stop ethnic slaughter; Serbian nationalism and Albanian irredentism; major naval forces in the Adriatic (now mostly American, not British as in the 1870s); and general uncertainty about who is most at fault for ethnic cleansing and mass killing. Further, as in the 1870s, the dimensions of European identity are still not finally demarcated, either in a geographic sense of where Europe ends, or in the political-cultural sense, the power and range of international institutions such as the European Union?

Disputes of a new role for NATO in the post Cold War world have temporarily eased after the enormous commitment that NATO made to stability in the Balkans. Tom Friedman in his *New York Times* column of June 20, 1999, suggested that NATO might more properly now be called BATO (Balkans-Atlantic Treaty Organization) given the presence of about 100,000 NATO troops in

the region indefinitely, mostly in Bosnia and Kosovo. During the bombing of Yugoslavia in April 1999, NATO met in Washington DC to celebrate its 50th birthday and to agree a "New Strategic Concept". At this conference, it became clear that NATO successes in the military and political domains have produced two dilemmas, whose resolution will write the history of NATO, and by extension the history of Europe, well into the next century.

The first dilemma lies in the geopolitical arena as the queue for NATO membership grows ever longer with countries as far east as Kazakhstan conducting joint exercises with NATO forces and asserting their interest in joining the alliance. Despite an explicit promise to Mikhail Gorbachev in 1989 at the time of the disintegration of Communist eastern Europe that NATO would not expand to the east towards Russia's borders, by 1995, NATO was committed to the admission of three Central European states (Poland, Czech Republic and Hungary) and a promise to consider seriously the future admission of many other former Communist country (about 10 at last count). Despite significant opposition from across the Russian political spectrum, the list includes former republics of the Soviet Union. If all would-be joiners are admitted, the alliance would take on a strong eastern European character and the "Atlantic" leg of the charter would look increasingly tenuous, predicated largely on the continued involvement of the U.S. on the European continent. (O'Loughlin, 1999).

The "New Strategic Concept" neither delimited the geographic range of NATO's future military operations nor explicitly limited the number or criteria for new admissions. In the Washington declaration, the NATO ministers declared that "We remain determined to stand firm against those who violate human rights, wage war and conquer territory. We will maintain both the political solidarity and the military forces necessary to protect our nations and to meet the security challenges of the next century." The openness of the Alliance was stressed: "Our Alliance remains open to all European democracies, regardless of geography, willing and able to meet the responsibilities of membership, and whose inclusion would enhance overall security and stability in Europe. NATO is an essential pillar of a wider community of shared values and shared

responsibility.” In the “Membership Action Plan (MAP)”, the NATO leaders declared that: “The door to NATO membership under Article 10 of the North Atlantic Treaty remains open. The Membership Action Plan (MAP), building on the Intensified, Individual Dialogue on membership questions, is designed to reinforce that firm commitment to further enlargement by putting into place a program of activities to assist aspiring countries in their preparations for possible future membership.” (Documents available from the NATO website: www.nato.int/docu). The indeterminacy of NATO’s bounds, either in membership or range of operations, led Russian deputy foreign minister, Yevgeni Gusev to argue that “NATO wanted to extend its competence to embrace Eastern Europe and the post-Soviet space.” He also said that the new strategic concept “envisaged NATO resorting to military force without the authorization of the U.N. Security Council”. For the “New Strategic Concept”, “Russia also wanted the document to guarantee NATO's co-operation with the United Nations and the Organization for Security and Co-Operation in Europe (OSCE) and to search for ways it could interact with these two organizations.” (Roland Eggleston, Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, 8 Feb. 1999).

Central to the debate about NATO’s future profile and Russian-Western relations is the determination of where “Europe” ends in the east and whether Russia is in, out or straddling the European divide. Classically, the limits of Europe ran along the river Don (near the present Ukrainian-Russian border), though the Urals became the commonly-accepted divide in the 18th century with a boundary post on the road between Yekaterinburg and Tiumen. Not only has the U.S. administration and its pro-NATO supporters strongly argued for the redress of the historic injustice of the Cold War divide in Europe by rapid admission of the central European states, but this “re-discovery” of the European credentials of central European states was bolstered by arguments in favor of NATO membership by politicians of all ideological stripes in Poland, the Czech Republic and Hungary. (See O’Loughlin, 1999 for more on this point). This claim on a common European ancestry is not some figment of a post Cold War geopolitical imagination. During the Cold War, Seton-Watson (1985, 14) noted that “Nowhere in the world is there so

widespread a belief in the reality, and the importance, of a European cultural community, as in the countries lying between the EEC and the Soviet Union... To these peoples, the ideas of Europe is that of a community of cultures to which a specific culture or sub-culture of each belongs. None of them can survive without Europe, or Europe without them.” Kundera (1983) took the analogy further by advocacy of a “kidnapped West” image, one in which the Soviet Union was holding Central Europe as a geopolitical hostage. Russia is still the “constituting Other” for the east European societies in their drive to certify their European heritage (Neumann, 1993). Though not yet clearly articulated by any Western strategist or central European politician, there is an implicit fear among the East European populations engaged in the NATO expansion debate that expansion might stop before all aspirant states meet the entry criteria.

The second dilemma arising from recent NATO actions concerns the implications of the military strategy of long-range bombing from a height (18,000-30,000 feet in the case of the Yugoslavia air defenses) that minimizes NATO, specifically American, casualties. In the case of the 11 week bombing of Yugoslavia in Spring 1999, the casualty numbers tell the tale: Serb soldiers, 6000; NATO, none; Serb civilians, 2000; and uncertain Kosovar estimates, perhaps 10,000-50,000. Over 1.25 million refugees were displaced inside Kosovo and to the neighboring countries.² The damage to the civilian infrastructure in Serbia amounted to about \$30 billion (*Stern*, 24 June 1999). An editorial in the *Economist* (June 12th 1999, 15 and 23-24) was moved to question the moral imperative of a war-making that was so one-sided. “Even the elegant trituration of targets in Serbia, the destruction of bridges, the incapacitation of power stations, however necessary in war, when

² United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, former Irish president Mary Robinson said about the Yugoslavian bombing that “large numbers of civilians have incontestably been killed, civilian installations targeted on the grounds that they are or could be of military application, and NATO remains sole judge of what is or is not acceptable to bomb?”

carried out night after night from the safety of the skies, seemed to turn the bombing into a high-tech coconut shy.³

Americans suffer from an acute case of double-standards regarding battle casualties. Exhibiting extreme caution about U.S. military deaths because of fear of a public opinion backlash, American leaders are highly reluctant to commit to ground troops, except in “permissive circumstances.” The U.S., therefore, foregoes territorial control while at the same time, inflicting heavy aerial damage on civilian structures in order to pressure opponents to capitulate, as in Iraq and Yugoslavia. The conservative columnist, Robert Novak (12 June, 1999), concluded at the end of the Kosovo war that: “There is no denying now that this is a hollow (U.S.) military, unable to launch a land war and not equipped for multiple crises.” Zbigniew Brzezinski has coupled this extreme sensitivity to American casualties with “indifference to the human cost of military action abroad.” (*Economist*, 12 June 1999, 24). This juxtaposition of unilateralist moralism and international opprobrium offers a perfect metaphor for the end of the American century. To Henry Luce’s list of “American jazz, Hollywood movies, American slang, American machines and patented products”, we could add American moralism.

The moralist track has, temporarily at least, won the debate in the U.S. foreign policy establishment over the strategists. Michael Dobbs (1999), in his book on Madeline Albright stresses her Wilsonian moralism, adopted as quickly as her American accent upon immigration from Central Europe at age 11. He concludes that “there's no question that the United State's Kosovo policy has been largely Albright's baby... It was Albright who, in a relentless lobbying campaign beginning in January, persuaded Clinton and NATO that it was time to take it to Milosevic, resulting in the hard-line, ‘NATO peacekeepers-or-NATO bombs.’” In his examination of recent American foreign policy-making, Nijman (1998) has carefully distinguished between the “geopolitikers” of European

³ In bombing supposed terrorist bases in Chechnya in September 1999, Russia is emulating NATO strategy in Yugoslavia and avoiding the ground casualties that were incurred in the 1994-96 Chechen war, despite protestations to the contrary.

background (Zbigniew Brzezinski and Henry Kissinger), who have argued for NATO expansion on the basis of purely strategic calculations, versus “American moralists” like James Baker, George Schultz and Warren Christopher, who promote the moral imperative of admitting states who have the proper democratic credentials. Madeline Albright, though from a central European background, has eschewed geopolitical calculation in favor of geographical argument and military uses for human rights purposes (Nijman, 1998). Dobbs chronicles Albright’s emotional congressional testimony on the failure of the U.S. to act in the Rwandan civil war and her determination to right that wrong. The question for NATO and the U.S. remains: what circumstances and locations distinguish between looking the other way and military involvement?⁴

Despite U.S. pledges to the contrary, the Yugoslavian war revealed a NATO deeply divided on the military options. U.S. was most hawkish on the air war and the targeting of Milosovic, Britain was most willing to engage ground troops, Germany and Italy were most anxious to get Russia involved in peace-making and to get U.N. endorsement of the cease fire plan. In NATO planning, the European members have resisted any plans that might give the impression of NATO as a police force, despite U.S. bows in that direction. But gray areas remain; what about peace-keeping in the Caucasus? Europeans do not want any change in Article 5 of the NATO charter that might be interpreted as anti-terrorist operations, whilst the U.S. and Britain have resisted calls for a pledge of no first use of nuclear weapons by NATO. (*Economist*, 24 April, 1999, 24). At the end of the Kosovo bombing, German chancellor Schröder said that whilst “Human rights are and should be inviolable. ... We have to look at issues very closely and in fact differentiate between different situations.” He concluded that NATO action should be confined to its own territory of operation (ill-defined as it is) that this limitation should continue.

⁴ Some indication of the future limits of U.S. military intervention might have been initiated by the absence of U.S. troops from the Australian-led United Nations peacekeeping force in East Timor in September 1999. The U.S. has taken the position that regional powers should lead and fill the ranks of the peacekeepers – except in the NATO territory of operation.

With the partial demilitarization of the KLA (Kosovo Liberation Army), the withdrawal of Yugoslavia military and civil rule, the compromise by Russia to allow its troops to serve under NATO control and the emasculation of the United Nations in Kosovo, NATO now controls the province, with all of its attendant difficulties. But more broadly, NATO has taken on the stability of the whole of the Balkan region, which since the years of Austro-Hungarian and Turkish imperial competition, has seen many external forces come and leave defeated. NATO definitely now has a new mission (peace-keeping in the Balkans); how this role fits the larger geopolitical aims of the organization remains to be seen.

Is Kosovo the prelude to future NATO-Russia confrontation? Whilst Russia was constrained by military, economic, domestic political and strategic limitations in the Kosovo conflict, these limitations can be expected to pale into insignificance if NATO becomes involved in the countries of the former Soviet Union.⁵ Russian doubts about NATO intentions are growing as a result of the broken promise to Mikhail Gorbachev, at the time of German reunification in 1990, that NATO would not expand to the east; by the rapid deployment of NATO bombers to Kosovo immediately after the accession of Poland, the Czech Republic and Hungary; by the military exercises that NATO has conducted with Azerbaijan in the increasingly-contested geopolitical morass of the Caspian Sea basin; by the indeterminate nature of the bounds of NATO action laid out in the “New Strategic Concept” of the Washington 50th birthday summit of April 1999; and by NATO avoidance of the Security Council of the UN in bombing Yugoslavia to accept foreign troops in Kosovo. Russian geopolitical goals of being an independent power centre in a multi-polar world are hindered by a military spending crisis, reliance on Western loans, and a lack of obvious global allies. Though China and

⁵ It is worth noting the extent of Russian isolation in the Kosovo conflict. After a small force of Russian troops reached Pristina airport before NATO troops, Russia was not able to re-supply these forces when the countries on the routes of potential air supply (Bulgaria, Romania, Hungary and Ukraine) refused to allow passage, under NATO pressure. Although Ukraine recanted in the face of Russian pressure, the other refusals prevented any re-supply.

Russia issued a joint statement in 1997 condemning “hegemonism” (code word for U.S. hegemony) in the post Cold War world, an alliance between these two states against the West is unsustainable. Current trends point to a future zone of confrontation between NATO and Russia in the states of the “Near Abroad”, especially Ukraine and the former Baltic and Trans-Caucasian republics of the Soviet Union.

Just as the Kosovo war seemed to recreate the nineteenth century great power competition in the Balkans, recent events in the Caucasus region seem to be repeating the “great game” in Central Asia when an expanding Tsarist empire came into conflict with British imperial plans. The Crimean War (1853-56) temporarily slowed Russian territorial growth but the great power competition shifted further east to the borders of Afghanistan and Iran. Since the end of the Soviet Union, national and strategic cleavages in the southern states have deepened. At the center of the military, economic and political networks is the unsettled dispute between Azerbaijan and Armenia over the disposition of Nagorno-Karabakh, now controlled by Armenia.⁶ Azerbaijan and Georgia have opted out of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) collective security pact and are members of the GUUAM (Georgia, Ukraine, Uzbekistan, Azerbaijan and Moldova) group. These states have held joint military exercises in the Caspian Sea region with NATO forces, under the aegis of the Partnership for Peace program. Azerbaijan has tried repeatedly to link itself closer to NATO, assisted greatly by close relations with Turkey, and its representatives attended the NATO 50th anniversary celebrations. Azerbaijan has offered an air base to NATO while in a classic geopolitical countermove, Armenia and Russia have become militarily ever closer, especially in Russian provision of new jet fighters and improved air defense systems. Georgia has asked Russian peacekeepers to leave Abkhazia (northwest Georgia) and accused Russia of trying to settle internal Georgian political disputes by assassination and provocation, while Russia has responded by removing border controls between Abkhazia and Russia.

⁶ The dispute flares up into periodic military conflict, such as the skirmish in mid-June 1999.

Why would the U.S. and the west become involved in a region particularly sensitive to Russian interests at a time when, ostensibly, NATO is trying to mend relations with Russia? The geopolitical machinations in the Caucasus region have become heated because of the immediate crisis in oil delivery from the Caspian Sea holding of Azerbaijan and by the ethnic conflict that has spilled out of Chechnya into Dagestan and other bordering territories. For decades, the oil flowed through pipelines crossing the northern Caucasus, via Chechnya to the Russian Black Sea port of Novorossiysk supplemented by a new (since April 1999) southern route to the Georgia Black Sea port of Suspa. The plan to ship the oil direct from Baku to the Mediterranean port of Ceyhan in Turkey, thus bypassing the unstable Caucasus region and the Bosphorus bottleneck, is seriously delayed, though heavily favored by the Western oil companies operating in the Caspian sea. The three biggest Azeri oilfields are run by a Western consortium of 12 companies that include Amoco and British Petroleum. (Beddoes, 1998). In April 1999, contracts worth \$2 billion between SOCAR (Azerbaijan's state oil company) and Exxon and Mobil for further Caspian sea oil exploitation were signed at the time of the NATO party, illustrating well the coincidence of economic and geopolitical goals. In a specific message to Russia and Armenia, GUUAM troops conducted military exercises in 1999 to "defend" the Baku-Suspa pipeline. In June 1999, Russia announced that the Baku-Novorossiysk would be shut down indefinitely due to thefts of the oil running through Chechnya and suggested an alternative route further north, through Dagestan, that has been rejected by Azerbaijan. The Caucasus meets the narrow definition of Saul Cohen's (1982) "shatterbelt" thesis (a region with significant global resources, complicated ethnic divisions and territorial claims, alliances of local and outside great powers, and great power competition). Future local and regional conflicts can easily be transformed into further NATO-Russia confrontation, with growing prospects of a new Cold Peace.

While the attention of post-Soviet political analysts focussed on political developments in Moscow, analysis of the possible impacts of the NATO bombing of Yugoslavia on other former Communist societies in transition has been relatively scarce. Ukraine is most often viewed as the

most significant of the post-Soviet independent states for the future direction of NATO-Russian relations (Brzezinski, 1998). Ukraine straddles the new geopolitical divide that is emerging in Europe as criteria for admission to the Western institutions are defined and implemented. Since independence in 1991, successive governments in Kyiv have tried to paint Ukraine in European colours, despite a strong regional divide in the country based largely on ethnicity (Ukrainian and Russian) and ideology (Communist and reform) (O'Loughlin, 1999; O'Loughlin and Bell, 1999). The Ukrainian government joined Russia in strongly condemning the bombings in Yugoslavia, despite the fact that NATO was a hugely popular institution in the country. By April 1999, 39 % of Ukrainians (and 70% of Russians) saw NATO as a military threat and dismissive comments about Ukrainians as peace-keepers in a U.N. force have only fuelled suspicions about NATO's goals, seen as more geopolitically self-serving than the ostensible goal of protecting Kosovars.⁷ Though President Leonid Kuchma has been relatively successful in his "multi-vectored foreign policy" that presents two different faces of Ukraine to the West and to Russia, it is an open question whether this strategy can continue to be successful in the Presidential election campaign now underway, as opponents skewer him for contradictory "pro-Russian" or "pro-NATO" policies. NATO has leased a military training ground in Western Ukraine, Ukraine has participated in NATO's Partnership for Peace program and attended the 50th anniversary celebrations in Washington DC. Reflecting the geopolitical split in the country as a whole, polls showed that 50 percent of the Ukrainian population opposed sending troops to Kosovo, with 25 percent in favor. As in Russia, the electoral fallout and further geopolitical ramifications from the NATO bombing of Yugoslavia have not yet become manifest.

Public Opinion Polls and NATO's War

⁷ James Rubin, U.S. State Department spokesperson, said that the last thing that NATO needs is "a bunch of Ukrainians running around with guns on their sides" (Andersen, 27 May 1999).

War-making has changed fundamentally in the past two decades because of the instantaneous transmission of news, rapid growth of cable television, the lingering effects of the Vietnam war, and the resulting attempt by governments, especially in traditional democracies, to avoid military casualties (Cumings, 1994). In the contemporary United States, foreign policy decisions are closely monitored by public opinion polls; indeed, numerous polls and focus groups are conducted by political leaders to probe public reaction to a variety of possible scenarios and military developments, *before* a decision is taken. Newspaper columnists have roundly condemned the Clinton administration for conducting foreign policy by opinion poll. Certainly, this administration is keenly aware of public reaction to television images of American troops being captured, tortured or killed. The spectacle in Mogadishu in 1993 of an American soldier's body being dragged through the streets remains a defining image of U.S. peacekeeping in the post Cold War world in the eyes of many Americans. Based on extensive polling about foreign military actions and about the Kosovo war, University of Maryland pollsters concluded "Americans are very resistant to the U.S. acting on its own and looking like the world's policeman. Since the Vietnam experience, this is anathema to most Americans. But provided that the alliance holds together, the U.S. public is likely to support a dynamic NATO effort in Kosovo. Fatalities would definitely raise the political stakes, but ultimately, Americans do see it as part of America's role to participate in multilateral efforts to stop genocide." (PIPA, 1999). As the *Economist* (24 April, 1999, 50) notes, the perception of legitimacy (of military action) in the last years of the twentieth-century is molded largely by that supreme arbiter in modern democracies, public opinion, rather than the norms of international law or the expectations of strategic balance of power strategies. Though foreign policy does not generally have a high profile in American public discourse, political leaders strongly feel the need to mobilize public opinion for support or, at least, cautious neutrality. During the course of the Yugoslavian aerial bombardment, 55-60% of Americans supported the aerial war throughout its 11 week course while at the same time, only about one-third favored a ground invasion of Kosovo for humanitarian aims, due to fears about

high U.S. casualties. Support for military actions decreases in proportion to the expected number of U.S. casualties (PIPA, 1999).

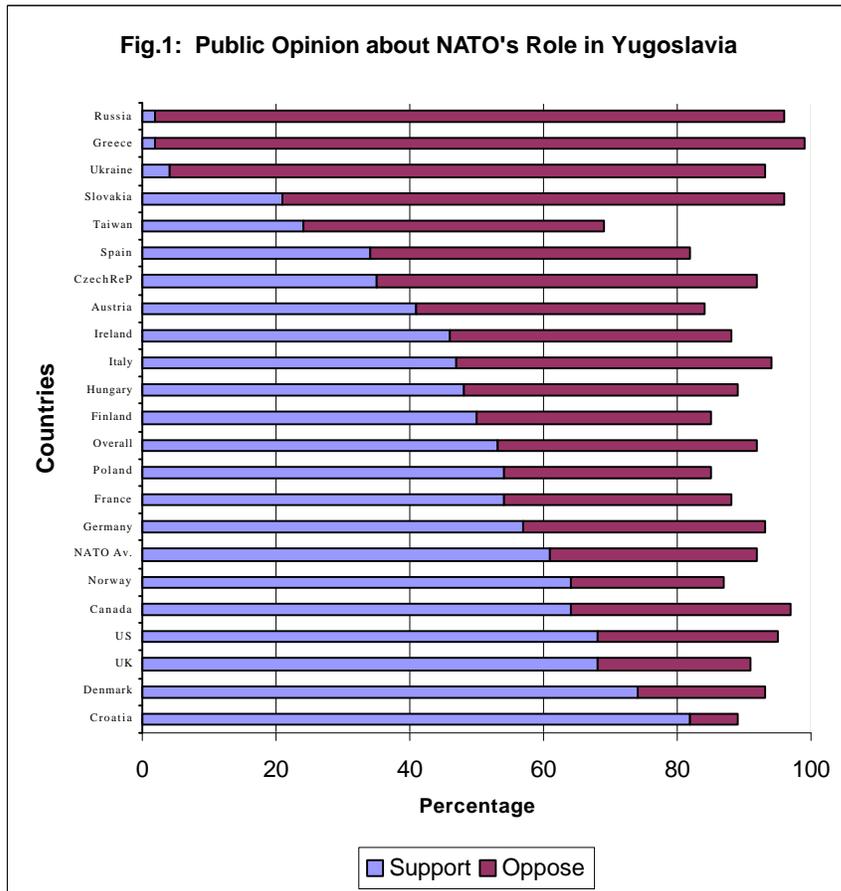
During the course of the Kosovo crisis which started in Spring 1998, officials of the Clinton administration led by Secretary of State Madeline Albright repeatedly made the case for NATO intervention for humanitarian purposes. Stories of ethnic cleansing and massacres had swung the majority of Americans to the side of intervention by the beginning of 1999. About two-thirds of the U.S. public believed that the U.S. had a “moral obligation” to launch attacks on the Yugoslav forces and in general, humanitarian concerns and beliefs generated more support for U.S. involvement than administration arguments about U.S. national interests. An April 7th 1999 Gallup poll showed that two-thirds believed that the U.S. should be engaged in the war because of a “moral obligation to help the refugees” while just 13% thought NATO’s credibility was important and only 8% cited strategic reasons. When asked directly to compare the principles of “national sovereignty” and “genocide prevention”, 62% of Americans agreed that fears of genocide justified military intervention in the internal affairs of a sovereign state, while 28% upheld the principle of national sovereignty. The support of the humanitarian principle is strong even in the face of charges of “American unilateralism”. When asked about NATO’s avoidance of the United Nations, 48% of the U.S. public were concerned that NATO actions did not have UN backing but that it should continue anyway; 30% believed that NATO action should wait for UN support (like the situation in Kuwait in 1991); and 19% were not concerned that that NATO was operating without a supportive UN resolution (PIPA, 1999). What these and other national polls consistently show is that about two-thirds of Americans will support military action for humanitarian purposes, though support drops in proportion to an increasing rate of expected U.S. casualties, and it is also reduced by lack of support from traditional allies. As long as U.S. leaders can demonstrate moralistic goals for overseas action and support from other countries (preferably including the United Nations, though it is not imperative), the U.S. public will support the military option. Kosovo, the first time that Western powers have launched military attacks for ostensibly humanitarian purposes without UN

endorsement and established a protectorate within a sovereign state with ground forces, may be the first of post Cold War interventions that increase the number of pseudo-states in the world system⁸. Pseudo-states were earlier concentrated on the territory of the former Soviet Union and Russian troops intimately involved in their establishment (Trans-Dniester Republic of Moldova, Abkhazia, and Nagorno-Karabakh) or attempts to eliminate them (Chechnya). (Kolossoff and O'Loughlin, 1999; O'Loughlin, Kolossoff and Tchepalyga, 1998).

Though the U.S. was the undisputed leader of the NATO alliance in the Yugoslavia conflict of 1999, the war demonstrated a growing fracture in NATO that pitted the U.S. and Britain leaderships on the military activist side against the more cautious leaders of Germany, Italy and some smaller states that worry more about future relations with Russia and other states in Eastern Europe. Public opinion surveys conducted by international polling firms, Angus Reid and Louis Harris, during the course of the bombing of Yugoslavia allow a comparison of support for different NATO actions across a large sample of countries, in and outside of Europe. In general, the polls show a close fit between the attitudes and practices of individual NATO members within the councils of the alliance and public opinion in the respective countries. A symbiotic relationship between public attitudes and government foreign policies seems to have developed over the past quarter-century in the Western democracies. Overall, just over half of respondents surveyed in all sample countries supported NATO actions in bombing Yugoslavia, with support in NATO countries reaching 62% (Figure 1). Predictably, citizens of the U.S. and the UK were more supportive of NATO bombing actions in mid-April (about two-thirds supports), though these ratios are matched by values for Denmark, Norway and Canada where the moral imperative of saving Kosovars held sway in the popular media. Most other NATO countries, whether new (joining in 1999) or traditional partners, show more support than opposition, though Italy (47%), Czech Republic (37%) and Spain (36%) had

⁸ Kolossoff and O'Loughlin (1999) define a pseudo-state as a political-military entity that is part of "a network of islands of 'transitional' or 'incomplete' statehood is emerging.... These pseudo-states have achieved varying but low levels of recognition by the international community, are highly involved in local wars whilst their unsettled political status makes further conflict possible."

majorities opposed. Greek public opposition (92%) is as strong and unanimous as the Russian and Ukrainian cases, a trend interpreted by many commentators as a kind of Orthodox solidarity but was almost certainly motivated by traditional Balkan rivalries and historical geopolitical alliances. The figure for

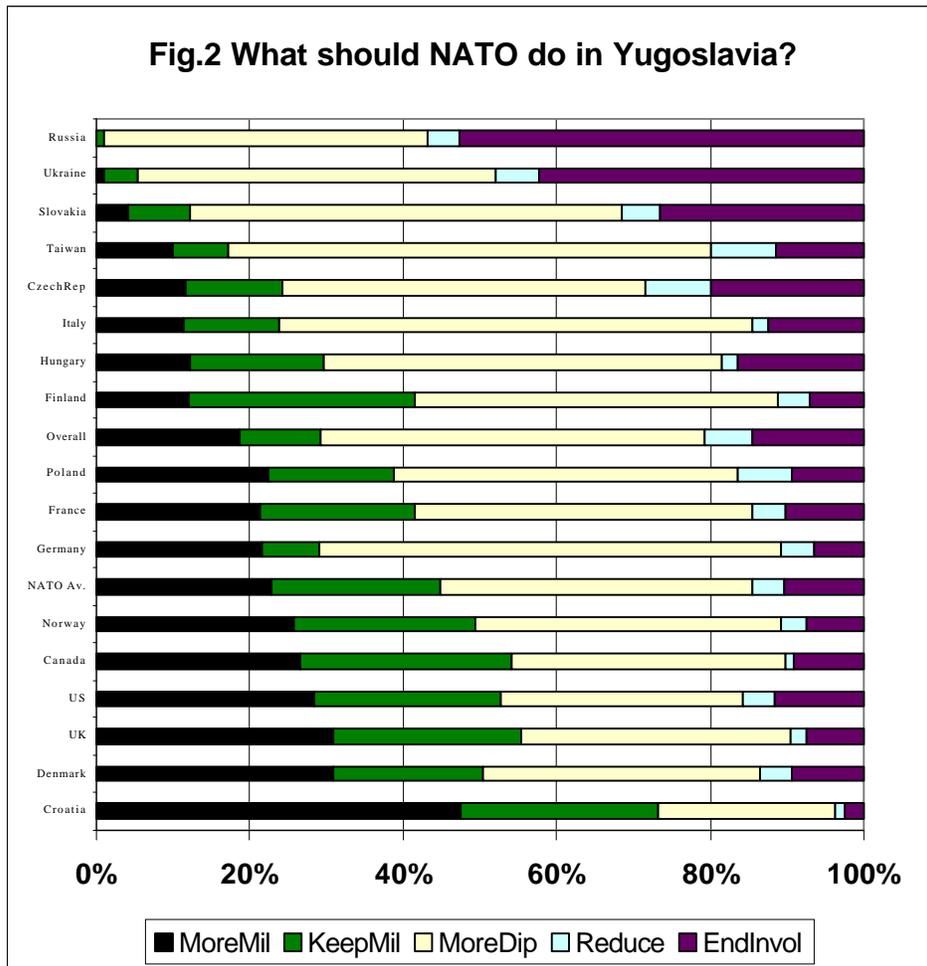


Ukraine is most significant since the country is polarized between a pro-Western (Ukrainian) and pro-Russian eastern part of the country (Kubicek, 1999). Opposition to NATO actions spanned this internal cultural cleavage and pushed a rapprochement with Russia on the part of the previously Western-leaning Kuchma government. Like Russia, the candidate positions on the NATO bombing in the Kosovo war are important electoral cues for the Ukrainian voters in the October 1999 presidential election. Geopolitical fall-out thus may not be confined to the Balkan peninsula.

The Yugoslavian war of 1999 will be remembered in the United States for the armchair strategists and military pundits that proliferated on the cable television channels. Their advice to the Pentagon and the White House ranged from a full-scale land invasion of Yugoslavia, followed by forced removal from office and a war crimes trial for President Milosevic on the one hand, to a halt in the aerial bombing on the other. Like the Gulf War of 1991, critical voices that questioned the whole NATO enterprise were relatively missing from the mainstream media. The public in the NATO countries was also engaged in the conduct of the war on NATO's terms. The interest was further motivated by careful manipulation and spinning of military news and a torrent of satellite television reports from points in Yugoslavia and bordering states. Mis-targeting by NATO bombers was widely discussed, as was the escalation in the aerial bombardment at the time of the NATO 50th anniversary celebrations in Washington DC in late April. In the confusion about a clear strategic goal (the ostensible goal of protecting Kosovars took on a different dimension when the refugee flight reached full force), numerous options came into the public fray. The responses by the public to 5 options for NATO at the height of the campaign in mid-April are presented in Figure 2. The results are consistent with those of Figure 1, with the public opinion that was more supportive of the NATO policies also the most warlike. Majority support for more or continued military action was found in Croatia, Denmark, Britain, the U.S. and Canada. Of these states, about one-third of the public surveyed supported a ground invasion.

A balance between continued military pressure and a stronger diplomatic effort to resolve the crisis can be seen in Figure 2 by the responses from Norway, France, Germany, and Poland. Respondents in Hungary, Finland, Italy and the Czech Republic preferred a stronger diplomatic initiative than the military option, while respondents in Russia, Ukraine and Slovakia opted strongly for either the end of the NATO action or a diplomatic solution to the crisis. In the end, a combination of military and diplomatic activities followed by NATO and abandonment of Milosovic by Russia resulted in the cease fire agreements negotiated in Bonn and strongly promoted under German auspices. Differences in opinion in the NATO leadership about the conduct of the war was

mirrored by the comparative public responses and the possible outcome of this unilateralist NATO action may be a questioning of U.S. leadership that was significantly more inclined to use the military option than most of the European NATO states (with the exception of Britain) wished to pursue. In further discussions in the European Union about expansion and relations with the countries of Eastern Europe, a key item will concern the nature of the cross-Atlantic political link and the continued U.S. dominance of NATO.

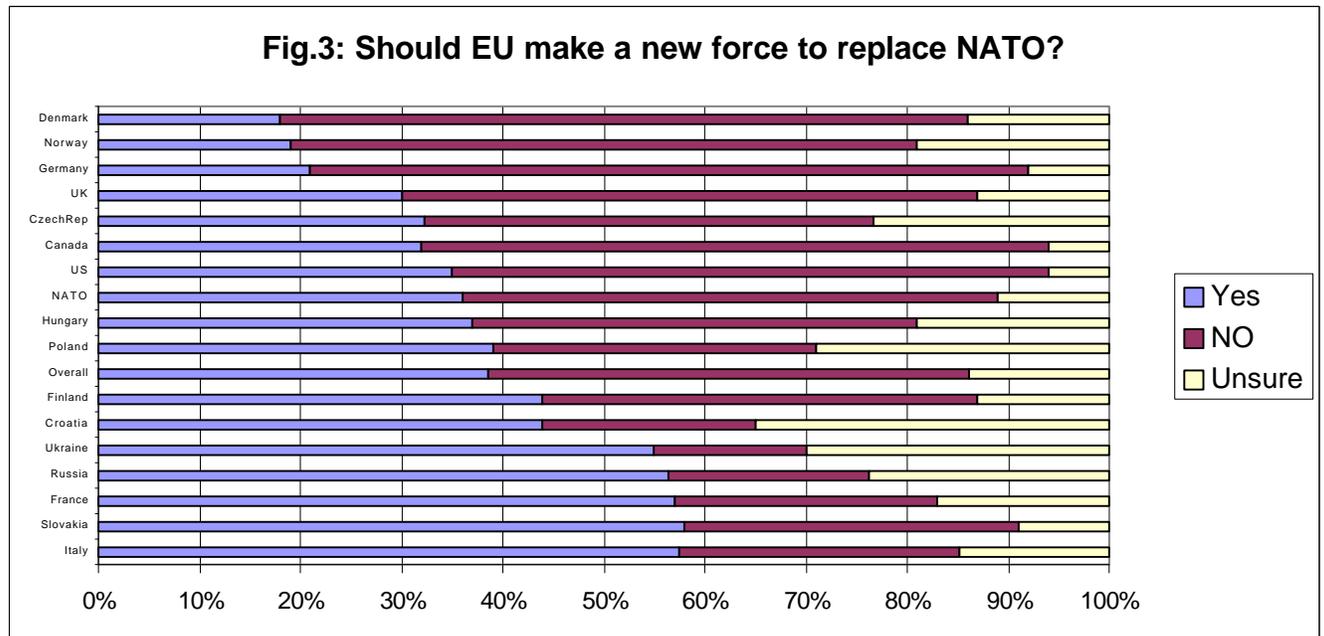


The possible substitution of NATO by an alternative military forces of the European Union motivated a specific question by the opinion pollsters; the answers are shown in Figure 3. Though the correlation between the answers on this question and previous responses in Figures 2 and 3 are not as strong as those between the answers to the questions on NATO's conduct of the war, there is

some consistency. Among the NATO countries, France and Italy show majority support for a European alternative to NATO. The question asked specifically about a “new defense and peacekeeping force” to replace NATO and overall, 38% of Europeans sampled supported this idea. However, opposition to such a replacement for NATO is solid in two important original members of NATO, Germany and Great Britain, while the U.S. percentage sits close to the NATO average. The relatively high score for the U.S. is a function of the traditional isolationist streak of Americans and this position, with about one-third public support (O’Loughlin, 1999), argues that Europeans (and other U.S. allies) should pay more for their own defense and commit more military resources. Fearful of the actions of a unilateralist NATO, respondents in Russia and Ukraine, as well as Slovakia, want its replacement by an EU force, while the reaction in Croatia (42% support, 42% opposition and 36% unsure) reflects the uncertainties of a Europe without NATO while a substantial part of the Balkans currently resides under its protectorate status. Opposition to a new EU military force is also strong in the small NATO states of Denmark and Norway (less than 20% support) and, in a separate survey, respondents in the EU neutral states also opposed the idea (Ireland 27% support and Austria 35% support). (Smyth, 1999).

Though the United States administration argued strongly during the course of the Yugoslavian war that NATO was united and determined to meet its goals, suspicions about the U.S. role in Europe and its long term aims abound. When asked to contrast Russia and the United States in terms of which state is the greatest threat to world peace, citizens of NATO countries pointed to Russia, 53% to 23%. But in the six non-NATO countries in the Angus Reid sample, a slightly bigger majority pointed to the US, 52% to 19%. (The figures blaming the U.S. as the biggest threat reached 66% in Russia and 57% in Ukraine). Further evidence of the east-west gap in perceptions is provided by the answers to the question asking for an overall positive or negative rating of NATO as a contributor to peace. While the respondents in the NATO countries rated the organization positively by a two-thirds majority, 50% of Russians and 41% of Ukrainians rated it negatively. Further, 75% of respondents in NATO countries believe that the organization should ignore Russia’s

protests regarding NATO expansion but response to this question is evenly split in non-NATO states.



Public opinion can be fickle and can be manipulated by political leaders assisted by both state-controlled and private media. Nevertheless, extensive polling at the time of the Yugoslavian war demonstrated conclusively the “psychological iron curtain” that is developing in Europe between NATO members (both original and new) and the states to the east, especially Russia and increasingly Ukraine. The Yugoslavian war clarified this geopolitical divide and compared to the NATO-Russia/Ukraine public opinion gap, the differences within the NATO community (except for Greece) are relatively small. Unlike the United States, where elite and public opinion has been consistent over decades about the level and nature of U.S. involvement in world affairs, the citizens of European countries are newly confronted with the unanticipated consequences of dramatic geopolitical shifts on their continent. Parallel to the construction of a European “community” is the parallel determination of future members of the community and the nature of economic and political relations with the states to the east. It is not just public and elite opinion in the west that will determine this outcome but significantly, it will depend on the struggle over the nature of the

political transitions in former Communist states as “westerners” and “eurasianists” compete for the geopolitical futures of Russia and Ukraine.

Geopolitical Futures and Public Opinion in Russia

As the countries of central Europe queue for membership in European institutions, Russian geopolitical debates are revisiting the major paradigms that have existed in one form or another since the revolution of 1917. The idea of Russia as a Eurasian country (a world onto itself, neither east nor west) is growing beyond its traditional adherents (Clover, 1999). The grand debate in Russia about whether Russia is part of the European-Western world or the center of a separate Eurasian sphere has generated different opinion blocks among the political elite. The “westerners” want to be part of the Atlantic-European community but their opponents (fundamentalists and supporters of Russian great power status) see westernism as the root of Russia’s problems. The perspectives of the centrists and Communists are less dogmatic but veer towards the western and the Eurasian ideologies, respectively. A shared belief that NATO enlargement institutionalizes a new European wall, bringing it closer to Russia’s border bridges the otherwise-disparate perspectives. Nearly 100% opposition to the NATO bombing of Yugoslavia in Spring 1999 is accompanied by strong sympathy for the Serbian people and a condemnation of the actions of the Milosevic regime. Traditional links between the Orthodox peoples of Serbia and Russia were exaggerated during the Kosovo war. Even in the scramble for the territories of the Ottoman empire in the Balkans from 1867 to 1913, Russian support for Serbia was inconsistent and haphazard, though Tsar Nicholas I in 1826 obtained autonomy for Serbia from the Ottoman Empire and many Russian volunteers fought in 19th century Balkan wars. Fyedor Dostoevsky worried that the Slavs of the Balkans would “rush in ecstasy to Europe” and in the process “have to survive a long period of Europeanism until realizing something in their Slavic importance and in their particular Slavic role in humankind.”

Contemporary Russian reactions to the Kosovo crisis are greatly colored by, and in turn, influence domestic political alignments. During the Kosovo war of 1999, the “westernizers”, who

controlled the Russian policy circles (Viktor Chernomyrdin, Anatoly Chubais, and most of the Yeltsin forces) acted to defuse the crisis, and in the end, pressured Serbia to accept a cease-fire that resembled the Rambouillet agreement, rejected by Slobodan Milosovic in March 1999. In this regard, by reaching accommodation with the West to settle ethnic conflicts in the Balkans, they behaved as the inheritors of the tradition of Foreign Minister Gorchakov.

Russian sensitivities to NATO actions in eastern Europe were clearly visible in the strong and consistent reaction across the ideological spectrum, a rare occurrence in contemporary Russia. Ranging from Alexander Solzhenitsyn's condemnation of NATO's bombardment of Yugoslavia as equivalent to Hitler's to the milder denunciation of the Westernizers in Moscow, close to 100% of Russians opposed NATO's military campaign, and 70 percent see NATO as a military threat to Russia. In the view of many Russians, NATO is engaged in setting up a series of military protectorates (Bosnia, Albania, Macedonia and Kosovo) that are edging into Russia's historic zone of influence (Wallender, 1999; Stepanova, 1999). With the growing turmoil in the Caucasus coupled with the increasing interests of external powers for geopolitical and economic reasons, Russians worry about NATO intentions in the "Near Abroad". The implications for the outcome of the political struggle for Russia's parliament and president are very important and it is likely that the Duma elections in December 1999 and Presidential elections in 2000 will be, in effect, referenda on the westernizing policy of Yeltsin and his successive governments. These geopolitical visions for Russia have developed from both a long tradition of geopolitical isolationism and contemporary debates in an era of geopolitical transition.

The Soviet heritage and contemporary geopolitics: With the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, attention turned to the nature of the identities that would replace the Soviet one in the successor states. As in other republics, the content of what it meant to be "Russian" now came into discussion (Eckert and Kolossov, 1999; Tishkov, 1997). While now widely accepted among academic observers that individuals can have multiple allegiances and identify with multiple national and territorial identities,

it is also clear that changes in identities shift in response to contemporary political and cultural developments. After five years of independence in 1994, 63% of respondents in the VCIOM survey of respondents in Russia said that they constantly felt Russian (an additional 17% added "sometimes"), while 35% constantly and 23% "sometimes" still perceived themselves as Soviet people.⁹ Moreover in Russia, there is no consensus about the ideology or a set of ideas, which could be used as the basis of national unity and social integration. Unlike the United States, for example, where the founding statement of the republic is reified in the Constitution, learned and promoted throughout the educational career of all students, Russia has no unambiguous and unchallenged document that unites all citizens. Under the conditions of the deep, all-encompassing crisis embracing the country since the early 1990s, about 50% of the Russian population suffer from fear of loss of national resources and national identity. For instance, 60% of respondents to a 1997 VCIOM survey were persuaded that Russia is under threat by the sale of national resources to foreign countries and 46% of Russians believed that the Russian political leadership betrays the "national interests", though it is not exactly clear what these national interests are.

The population of post-Soviet Russia fully inherited important elements of the Soviet mentality - opposition to the outside world, fear of this "hostile environment", strong mechanisms of group solidarity and appeals to symbols of "great-poweriness" as compensation for the many different humiliations and psychological damages suffered in the post-Soviet times. The loss of great power status is deeply felt across the wide spectrum of the Russian society. In 1996, according to a VCIOM survey, more than 2/3 of the Russian population still regretted the disintegration of the Soviet Union. Unlike in most post-socialist central-European countries (exceptions are Hungary, Romania and Bulgaria), pessimistic predictions of the countries' present course and future direction as compared with the recent past dominate in Russia, as well as in Ukraine and in other former

⁹ VCIOM (Russian Center for Public Opinion and Market Research) is the largest independent research company in Russia and was founded in 1987. It conducts regular social, political and marketing surveys in Russia, CIS countries and the Baltic states.

Soviet republics, except Baltic states. More than 80% of Russians worry about the rights of ethnic Russians and Russian-speakers in the newly independent countries of the former Soviet Union, principally in Ukraine, Kazakhstan, Latvia and Estonia. The perception of a hostile global environment that had persisted across centuries, was cultivated by successive Soviet governments and has become deeply rooted in the Russian and the Soviet mass consciousness, as reflected in the VCIOM surveys. Russians see their country as a besieged fortress encircled by enemies and consequently, they site themselves in opposition to the “other” world. In 1994, 42% of VCIOM respondents fully or partly agreed with the statement that "Russia always provokes negative feelings in other states, and nobody wants us". Of course, such a feeling was strengthened in the early post-Soviet years by an expulsion of hundreds of thousands of ethnic Russians from the Transcaucasian republics, Central Asia and Kazakhstan and by overt anti-Russian nationalism in the independent Baltic states, marked by stringent language requirements for citizenship. In 1996, 8% of VCIOM respondents declared that they believed that the military threat to Russia was real and 29% believed in the possibility of an external military aggression against Russia. In April 1997, even one-quarter of the respondents answered that the military threat to Russia has grown since the beginning of political and economic reforms under Mikhail Gorbachev in the mid-1980s.

For centuries, the Russian Empire and the former Soviet Union as its direct successor built during geopolitical "envelopes" around the country in the attempt to move perceived enemies away from "the besieged fortress"; this classic attempt to make buffers against external threat was taken in both eastern and western directions. As a result of these continual efforts, three such envelopes existed around Russia by the end of the Soviet Union in 1991: the belt of Union republics on Russia's borders, the strip of Soviet allies in East-Central Europe and in other regions, and, finally, a discontinuous zone of the so-called “countries of socialist orientation”, a set that grew significantly in the 1970s (O'Loughlin, 1989). In only a few years, 1989-1991, all three zones disintegrated (Kolossoff and Treivish, 1993). Moreover, the recent enlargement of NATO to central Europe right up to the borders of Russia and incorporating former Soviet allies, has made the Russian exclave of

Kaliningrad a direct neighbor of a NATO member. The perspective of a further eastward expansion of NATO to the territory of the former Soviet Union, for example to the former Baltic republics of Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia, is a nightmare scenario for a large part of Russian public opinion. The events in Kosovo in Spring 1999 seemed to confirm the worst expectations of Russians and temporarily reunited almost all political strata and ideologies of the Russian political elite in opposition to the NATO actions.

Nevertheless, in contrast to expectations from a general sense of encirclement, Russian perceptions of the "other" are in general not aggressive. In 1997, only 17% of Russians, as citizens of a great power, explain their frustration with the present-day situation by loss of "external" self-identification towards the outside world. The feelings of Russians are generally not focused against one or several national groups, with some important exceptions. According to the results of the 1997 VCIOM sociological study, 47% of Russian respondents did not trust or were angry towards Chechens (in autumn 1999, after a series of apartment bomb blasts in Russian cities, this percentage has increased dramatically) and 41% were hostile towards Gypsies. The comparable hostility figures are about 10% towards Jews, 12% towards Estonians, and 28% towards Azeris. However, ethnic or political mobilization according to a single "oppositional" model that puts Russian identity as a frame of reference against other national groups of the former Soviet Union, is simply not feasible among contemporary Russians. For Russians, a combination of a general lack of self-confidence, an uncertain identity and a general distrust of foreigners is not matched by strong negative feelings towards specific nationalities or countries.

The new Russian isolationism: The state of cultural and social disorientation and the lack of identity markers in contemporary Russia has given rise to isolationism, to the desire of individuals to hide themselves from unpleasant realities and to be less aware of their own short-comings. The results of the ISSP (International Social Survey Procedure) program "National Identity 1995" conducted in 1995-1996 in 22 European countries, in the U.S., Canada and New Zealand using the same methods

show that Russian citizens are not proud of their country and at the same time, they do not share a feeling of national exclusiveness (Gudkov, 1999). The ratio of those who believe that their country is "better than most other countries" was 42%, ranking Russia only in 13th place of 22 countries (in Japan, positive answers to this question were given by 84% of respondents, in the U.S. by 81%, and in Canada by 77%). In the Russian sample, nearly half (44%) would not like to be citizens of any other country.

Russia has ceased to be a great power in the eyes of most of its citizens. Traditional markers of identity in a great power are belief in the armed forces of the country, feelings of dominance over other nationalities, and conviction about a glorious and heroic past. This combination helps to nourish "imperial" feelings of self-satisfaction and partly compensates for the frustrations of individuals with daily life struggles, but in the case of contemporary Russia, it no longer cements national unity and the common identity of Russians. In the 1995 ISSP polls, only 14% of Russians were proud of their armed forces, compared to 49% of Americans and 48% of the British samples. A high level of science and technology education and personnel cannot substitute for these markers of self-identification for Russians. Only the domains of national cultural heritage, literature and the arts are highly-rated by the Russian respondents. It is possible that these characteristics could still be used as building-blocks of a modified ethnic and nation-building in the post-Soviet years. The high proportion of citizens that "highly appreciate" their national cultural heritage, perceiving a particular collective solidarity, puts Russia together in the company of some small European countries like Ireland, Norway and Austria, but not with the traditional "great powers". Characteristically, contemporary Russian identity is oriented to the past, with 45% of respondents in Russia "proud of history of their country", a slightly lower ratio than the U.S. sample (50%), but, unlike the U.S., this ratio does not correspond to a more general conviction of their country's dominance in most fields (Gudkov, 1999).

In general during these post-Soviet times in Russia, most expectations and at the same time, most disillusion concerns domestic policy, extend only to the day-to-day economic difficulties and

not to foreign policy. However, the crisis of identity, evident in the post-Soviet era, has generated many geopolitical discussions and projections among political parties and especially among Russian intellectuals. Identity crises are important elements of the general search for regional and global roles in all the post-Soviet societies, but in Russia, the identity crisis has taken on a much stronger and bitter debate than in other post-Soviet countries. Because of the size of Russia and the leading role played by Russians in the Soviet state, the loss of the Soviet identity cannot be easily or simply compensated by Russian ethnic-building and more expressive nationalism or by a search for new markers of identity, as is the case of most other former Soviet republics (Eckert and Kolosov, 1999). Not surprisingly in Russia today, ideologists of different parties, academic scholars and journalists try to evaluate the new position of Russia in the world, both now and in the future. Further, wide speculation exists in Russia about potential external threats to national security, actual and potential allies, and Russia's possible relations with world powers and neighboring states in order to generate new geopolitical codes in the emerging world geopolitical order. Importantly, by the mid-1990s, the term "geopolitics" had become almost monopolized by the opposition to market and liberal reforms on both the left and nationalist flanks. Thus, the Duma Committee on Geopolitics is chaired by a deputy from Vladimir Zhirinovskiy's Liberal Democratic Party of Russia. Nevertheless, four main streams of geopolitical thought can be distinguished in the numerous geopolitical (or popular pseudo-geopolitical) publications that have appeared in post-Soviet Russia.

In the immediate aftermath of the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, the hegemonic geopolitical discourse was the Atlantist (Westernizer) geopolitical orientation, usually connected to the name of the first post-Communist foreign minister of Russia, Andrei Kozyrev. Kozyrev has been often accused by relatively liberal (meaning pro-marketization and democratization in the Russian context) critics and media of ignoring national interests while in office. Further, he was attacked for blindly following the politics of the U.S. and other Western countries and for his readiness to "surrender" to the West in such vital regions as the Baltic states, Transcaucasia, and in Central Europe, as well as for a lack of political initiative. This Atlantist orientation or doctrine was

based on expectations and dreams of Russian development dominant at the end of the Soviet period, 1987-1993, among liberal intelligentsia and a great number of voters, who sincerely believed that Russia would be immediately admitted to the club of Western powers as a full member enjoying full rights and status. The disappointments of political and economic change in Russia since 1991 have significantly reduced the attractions of the Atlantist model and the Kosovo war of 1999 further reduced its appeal dramatically.

Second, a new Russian isolationism has manifested itself in a grouping of geopolitical concepts. The most interesting among these is the concept of "island Russia", developed by Vadim Zymburski. In his view, a weakened Russia should temporarily keep its distance from world affairs and focus its efforts on self-development on the "island" encircled by "straits" - geopolitically unstable and disputed territories (Zymburski, 1993, 1997). A third geopolitical perspective, the Russian "national" geostrategy, can be considered as a variety of the Atlantist or of isolationist concepts, or as a separate concept. It has united Russian intellectuals and politicians who share the values of the market economy and democracy but do not rely on promises of Western assistance to post-communist reforms; at the same time, this rather-diverse group is skeptical about any possible future union of Russia with Turkic Muslim republics in a modified Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) and they are concerned about "pumping" economic resources out of Russia. This geopolitical concept demands the withdrawal of Russia not only from Central Asia but as well from Transcaucasia (Georgia, Azerbaijan and Armenia) as well as the Muslim parts of the North Caucasus especially Chechnya and Dagestan. What remains would be the regions dominated by Russians and other Slavs and in the view of the proponents of the "national" strategy, this match of national distribution and territory would enable the creation of a truly Russian nation-state. This geostrategy is based on a union with the former Slavic republics of the Soviet Union and argues for the necessity of promoting the integration of Russia and Belarus to include Ukraine and Northern Kazakhstan (a predominantly Russian populated area) in this process. This "national geopolitical" strategy also often incorporates some points of the abandoned 19th-century concepts of panslavism and pan-

orthodoxism. Therefore, its supporters worry about the NATO expansion to the borders of Russia and view the events in Kosovo in Spring 1999 as negatively as the neo-Eurasianists.

The fourth geopolitical camp, the “neo-Eurasian” school, has created most concern in the Western media (Clover, 1999). It was recently revived around the newspaper of the radical leftist opposition, "*Den*" ("Day"), later evolving into a related publication "*Zavtra*" ("Tomorrow"). One of its best-known representatives, Alexander Dugin, is the author of a voluminous manifesto entitled "The Basis of Geopolitics" (1997) and the founder of a special geopolitical review "*Elementy*" ("Elements"). Neo-Eurasianists claim to be heirs of a long tradition in the Russian philosophical and political thought (Hauner, 1990, 1997). The concept of Eurasianism was worked out in the 1920s and the 1930s by Russian intellectuals and emigres in Prague, and later in Paris. These emigres, G.N.Vernadsky, P.N.Savitsky and N.G.Trubetskoi, considered Russia as a separate and unique geographical and cultural entity whose roots were simultaneously in the Turkic (nomadic) civilization of the steppes and in the Slavic civilization of the forested zone. As almost always happens with epigraphs, neo-Eurasianists simplified and primitivized the ideas and concepts of the founding-fathers. In particular, the originators of the concept emphasized in their books the importance of the Mongol yoke period for Russia, that delimited the Russian cultural area by separating it from the Christian West and orienting the country towards the Finno-Ugrian, Siberian and "Turanian" worlds. (The Turanian zone is situated between the Caspian and the Aral seas).

Neo-Eurasianists strongly criticize the process of economic and cultural globalization and view the general adoption of liberal democratic procedures and principles in Russia as imposed forcefully by the West. In their view, the West is bent on destroying world cultural diversity and establishing a uni-polar world geopolitical order that perpetuates the Atlantists' (i.e. American) dream. Proponents of neo-Eurasianism promote the perspective that the historical role of Russia is to become the leader of the global opposition to this U.S.-led geopolitical order and stress the slogans of "equality in diversity" and "the mutual respect" among peoples and countries. They contrast Slavic and Russian spiritualism (supposedly innately present in the Russian people) to

Western pragmatism and practices that are based solely on a senseless course for material values and consumerism.

Neo-Eurasianists combine the ideas of G. Vernadsky and other members of his circle with some points from early European geopolitical writings. They uncritically and unilaterally adopted Halford J. Mackinder's theory of the world Heartland (Pivot Area) as "rediscovered" by them and they consider this theory as unsurpassed geopolitical wisdom. This Heartland theory seemed very suitable for the purposes of Eurasianists because it endowed the territory of Russia with a particularly important geopolitical role and is considered the key to global stability while acting as the geographical centre of world politics. (See Clover 1999 also on this point). In general, in the mind of neo-Eurasianists, the development of geopolitics was halted before World War II at the time of the publication of the works of Mackinder, Karl Haushofer, Rudolf Kjellen and Alfred Thayer Mahan. Neo-Eurasianists have also borrowed some ideas of ideologists of the so-called "New European Right", in particular, those of A. de Benoist (Goguelin, 1999).

The neo-Eurasianists remain a small group of intellectuals and have little chance to promote themselves into an influential social movement, because, first of all, it is impossible to mobilize the Russian population on the basis of huge utopian projects, as was the case in the late 1920s and early 1930s and, to a lesser extent, during the three decades after World War II. Russians are not ready any longer to sacrifice their private interests and family well-being in the name of national glory, of ambitious objectives and of traditional Russian idealistic messianism, so well described by the prominent Russian philosopher, Nikolai Berdiaev (Berdiaev, 1934). In May 1998, about two-thirds of VCIOM respondents to a national survey declared that their family affairs were closer to them than the health of the country. Individual, pragmatic, "petty-bourgeois" values now dominate among Russians. Even the problem of Russians in the "near abroad" is mentioned as an essential element for Russia by no more than 3% of the national total, and more than 80% do not consider it worthwhile, and are not ready, to intervene in the affairs of the countries of the former Soviet Union.

However, the influence of the neo-Eurasianist circle is much larger than their "direct" political strength. Their arguments are widely used by Gennady Zyuganov, leader of the Communist Party of the Russian Federation, which possessed the largest fraction in the State Duma between 1995 and 1999. Sergei Baburin, a professor of law from Omsk, the vice-speaker of the Duma in 1995-1999 and the head of Russian National Alliance (*Sobor*), is solidarity with Zyuganov, his former political ally within the Union of Popular Patriotic Forces, shared similar geopolitical views (Baburin, 1997). They believe that the existence of the Soviet Union occupying most of the world's heartland contributed to global geopolitical equilibrium in the Cold War years and blame NATO for attempting to subordinate Russia and to transform it into an appendix of major western countries as a supplier of raw materials. Naturally, the Communist party and other left organizations were in the vanguard of the severest critics in Russia of NATO policies in the Balkans. The NATO action offered it the best possible argument justifying its position, a point repeatedly emphasized by George Kennan in his critique of NATO expansion (O'Loughlin, 1999).

Russia and NATO: Since the last days of the Soviet Union in the late 1980s-early 1990s, Russian public opinion towards Western countries has completely reversed. In 1990, 50% of respondents believed that there was a military threat to Russia. Of the respondents seeing a threat, 33% declared that the source of the threat was the U.S., 24% nominated Germany, 8% picked Japan, and 8% choose NATO as a whole. In late 1996, according to the VCIOM surveys, only 2% of respondents believed that the U.S. and Germany were enemies of Russia. On the contrary, the perception of enemy has shifted to neighboring countries. The former Soviet republics of Estonia (22% of respondents) and Ukraine (10% of respondents) were nominated most frequently as threats to Russia. Interestingly, many of the respondents picking these states were people with higher education living in Moscow, Petersburg and Southern Russia. Most VCIOM respondents, however, are persuaded that the most important threats to Russian national security originate in Russia itself. Paradoxically, despite the war in Kosovo and recent difficulties in relations between Russia and the

NATO countries, numerous recent polls allow the conclusion that no consistent anti-Western orientation exists in most segments of contemporary Russian society.

Before the 1999 NATO bombing, Kosovo remained a secondary issue for a Russian public usually preoccupied with domestic affairs. In early 1999, only 4% of VCIOM respondents mentioned the conflict in Kosovo as an important event that occurred in 1998, while 44% remembered the Russian financial landslide of August 17, 1998 and 29% listed the acceleration of inflation after the financial collapse. For most respondents, the major 1998 foreign event was the bombing of Iraq. At the same time, 47% of respondents considered the conflict in Kosovo as a Yugoslavian internal affair and were against any foreign involvement in it. In spring 1999, before the start of bombing, the overwhelming majority of respondents (57% to 65%) were against any Russian military involvement in Kosovo.¹⁰ Only 18% were in favor of it. Even after the start of hostilities in Kosovo in March 1999, 63% of Russian citizens were strongly against or more against than in favor of the Russian military assistance to Yugoslavia.

Returning to a historical theme reviewed in the first part of this paper and one that is frequently discussed in contemporary Russian geopolitical debates, the VCIOM polls do not show much public support for the so-called pan-Slavic solidarity of the Russian and Serbian peoples on a “civilizational” basis. Though very frequently-mentioned in western as well as in Russian media of different political orientations, only a small minority of Russians sympathize with Serbs (14-16%). Though fewer sympathize with Kosovars (5-7%), most VCIOM respondents blamed both of them for the Kosovo conflict (40%) or have no particular sympathies (39%). At the same time, however, both Ukrainians and Russians fear that next time NATO can intervene in their domestic conflict and contribute to further conflict and the possible disintegration of their countries. Even the leaders of UNA-UNSO, the Ukrainian ultra-nationalist (and strongly anti-Russian) organization whose members are concentrated mostly in the west of the country and in Kiev, believe that NATO can

¹⁰ The same majorities had been against Russian military involvement in the Bosnian civil war, 1992-1995.

support anti-Ukrainian movements of Ruthenians in Transcarpathia (far west Ukraine) and of Tatars in Crimea (Nezavissimaya Gazeta, 19.06.99).

The official Russian foreign policy strategy in the long term, explained many times by President Yeltsin and foreign minister, Igor Ivanov as well as his predecessor, Yevgeny Primakov, can be briefly stated as the creation from Russia of an "independent power center in the multipolar world". Therefore, the Kosovo conflict was a challenge to traditional Russian interests in the Balkans, as well as indicating that NATO did not intend to maintain its long-standing geographical limits in Europe. It was not coincidental that, at the time of the Kosovo war, Russia staged naval exercises in the Baltic sea, re-armed Armenia with sophisticated weapons, halted the flow of oil from Azerbaijan through Chechnya, stepped up discussions with China, and pressured Ukraine to allow free passage of Russian aircraft to the Balkans. On the other hand, Russia does not view NATO's actions in Yugoslavia as meriting a highly-negative response and jeopardizing relations with the West. However, further NATO encroachment on Soviet territory is likely to be met with a more robust response, motivated by both public opinion and geopolitical theories.

Russia and Europe: The east-west gradient has existed in Europe for centuries and can be measured by a number of quantitative geographical, economic and cultural variables (characterizing geomorphology and climate, the network of rivers and the density of population, land-use and natural resources, cultural preferences and economic development). For centuries, this gradient has served to justify geopolitical ambitions, to divide neighboring countries into "friends" and "enemies", "ours" and "not-ours", as well as a powerful leverage in ethnic and nation-building, as an important factor in the creation or the transformation of identities, in particular, at the supra-national level (Kolossoff and O'Loughlin, 1998). Geopolitical exercises with linguistic and cultural borders and attempts to delimit "european" and "barbarian" countries and regimes are as old as the beginning of modern European politics. Count Louis-Philippe de Segur, designated as French ambassador to Petersburg wrote in 1784 that he had completely abandoned Europe having crossed the boundary

between Prussia and Poland. In the similar way, though more primitive manner, the Romans in their epoch distinguished in Europe the civilized "South" and the barbarian "North". Therefore, it is not the struggle between "the West" and "the East" which determines the post-war and the actual geopolitical situation but the struggle between modernization and traditionalism at all territorial levels, including the national level – that is, inside every country. Most research and commentary that focuses on multi-national lines in Eastern Europe (the West versus the rest) are perpetuating the tendency to reify the border that separates Central and Eastern Europe (CIS countries, or even "Europe" as a whole from "Eurasia", that is Russia). But it would be dangerous to ideologize the current economic and political situation in Europe in terms of a primitive, quasi-biological primordialism and "geological" determinism, resulting in a new border. This new border is a social construct which can move with time and depends on the will and the activity of European peoples (Miller, 1997).

Conclusions

Western Europe has not (yet) developed a unifying identity beyond the limited goals of common economic prosperity and political institutionalism to support economic aims. Plans for a common European military force have not been translated into a mutation of NATO and the U.S. remains the dominant military power on the continent. However, strains between some European members of NATO (Germany, Italy, Greece and France) and the U.S. (backed by its most loyal ally, Great Britain) became increasingly evident in the course of the Kosovo war. "So long as the USA remains relatively strong and relatively prosperous, the status quo in Europe is unlikely to change suddenly... If and when the USA moves into crisis, however, the countries of the European Union would draw together for common protection. An Atlantic gale from the west could have the same effect as a cold east wind" (Davies, 1996, 1136). The evident contrast between the economic success of the European Union and the failure of the Soviet system was a powerful factor behind the events of

1989. It is not yet clear how the entry of some of the post-communist societies of central Europe will change the European Union.

The important answer to German Chancellor Willy Brandt's question "do we all want to become Americans?" – is still not readily observable. Unless the EU departs radically from its careful and slow enlargement and deepening, the status quo will continue to keep "the Americans in, the Russians out, and the Germans down."¹¹ The present "Europe", a creation of the Cold War under American dominance, will likely expand to surround Russia. That this geographic and political encirclement will produce a strong Russian reaction in the form of alliances abroad, revival of the military at home, electoral successes for anti-Western "patriotic" candidates, and a revival of a cold peace, seems probable.

As the title of our paper indicates, in the last quarter of the nineteenth-century, Germany could not pursue military objectives in the Balkans without risking the lives of Pomeranian and other grenadiers. In the last year of the twentieth-century, Russia in Chechnya and NATO in Yugoslavia were able to pursue political-military objectives through air attacks, thus minimizing changes to their troops and avoiding a possible confrontation between democratically-elected regimes and popular support for military action. The technology of war has widened the range of options of strong states, who now are no longer forced to choose between casualties, credibility and consent. The substitution of civilian casualties and destruction of facilities and infrastructure does not seem to matter much in the new calculus of war and geopolitical strategy.

Public opinion polls in Russia highlight a disparity between perception (Russia as a country strongly antagonistic to the west and supportive of the Serbian regime and other opponents of NATO) and the reality (Russians are generally not anti-Western and are overwhelmingly concerned with day-to-day struggles for a decent quality of life). Their major foreign policy concerns extend only to the countries of the "near abroad" on the borders of Russia and to separatist movements in

¹¹ Thomas Friedman, the *New York Times* foreign affairs columnist, has claimed that the aim after Kosovo is to "keep the Americans in, the Balkans quiet, and the Russians out." (June 20, 1999).

the Caucasus. Russian foreign policy actions are motivated strongly by a distance-decay effect and events in the NATO theater of operations are not yet significant to merit a strong and consistent response. Russian domestic politics hinders the formation of consistent geopolitical codes and until the election season of 1999-2000 yields a clear resolution on the future directions of Russian political and economic life, the still-unanswered issues about the scope of European identity and the extent of Russian insecurity will persist.

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Still not worth the bones of a single Pomeranian grenadier: the geopolitics of the Kosovo war 1999. *Political Geography*, Vol. 21, Issue. 5, p. 573. 47. For example, during World War II Bosnia and Herzegovina became part of the nazi puppet state of Croatia, which appropriated Muslims as brothers and allies of the Croats. In this regard, the Independent State of Croatia was imitating the Habsburg policy of an earlier date (see Rusinow, 3). 48. Filipovic, 14. 49. For example, How can a traitor be better than a knight? What is this talk of "sword" and "Kosovo"? Weren't we both on the field of Kosovo? I fought then and I am still fighting now, and you have been a traitor then and now, You've dishonored yourself before the world. Otto von Bismarck famously declared the Balkans weren't worth the bones of a single Pomeranian grenadier. He knew that fractious, feuding part of Europe would soak up as much blood as the Germans cared to spill. Because Bismarck's successors forgot his wisdom, the Balkans ended up claiming the bones Otto von Bismarck famously declared the Balkans weren't worth the bones of a single Pomeranian grenadier. He knew that fractious, feuding part of Europe would soak up as much blood as the Germans cared to spill. Because Bismarck's successors forgot his wisdom, the Balkans end The Kosovo war of 1999 brought the checkered legacies of Russian and Western geopolitics back to the forefront of international relations. Central to the discussions of the Balkans is its century-old legacy as a Shatterbelt or Crush Zone. Though not identified by Saul Cohen as a Shatterbelt during the Cold War, the region is now located where the maritime (Western) and land power (Russian) geostrategic realms come into contact. NATO expansion and Russian insecurities about the region's future have revised interest in geopolitical linkages and historical antecedents.