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ASSESSING THE EU AND THE US ROLE IN THE DISINTEGRATION OF YUGOSLAVIA

THESIS

by

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RESEARCH QUESTION

The disintegration of Yugoslavia has marked the first post-bipolar decade as the biggest armed conflict on European soil after the end of World War II. The United States, although indicated at the June 1991 Copenhagen NATO Summit, a unified Yugoslavia as "the ideal state of affairs"[1], did not pursue this goal decisively. On the other hand, the EC/EU's most powerful states were divided between preserving Yugoslavia's unity (France and the UK) and recognizing the breakaway republics (Germany), under the light of the upcoming, Maastricht Treaty. The questions on to what extend Germany's threat for a unilateral recognition of Slovenia and Croatia drug the rest of the European states on a path that unavoidably led to Yugoslavia's brake up, what was the reasoning behind this particular course of action and an attempt to assess the role of the EU, as a hole, and that of the US in the collapse of Yugoslavia, are forming the research question of the following thesis.

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[1] W. Bradford, *The Western European Union, Yugoslavia, and the (Dis)Integration of the EU, the New Sick Man of Europe,* Boston College International and Comparative Law Review, Vol. 24, Jan 2000, p. 27.

INTRODUCTION

The beginning of the 1990's was signified by the global tectonic changes that were taking place due to the collapse of the USSR and the eastern bloc in general. The bipolar world that had been around since the end of World War II, had ceased to exist. The emergence of a new world under US's dominance, had as a collateral consequence among others, the disintegration of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia; a state that just a few years ago had organized the Sarajevo Winter Olympic Games of 1984 and was commonly acknowledged by the West as the one closest to achieving EC full membership status, as the sui generis preferential agreements between the two parties, signed on April 1980, clearly showed.[2]

This event triggered a vigorous academic debate about the reasons of Yugoslavia's implosion. Many scholars have argued that this happened as a result of a series of different key factors, such as the economy, the ancient ethnic hatred existing between the different ethnicities, nationalism, the different cultures etc. A factor that is also considered to be highly responsible for the tragedy in Yugoslavia, is that of international politics. Key players in the region, mainly the US and the EC/EU, as well as Germany and international organizations like the UN and NATO, played a significant role in terms of the way that the Bosnia crisis began, unfolded and remained mostly unaddressed until about a year and a half before its end. Germany, a state that had recently regained its pre Cold War grandeur through its reunification, has repeatedly been accused of acting as the igniter of the chain reaction that led to the dissolution of Yugoslavia. The EC/EU finally chose to take an action path that led to the disintegration of Yugoslavia, despite the fact that many of the member-states were against Croatia's and Slovenia's recognition as independent states. As for the US stance towards the events taking place in this part of the world, was that of a remote observer, at least in its first stages. The Americans delayed their active intervention in the Bosnian crisis until 1994, when doing nothing was no more an option.

What were the reasons behind this course of action? In which way did the US - EC/EU relation dynamics influence their actions in the Balkan crisis and how did that same crisis reshape their relation? Was the disintegration of Yugoslavia a vivid example of the implementation of Kenneth Waltz's neorealist theory, in which the international system's structure allow the politicians to, practically, have very limited choices, or was it the unfortunate outcome of the United States' and the European Union's straggle to balance between realistic cynicism on the one hand and the world's perception of them as the leading moral powers, on the other?

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[2] http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_MEMO-86-92_en.htm

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

This thesis investigates the reasoning behind the course of action that the United States and Europe[3] adopted in Bosnia and Kosovo crisis. By analyzing the internal and the external variables that influenced the decision making process of these two main international actors, the balance that had to be achieved in the context of the newly established Europe's Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) and the always evolving, multilayered and sometimes challenging relation between Europe and the US, its purpose is to assess the role that the two actors played in the disintegration of Yugoslavia.

This thesis is structured on analyzing:

-The general historic conditions of that certain period;

-The role that the recently reunified Germany played and the reasoning behind the decisions of its top policy makers;

-The International Community's involvement in the Bosnian crisis;

-The various theoretical approaches that can offer an explanation on the political decisions of the key actors;

-The actions of the US and the EU on the following Kosovo crisis and on comparing them with these of the previous one in Bosnia;

-The new transatlantic relationship that the disintegration of Yugoslavia curved.

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[3]From now on whenever the term "Europe" is used, it refers to the European Community (EC) or the European Union (EU) for events occurred after the signing of the Maastricht Treaty on February 7, 1992.

1. Historical background

The Balkans were a politically unified area only as a part of the Ottoman Empire. The variety of different ethnic, religion and lingual backgrounds of its population, compressed into a relatively small piece of land, is astonishing. The Ottoman occupation also resulted in a much slower pace of the region's path towards the formation of ethnic states and socio-economic development, when compared to the rest of the, western, Europe[4], a fact that resulted in the projection of a very negative image to the rest of the world. The word "Balkans" has become synonymous to political instability, poverty, ethnic rivalries, retarded social and economic development and war. Huntington's *Clash of Civilizations* has reaffirmed the westerners' disdain for the region, the stereotypes that come along with it and its isolation from the continent's mainstream[5].

Despite the fact that the Balkans are inherently perceived to be "Europe's powder keg", there are plenty of contemporary scholars arguing that a significant part of the wars in the region was not locally originated, but mainly the outcome of global power shifts and balance changes and that the negative stereotypes which accompany the peninsula's troubled past, is nothing more than a misinterpretation of the region's history[6]. The very case study of this thesis, the disintegration of Yugoslavia, was indeed, at least to a certain extent, a byproduct of the global power shift after the collapse of the Soviet Union.

After the end of World War II (WWII) and for the next forty four years, until the fall of the Berlin Wall, every local and regional-level political event was interpreted, evaluated and addressed upon in the greater context of the antagonism between the two superpowers. Yugoslavia, under the rule of Marshal Tito, chose a different way of coping with bipolarism; the one famously known as the "third way". The term referred to a political stance that the country adopted during the aforementioned period, according to which Yugoslavia avoided to take sides in favor of one of the two main rivals. To do so, one has to have something valuable to offer that is needed by at least one of the two main players. In the case of Yugoslavia, this much needed asset was the country's ports in the Mediterranean Sea, potentially providing the USSR with the long dreamed exodus in the warm seas[7]. Furthermore, Yugoslavia was to serve the West as a buffer-state in the case of a communist invasion against its southeast European allies. The "third way" certainly was a strategic choice

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[4]Th. Veremis, *The Balkans from the 19th to 20th century, Construction and Deconstruction of States*, Patakis, Athens 2008, p. 9.
[5]Ibid, p. 12.
[6]Ibid, p. 11.
[7]D. Serwer, *The Balkans: from American to European leadership*, at *Shift or Rift*, G. Lindstrom (ed.), Institute for Security Studies (ISS), Paris 2003,p.170.

aiming to better serve the national interests of Yugoslavia. Its weak spot though, was that it needed bipolarity in order to remain an effective policy. Tito was, undoubtedly, a gifted and charismatic leader, who was capable of successfully governing a socialist federal state of six constituent parties, two autonomous peripheries, three main religions and six main ethnicities, according to 1971 and 1981 Yugoslav censuses. Doing so, in conjunction with exercising an efficient foreign policy that had to always keep the balance between the two superpowers, was something truly admirable.

According to the memoirs of Sir Fitzroy Maclean, a high ranking British officer during WWII and a diplomat after the end of it, who parachuted into Tito's HQ in German occupied Yugoslavia, Tito was a different kind of communist. Different than Stalin that is. As a consequence, he disagreed with the latter's policies and planning of making Yugoslavia another Moscow's satellite state and steered Yugoslavia away from the Soviet influence, in 1948, after the country's expulsion from COMINFORM.[8] The Bandung Asian-African Conference, held in Bandung, Indonesia on April 18-24 1955, was the first step towards the creation of a movement of non-aligned states, incorporating newly created countries originating from the ongoing process of decolonization, as well as third-world countries and others.[9] Six years after Bandung Conference, the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries was founded on a wider geographical basis at the First Summit Conference of Belgrade, which was held in September 1-6, 1961. The membership criteria formulated during the Preparatory Conference to the Belgrade Summit (Cairo, 1961) showed that the Movement was not conceived to play a passive role in international politics, but to formulate its own positions in an independent manner so as to reflect the interests of its members. Thus, the primary objectives of the non-aligned countries focused, among others, on the support of self-determination, on national independence and the sovereignty and territorial integrity of States, on the non-adherence to multilateral military pacts and the independence of non-aligned countries from great power or block influences and rivalries; on the struggle against colonialism, neocolonialism, racism, foreign occupation and domination, on the non-interference into the internal affairs of States and peaceful coexistence among all nations, on the rejection of the use or the threat of use of force in international relations and on the democratization of international relations.[10] .All of these principals and objectives made the two superpowers feel somehow uncomfortable, given the fact that in their struggle for world domination and in the presence of the Mutual Assured Destruction (MAD) doctrine, proxy wars were the only way to expand one's influence or to deny the other the possibility

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[8] S. Pons, "The Twilight of the COMINFORM" at F.G. Feltrinelli's *The COMINFORM Minutes of the Three Conferences 1947/1948/1949,* Russian Centre of Conservation and Study of Records for Modern History (RTsKhIDNI), vol. 24, Milan, 1994, p.483.
[9] http://mea.gov.in/in-focus-article.htm?20349/History+and+Evolution+of+NonAligned+Movement
[10]Ibid

of doing so. These proxy wars had, as protagonists, weak, sometimes newly formed ex-colonial countries, easy to manipulate and corrupt. A potential third pole comprising that kind of states, was nothing desirable by neither of the superpowers; and Tito's Yugoslavia was one of the founding members of the movement. Nevertheless, for reasons that we have already referred, the US and the Soviet Union had never given up trying to ally with this particular, non-aligned, Balkan state.

The year 1974 was the one that the institutional foundations of the future collapse of Yugoslavia were set. The newly adopted constitution attributed enhanced autonomy to the constituting republics of Yugoslavia by treating them as sovereign states, thus further weakening the central federal government. The ideological concept that this constitution represented, was that of self-management as an alternative to the power of the State. Paradoxically, the Yugoslav state was based upon an anti-state ideological conception.[11] The de-constructive impact of this paradox on the ideological narrative that was holding the Yugoslav "nation" together, would prove to be enormous. In addition to that, the new constitution appointed Tito as a life-time president, not to be replaced by anyone after his passing. When that passing occurred, on May 4th 1980, it naturally created a psychological as well as an institutional gap in the Yugoslav society. As Tito had, undoubtedly, become the embodiment of Yugoslavia's statehood and unity, his absence enhanced the already existing centrifugal powers. The final blow was given by the collapse of the Berlin Wall and, consequently, the Soviet Union itself. When the ideology of communism failed at such a massive scale in its birthplace, it was unavoidable for the other communist/socialist states, even if they had chosen a different path of implementing it, like Yugoslavia did, to feel the immediate impact of that major historical event. In addition to this, the main pillar of Yugoslavia's external policy, bipolarity, had also collapsed. While other eastern countries, with ethnically homogenous populations, like Poland and Hungary, where trying to establish a new state away from the collapsing Soviet patronage, Croats, Slovenes, Bosnian Muslims and Kosovo Albanians perceived Belgrade as the obstacle to their statehood's conclusion. Nationalism was there to fill in the gaps of the failing Yugoslav ideological narrative.

2. The war in Bosnia

The final outcome of that declining process was a full scale war, in which everyone fought against everyone. The powder keg of Europe had, for once more, justified its name and the stereotypes surrounding it. Was that war unavoidable? Did it serve the best interests of the West, which had just arisen victorious from the Cold War? What was the plan of the two main international

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[11]D. Jovic, *The Disintegration of Yugoslavia: A Critical Review of Explanatory Approaches*, European Journal of Social Theory 2001 4: 101, London, 2001, p. 105.

actors, the US and the EU, for the region after the collapse of the Soviet Union? Was there even a certain plan concerning Yugoslavia's preservation, or maybe the war was considered to be an undesirable but manageable development?

2.1 The role of Germany

The fall of the Berlin Wall on November 9th 1989, signaled the end of an era and the beginning of a new one. The eastern bloc collapse was concluded at Christmas of 1992, after the last official downhaul of the Soviet Union's flag off the Kremlin. The period between the two events was, nevertheless, characterized by a sense of confusion. Undoubtedly, the Cold War was over and the US and its allies were the winners. The very fact, though, of a transition from a bipolar to a uni/multipolar world was not easy to be realized on a global scale. Time was needed for the disturbed world power equilibrium to come into balance again.

During this period of uncertainty, the problems already existing in Yugoslavia reached their peak. On June 25th 1991, Slovenia and Croatia officially declared their independence from Yugoslavia[12], seeking for international recognition of their sovereignty status in order to enforce it on to Serbia. It was at that time that something unexpected occurred inside the European Community: Germany decided to act unilaterally.

2.1.1 The external factors of Germany's defection from the EC's common policy

After WWII and the division of Germany, West Germany became a state decisively orientated towards cooperation within the Western alliance. This was the rational outcome in addressing the two main problems that the postwar (west) Germany was facing: its protection against the well-defined threat that the USSR represented and the political, as well as the psychological, need to cut off from its Nazi past. In order to achieve these goals, Germany had to show to the rest of the western world that it could be a trustworthy partner and an ally. On the other hand, the rest of west European countries, along with the US, needed West Germany into their alliance, both because it was the most probable place for a Soviet conventional military attack to take place, right in the heart of Europe, and also for closely monitoring a nation capable of causing global scale catastrophes. For these reasons West Germany was allowed to became a founding member of the European Coal and Steel Community in 1950 and to join NATO in 1955. Consequently, Germany's decision for pursuing a deferent objective than most of the EC member-states and the US, regarding the recognition of Slovenia and Croatia, was very uncommon by Cold War standards.

According to the theoretical debate on the subject of international cooperation and from a liberal point of view, state preferences for cooperation or conflict are the result of interaction among states (external factors) and domestic policies (internal factors).[13] Structural realism, on the other hand,

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[12]https://history.state.gov/milestones/1989-1992/breakup-yugoslavia

[13] W.J. Long, *Economic Incentives and Bilateral Cooperation,* University of Michigan Press, USA, 1999, p.9.

argues that preferences are primarily formed by external forces and the very structure of the anarchic international system that forces states to pursue power.[14] Despite all the different opinions amongst scholars that express different theoretical approaches on this particular issue, they all agree on the assumption that the decision of a country to cooperate or defect is based on rationality and calculations of net gains and losses.[15] Bipolarity increased Germany's incentive to cooperate in the Western alliance, since that particular choice was rationally in favor of its national security interests, threatened by the Eastern Bloc. In addition to this, Germany had a sui generis national interest, as already mentioned, that of its reacceptance into the international community. In other words, international cooperation was the only choice West Germany had during the Cold War. After the latter's end though and the reunification of Germany, a new and stronger actor emerged in the International Community. The theory, like the story, of international politics is based on the great powers and their actions. Being stronger, means that one can cope easier with the consequences of unilateral acts.[16]

This new status of reunified Germany might explain only up to a point its decision to actively pursue the recognition of Slovenia and Croatia. This neorealist approach has, in itself, some serious limitations. Germany, after World War II, had a history of being a committed team player. The very same German foreign minister who was the architect of the uncommon act of the "unilateral recognition"[17] of the two brake away Yugoslav republics, Hans-Dietrich Genscher, was also the same politician that had led the effort to strengthen the European Political Cooperation (EPC), the regime that was governing EC's foreign policy cooperation. His initiatives paved the way for the Single European Act of 1986 that gave the EPC its formal organizational structure and finally led to its farther institutional strengthening, via the signing of the Maastricht Treaty in February 1992. After these two Balkan countries' declaration of independence, Germany complied to EC decisions concerning an arms embargo imposed to all of Yugoslavia in July 1991 and to economic sanctions imposed in November 1991. In addition to this, at the same time that all of these events were taking place, Germany was actively promoting Europe's monetary union, helping the creation of enduring restrictions on its own economic independence. It also joined with France to create Europe's only internationally integrated military unit. Furthermore, when the war in Bosnia escalated in 1994 and the nationalist Croatian president Tudjman sent his troops there, it was Germany that pressed him to pull back. In conclusion, although the evidence supporting the neorealist hypothesis about Germany's

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[14] J.J. Mearsheimer, "Structural Realism" in Tim Dunne, Milja Kurki, and Steve Smith, eds., *International Relations Theories: Discipline and Diversity*, Oxford University Press, Oxford 2006, p. 72.

[15] B. Crawford, *Explaining Defection from International Cooperation: Germany's Unilateral Recognition of Croatia*, Princeton University, World Politics, Vol. 48, USA, 1996, p. 485.

[16] K. N. Waltz, *Theory of International Politics,* Waveland Press Inc, USA, 2010, p.72,73 and 202.

[17] At this point it must be clarified that the 23rd of December 1991 Germany's recognition of Croatia and Slovenia, took place only after the 16th of December 1991 EPC's decision to recognize the independence of all the Yugoslav republics fulfilling all the conditions set at that very same meeting. Therefore, typically Germany did not act unilaterally [although it did recognize the two republics earlier than the commonly agreed date (15/01/1992)]; only threatened to do so. Substantially, it did. From this point on, when we will be mentioning "Germany's unilateral recognition of Croatia and Slovenia" we will be referring to the substantive meaning of its actions.

behavior are not solid, it also remains a fact that the country's enhanced new status after the reunification, made a defection scenario more realistic than ever.

Another hypothesis, also illustrating the causes of Germany's defection at an international level, is the institutional one. Although it can explain, to a certain extent, that defection, it does not purport to explain the German preference for recognition versus the preservation of Yugoslavia's unity. The institutional approach is based on three important points[18]: first, international regimes reduce the fear of not knowing the other party's true intentions, by increasing the necessary transparency and information flow between its members. This, consequently, mitigates the fear of unilateral actions, which are heightened in a multipolar world, and makes the regime's members more reluctant to adopt such a way of acting. Secondly, regimes help the consolidation of the idea that a common future exists. They create the expectation that all of the participants will interact indefinitely and a defection will be punished by someone else's noncooperation in the future. When the members of an international regime value their future relationships, which can be endangered by a unilateral act, it is more possible to refrain themselves from pursuing such actions. Thirdly, reputation is a valuable asset in the world of international relations. No one takes a state that has repeatedly proven to be untrustworthy seriously. Acting unilaterally, while being a member of an international regime, can stigmatize a state as exactly that: Being unworthy of everybody else's trust. The losses this kind of labeling can cause, is a very powerful motive for the states to prefer cooperation, even if this does not promote their short term national interests. It is a strategic-level choice. These three points taken together into account, suggest that strong international regimes are both shaping their members incentives *and* creating a preference for cooperation.[19] Unfortunately, the EPC was yet not a strong international regime, capable of enforcing its decisions even to its most powerful members.

An additional aspect that needs to be referred to, is the one concerning the polyphony of the international community on the matter of new countries' recognition during that particular period. The two main principles governing international behavior towards this very sensitive matter, is that of people's right for self-determination, which was codified in Article I of the UN Charter, and the principle of territorial integrity and borders' inviolability, upon which UN membership was based. Because of the latter's contradiction to the former in the case of a separatist movement within a sovereign state, actively seeking for territorial separation, the freedom of self-determination was not extended to this kind of movements. Furthermore, the right of self-determination was enriched during the Cold War, directly targeting the totalitarian regime of the Soviet Union, through the addition of the right of all people "to determine, when and as they wish, their internal and external political status, without external interference, and to pursue as they wish their political, economic, social and cultural development".[20] While the EC members had agreed to work in concert towards preserving Yugoslavia's unity, even by offering the promise of an association and possibly a full EC membership to a united Yugoslavia, the

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[18] B. Crawford, *Explaining Defection from International Cooperation: Germany's Unilateral Recognition of Croatia*, Princeton University, World Politics, Vol. 48, USA, 1996, p.487.

[19] Ibid.

[20] Conference On Security And Co-operation In Europe, Final Act, Article VIII, par.2, Helsinki 1975.

international recognition that both the US and the EC granted to the USSR's breakaway Baltic republics, weakened the rational for not recognizing Croatia and Slovenia.

Summarizing, the external factors that led Germany to defect from the common EC policy, can be limited to the following three: first, after the country's reunification, Germany had been, undoubtedly upgraded to the most powerful state in Europe. Second, in this new world moving towards multipolarity, the regime that the EC represented was neither strong enough to impose its decisions to its members and reduce the uncertainty among them, nor did it have any real military capabilities in order to convey its political decisions on the ground. Germany took advantage of and was driven by these systemic weaknesses and of the non-existing sanctions against defection and made the threat to act unilaterally. Third, the international behavior in this case was governed by conflicting norms. No one knew what was to happen in the imploding Soviet Union and no one wanted to take hasty actions on a matter still unfolding, that of new states emerging and seeking for international recognition[21], a matter that clearly had to be addressed on the basis of political considerations, rather than on human rights. These three external factors combined with Germany's persistent effort to cooperate in other issue areas, drove Genscher to the rational conclusion that the reputational costs from a defection would be low.

2.1.2 The internal factors of Germany's defection from the EC's common policy

The evidence supporting the combination of both the neorealist and the institutional hypothesis, suggests that incentives for defection increased because of the new multipolar international structure that was more susceptible to actions like these and also because the cost of a defection was now low. It does not explain, however, why the German government decided that it would be better off with a unilateral decision to recognize Croatia and Slovenia, than with the initial multilateral course of conflict mediation, in favor of Yugoslavia's integrity. The general unrest that characterized the international environment at the time and the major changes that were taking place, where producing a tsunami-like event that every nation interpreted on its own way and tried to deal with its impacts differently. Those different interpretations by the different political elites, had to spring out of differentiations on the expression of domestic forces. In our effort to discover the sources of Germany's preference for a fragmented Yugoslavia, we will analyze the two main domestic policy-making factors: societal pressure and elite-party politics.

The first one, that of societal pressure, does not seem to be able to explain the preference change of the German political elites, in favor of the recognition of Slovenia and Croatia. Just almost two weeks after these two constituent Yugoslav republics had declared their independence, the German political parties reached a consensus in supporting their secession. The first relevant opinion survey taken in late July, after the parties' consensus, revealed that

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[21] B. Crawford, *Explaining Defection from International Cooperation: Germany's Unilateral Recognition of Croatia*, Princeton University, World Politics, Vol. 48, USA, 1996, p.491.

61% of the respondents where either in favor of Yugoslavia's unity (34%), or they did not have an opinion on the matter at all (27%). Furthermore, a staggering 92% expressed its trust to the EC for its mediation efforts and its conflict resolution actions.[22] Peoples' opinion on the subject started to change after Genscher's argument for recognition, within the EPC, had become public and after early mediation efforts had failed.

The argument that Germany's Croatian Community, mainly situated in traditionally conservative Bavaria, lobbied Croatia's independency inside the conservative parties of CDU (Christian Democratic Union) and CSU(Christian Social Union) since 1990, influencing them to change their opinion on the matter, cannot be supported by any evidence. Both of these parties steadily held their position in favor of a unified Yugoslavia until the end of June 1991. In addition to this, the conservative parties were not the first ones that openly supported Croatia's and Slovenia's independency; it was the left-center Green party that did so as early as February 1991.[23]

As for the media factor, mainstream media organizations were divided between those supporting Croatian and Slovenian secession and others warning about the dangers of a hasty recognition. There were media organizations, like the Bavarian network *Bayierishe Rundfunk*, strongly in favor of the Croatian positions[24], but, overall, media stance was not unified and thus, strong enough to influence developments towards the one or the other direction. The common stance for recognition came later on that summer.

The societal pressure factor is, in sum, incapable of offering a solid explanation for the recognition preference, of the bottom-up variety. That leaves us only with the alternative of the top-down one. The elite hypothesis has three different dimensions.[25] According to the first, the preference for recognition originated from the Cold War era. Back then, the right of self-determination was acknowledged in a profound way in the West Germany's society and political elites, because of the separation of the country. It would not be an exaggeration to say that it had created a norm, a political tradition to Germany's foreign policy that greatly influenced its decision making process in the Balkans. The political elites knowing that the self-determination norm was, horizontally, cutting through the German society, calculated high political gains in the domestic arena, if the self-determination card was rightly played.

This norm, nevertheless, focused only on Croats and Slovenians and excluded Serbs. One third of the latter's population lived outside Serbia. In Croatia alone, according to the last pre-war census of 1991, there was a 580.000-strong Serb minority, representing almost 12,2% of the total population.[26] The Arbitration Commission came to the conclusion that those Serbs in Croatia were subjected to human rights abuses. Britain and France had incorporated the Serb self-determination factor into their foreign policy

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[22]J.S Lantis, *Strategic Dilemmas and the Evolution of German Foreign Policy Since Unification,* Praeger Publishers, Westport CT, p. 85.

[23]*Parlamentarische Protokolle* (fn. 35), 408B.

[24]J.S Lantis, *Strategic Dilemmas and the Evolution of German Foreign Policy Since Unification,* Praeger Publishers, Westport CT. p. 86.

[25] B. Crawford, *Explaining Defection from International Cooperation: Germany's Unilateral Recognition of Croatia*, Princeton University, World Politics, Vol. 48, USA, 1996, p.503.

[26] S. Woodward, Balkan Tragedy, Chaos and Dissolution after the Cold War, The Brookings Institute, Washington D.C. 1995, p. 33.

traditions through their direct involvement in the creation of the Yugoslav state in 1918 and they also had a certain, conservative perspective of the self-determination right due to the bloody decolonization process they had experienced.[27] Germany had neither of these experiences. The prism through which the political elites of the CDU/CSU interpreted the unfolding events was that of the Cold War: a central communist government (Serbia) was trying to keep its grasp on its satellite republics (all the others), who democratically had chosen their independence.

This way of thinking however, does not fully explain oppositional SPD's quick adoption of the conservative coalition's preference for recognition. During the Cold War, the center-left SPD had argued that self-determination was a vague principal that could be pursued in many ways. These many ways of pursuance were also available to solve this particular problem as well. A looser federation, a new Yugoslav constitution and a new central government accepted by all were some of these other ways already proposed, by Croats and Slovenes, at the early stages of the negotiations.[28] Why SPD did not pursue a solution based on this way of thinking? The reason is known by the term "bandwagoning" and is the second dimension of the political elite hypothesis. 1990 was an election year for East and West Germany. On the 18th of March the first and last free elections were held in East Germany and the east branch of CDU was the winner. The east branch of SPD came second. Similar were the results in West Germany few months later, on the 2nd of December, were the CDU/CSU won the elections, while SPD was elected in the opposition. SPD, throughout its entire campaign, communicated ambivalent messages to the voters and that was the main reason of its defeat.[29] On the one hand, it clearly favored the collapse of the East German regime, but on the other did not openly support a rapid German reunification, feeling uncomfortable with the nationalistic sentiments that it evoked. Bandwagoning tactic suggests that a political party should adopt popular policy positions of other parties, in order to attract the latters' voters. In other words, bandwagoning is a synonym of political opportunism. When the SPD lost the elections and the winner, the CDU, came out favoring diplomatic recognition based on the self-determination right, the former switched its position as well so it would not be outflanked.

The bandwagoning effect was generally intensified during the 1980's. Until then, the German political scene was characterized by the dominance of the Christian Democrats and Social Democrats governing either together, forming big coalitions, or separately, in coalition with smaller parties. In the eighties, these two major parties lost significant amount of their political power in favor of smaller parties that were now able to surpass the 5% barrier so as to achieve representation in the German parliament. That led to further political fragmentation. Smaller parties were now trying to identify themselves not on the basis of left-right dichotomies, which had become obsolete, but on an issue-by-issue basis, where they tried to express distinct political positions. This tactic also included foreign policy issues. The two big political parties, now vulnerable to loosing voters to the smaller ones, were forced to adopt some of the radical political positions of the latter, expressed in a more digestible form, in order to

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[27] B. Crawford, *Explaining Defection from International Cooperation: Germany's Unilateral Recognition of Croatia*, Princeton University, World Politics, Vol. 48, USA, 1996, p. 505-506
[28] Ibid, p. 505
[29] Ibid, p. 506.

win back some of their voters.[30] SPD did exactly that when it came out in favor of the recognition. The small Green Party, was dominated by dissidents from East Germany who had opposed the communist regime and were strong supporters of the self-determination principle.[31] As a consequence, this small and insignificant political party, exercised considerable moral authority on the Yugoslav issue and attracted new voters, mainly from the ideologically closest SPD. Receiving pressure from both sides, CDU/CSU and the Greens, bandwagoning both of them at the same time, was the easiest way for the SPD to bring its voters back.[32]

Although foreign policy culture, along with elite bandwagoning tactics, under the catalytic influence of party fragmentation, can explain the creation of an early elite consensus in favor of the recognition of Croatia and Slovenia, the incentives behind Germany's top policy-makers decision to defect from a multilateral European agreement are yet to be determined. In that direction, one should keep in mind that the politics of many international negotiations can be conceived as a two-level game. At the national level, domestic groups are pressing the government to adopt favorable policies, while politicians seek power by constructing coalitions among these groups. At the international level, national governments seek to maximize domestic pressures' satisfaction, while minimizing the adverse consequences of foreign developments. Top policy makers cannot ignore neither of these two levels so long as their countries remain interdependent, yet sovereign.[33] Kohl and Genscher found no fruitful ground back home to support their preference for cooperation with the EPC, mainly due to the German people self-determination culture and especially after the SPD's bandwagoning. After Genscher's late June trip to Croatia, he stated that he was convinced that Serbia undisputedly was the aggressor in the conflict, making, at a later stage, the parallelism with the German aggression of the pre-WWII period and the appeasement of that aggression by the international community.[34] In early July, Kohl was the first to speak about Serb aggression as the cause of the conflict, imposing a new interpretation of the war, that of an international rather than of a civil one.[35] German top decision makers had their options narrowed by other domestic forces, even from within their party. Nonetheless, they continued to publically support the EPC's position, as can be seen by holding the arms embargo imposed to all of Yugoslavia, including Croatia, between July and December 1991. The progressively mounting domestic pressure was now in favor of both multilateralism *and* recognition. That left them with no other choice but to draw the EC closer to Germany's position. When that happened, on December's 16th EPC's meeting, where the EC agreed to recognize Croatia and Slovenia under certain conditions, Kohl was given a standing ovation at the coinciding, first ever all-German CDU congress in Dresden. He presented that decision as a pure victory of Germany's foreign policy; and it certainly was.

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[30] Ibid, p. 508.

[31] Ibid, p. 507.

[32] Ibid, p. 510.

[33] R.D. Putnam, *Diplomacy and Domestic Politics: The Logic of Two-Level Games*, The MIT Press, International Organization, Vol. 42, No. 3, (Summer, 1988), p. 434.

[34] *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, August 6, 1991, p. 1.

[35] B. Crawford, *Explaining Defection from International Cooperation: Germany's Unilateral Recognition of Croatia*, Princeton University, World Politics, Vol. 48, USA, 1996, p. 511.

In order to achieve that, Genscher tried to increase other's motivation to adopt German preferences by implementing three strategies[36]: first, he tried to convince them that Serbia was the aggressor of the conflict and self-determination should be the guiding principle in this particular crisis. Second, he used the threat of a German unilateral recognition, something that would transform Maastricht treaty into a practical joke. Finally, he bargained. He promised support on other issue areas if he was supported on this particular one. The *Economist* reported that in return for Britain's support on the Yugoslavia issue, Germany was willing to offer its support to Britain on a number of issues at Maastricht.[37] These strategies resulted in the EC coming closer to the German position. On October 10t^h, the EPC decided to withhold the recognition for two more months, giving the peace process another chance. When December 10th came and passed with no action on the behalf of Europe, Genscher felt betrayed. That feeling was amplified when France and Britain tried to block Germany's moves through the UN Security Council. When that did not happen, he bet on the assumption that they would not undermine Maastricht's cooperative spirit. He appeared to compromise on conditionality, although he knew that in a matter as vague as prerequisites to be met for the recognition of a new state, his European partners could give him a bunch of excuses in order to avoid doing what Germany wanted them to. Having this fear at the back of their minds, Germany's top decision makers decided to defect, leaving to the EPC the choice of either following, or taking the blame for embarrassing disputes over the Yugoslav issue, a few days after the final drafting of the Maastricht Treaty.

2.1.3 Conclusions on Germany's stance

The recognition of Croatia and Slovenia as independent states, provided the necessary igniter for the Balkans' volatile ethnic and political mixture to finally explode. Germany played a catalytic role in this development and practically left no other choice to the EU but to consent to Yugoslavia's disintegration, in order to save its image of unity. Appearances are everything in international relations, because they actually shape realities according to the constructivist theory, as we will later analyze. In sum, the reasons that Germany, a state repeatedly proven to be a strong supporter of multilateralism, acted unilaterally in this particular issue are the followings:

1. Germany's newly increased power in the international structure in conjunction with the changing global geopolitical environment, made an action like that conceivable. Because of the weak and underdeveloped regime that the EPC represented, the real problem of which was the lack of effective adjudication or enforcement mechanisms[38], such an action of defection was upgraded to a considerable political option.

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[36] Ibid, p. 513.

[37] "Wreckognition," *Economist*, January 18, 1992, p. 49.

[38] M.E. Smith, *Europe's Foreign and Security Policy: The Institutionalization of Cooperation*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2004, p. 153.

2. The absence of clear international guidelines on new countries recognition, weekend the external factors of preference-shaping and gave room to Germany's domestic political balances to be strongly expressed in the decision making process on this foreign policy issue.

3. Germany's foreign policy tradition was, due to the country's post WWII separation, linked to a wider perception of the self-determination right, unlike France's and Britain's relative traditions which were based on their different historical experiences.

4. The political party fragmentation that occurred in Germany, led the major political parties to embrace bandwagoning tactics and to adopt more extreme political positions than of those multilateral agreements usually produce. The consequence was the further limitation of top decision makers' alternatives.

2.2 The International Community's involvement

The Croatian and Slovenian 25th of June 1991 declaration of independence had, as a consequence, the intervention of the Yugoslav People's Army (YPA), in an attempt to preserve the country's unity. YPA was deployed initially in Slovenia but withdrew, with the mediation of the EC, after a 10 day war that killed about seventy people.[39] In Croatia things were different. Smoldering armed hostilities between the Croatian government and radical Serbs since August 1990, were further spread by March-May 1991 and upgraded to violent local confrontations. These confrontations further escalated to an open war between Croatia and the YPA, two months after the former's declaration of independence.[40] This war ended the following January, after a cease fire agreement brokered by the UN's envoy Cyrus Vans and paved the way for UN peacekeeping troops in the region.

Bosnia and Herzegovina[41] followed the lead of the two breakaway republics and also declared its independency from the Yugoslav state on the 3rd of March 1992 and was officially recognized by the EU shortly after (6/4/1992). Given the country's demographic synthesis, based on 1991 data, which showed 43,7% Bosnian Muslims, 31,4% Serbs and 17,3% Croats[42], the spreading of the war in Bosnia was far from unexpected.

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[39]S. Woodward, Balkan Tragedy, Chaos and Dissolution after the Cold War, The Brookings Institute, Washington D.C. 1995, p. 146.
[40] Ibid.
[41]From now on Bosnia.
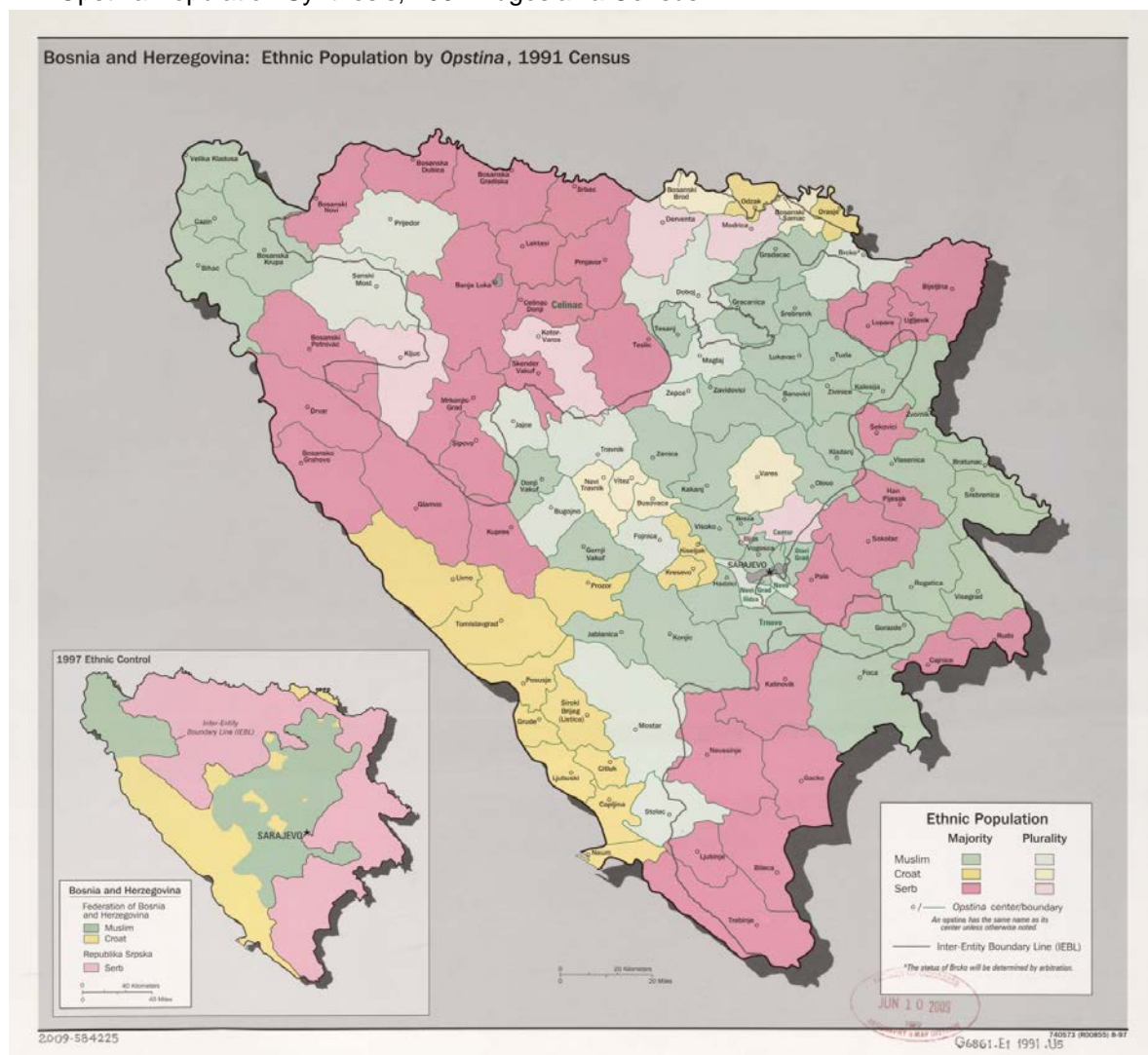[42] S. Woodward, *Balkan Tragedy, Chaos and Dissolution after the Cold War*, The Brookings Institute, Washington D.C. 1995, p. 33.

BiH Opstina Population Synthesis, 1991 Yugoslavia Census

Source: http://www.loc.gov/item/2009584225/

2.2.1 The international geopolitical environment

The end of the Cold War set the West powers to an enthusiastic mode. The very same changes that were perceived as the dawn of a new era, one of reduced security threats and of expanding economies, were now creating insecurities and conflicts within Yugoslavia.[43] The European Community was undergoing a deepening procedure, trying to institutionalize some, until then, wishful thinking, such as a common European foreign and defense policy and a future common currency. The signing of the Maastricht Treaty on February 7th, 1992, created a comprehensive institutional basis on which the European Union was aspiring to establish and further deepen an international as well as a security regime, similar to a federation. The US on the other hand, while still celebrating its cold war victory, were also in the process of redirecting their strategic efforts to a different, yet still unclear, direction.

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[43]Ibid, p.148.

Some things though, were crystal clear for them: one was that Yugoslavia had lost its Cold War's strategic importance.

2.2.2 The role of the United Nations

On the 25th of September 1991, the UN Security Council unanimously adopted resolution No 713 (UNSCR 713), according to which it expressed its deepest concern on the crisis in Yugoslavia and called all of its member states to enforce an arms embargo on that country.[44] After a ceasefire had been achieved, the UN authorized, under the UNSCR 749, the deployment of the UN Protection Force (UNPROFOR) with a time spam of twelve months and a mission of demilitarizing three of the so called "Protected Areas" and of protecting its inhabitants from armed attacks against them.[45] Gradually, UNPROFOR's presence was expanded throughout Yugoslavia, trying to follow the rapidly unfolding events (war in Bosnia, recrudescence of the conflict between Croats and Serbo-Croats) that it could not control, even less predict and prevent from happening.

It would not be far from the truth to say that the UN involvement in Yugoslavia was, generally, unsuccessful. The greatest of its failures nevertheless, was its inability to deliver at the very core of its mandate, namely the protection of the UN designated Protected Areas. The most profound example of this inability was the Srebrenica massacre, in which over 8.000 Bosnian-Muslims were executed after the Bosnian–Serb paramilitaries enforced the withdrawal of the Dutch UN contingent that was supposedly protecting them.[46]

Regardless the reasons of that failure, which can be traced back to the very structure of this particular organization that forbids it from acting autonomously, hence rapidly and effectively in a militarily context, the undoubtable conclusion was that if the problem was really to be solved, the solution had to originate from the cooperation between the US and the EU.

2.2.3 The US and the EU in the Bosnian crisis

In order to understand the US's and the EU's actions, reactions or the absence of both in the Yugoslav crisis, one should first analyze their motives and the stakes, as they perceived them, behind any relevant decision. Both of these international actors, given the massive special weight they carry as the pillars of the Western world, had to carefully calculate every single aspect of the impact their decisions would have. Power and responsibility

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[44]http://www.un.org/en/peacekeepin/missions/past/unprof_b.htm

[45]Ibid.

[46] D. Serwer, *The Balkans: from American to European leadership*, from *Shift or Rift*, G. Lindstrom (ed.), Institute for Security Studies (ISS), Paris 2003. p.176

after all are, or should be, bound together.[47] Net gains and losses are always the one side of the coin; reputation is the other. Balancing between them, while trying to appease the press and the public opinion, both internally and externally, while simultaneously depriving your domestic political opponents of any political accusation against you, is a very difficult task for any top decision maker.

2.2.3.1   Theoretical approaches

The very question set here of how the two major international actors were involved in the Yugoslav crisis and how they acted upon it, has a theoretical background that we have to study if we want to understand their motives, explain and assess their actions.

This theoretical background is two dimensional: On the one hand there is realism and neo-realism, which are interpreting political decisions on the basis of net gains and losses, military power and the structure of the international system. On the other hand, contemporary societies demand from top policy makers to also take into account the impact of their decisions on individuals as well. The international actors and especially the most powerful ones, have to carefully calculate and incorporate into their decision-making process a "mixture" of these two "ingredients", a mixture with always changing analogies according to the dynamics of the situation at hand.

In analyzing the element of power, Thucydides in *The Peloponnesian War,* came to the conclusion that power has an aspect of justice in it; a different kind of justice that has nothing to do with equal treatment. Like people, he argues, states are not equal. Some are stronger, others are weaker. Classic realism, thus, perceives international relations as an anarchic system of unequal states, that have no other option but to function in full compliance with the principles of power politics, where security and survival are the highest values and war the ultimate regulator.[48] In addition to this, *The Prince* of Niccolo Machiavelli, is the bearer of a different kind of morality according to which a political leader should always be ready to sacrifice his personal moral principles, by making immoral decisions, in favor of himself and his country. Power and political responsibility have their own ethics.[49] Thomas Hobbes' classic realist theory suggests that as a human creation, international law will only be respected by the sovereign states as long as it does not contradict with their national interests and does not pose a threat against their security and survival.[50] [51] Finally, according to the

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[47]R. Jackson – G. Sorensen, *Introduction to International Relations. Theories and Approaches*, ed. P. Tsakonas, Gutenberg, Athens 2006, p. 127.

[48]Ibid, p.116.

[49]Ibid, p. 117-118.

[50]Ibid, p. 120-121.

[51] T. Hobbes , *Leviathan*, vol. A, Knowledge, Athens, 1989, trans. G. Paschalidis-E. Metaxopoulos, p. 281.

patriarch of contemporary neoclassical realism Hans Morgenthau, humans are characterized by their lust for power, or *animus dominandi.* He too believed that political morality is something very different from personal morality. According to him, a political leader trying to implement his personal moral values on the public sphere, should be considered as immoral and irresponsible[52] given the fact that "international politics, like all the other politics, is a struggle for power".[53]

Summarizing the classic and neoclassic realist theory that Thucydides, Machiavelli, Hobbes and Morgenthau represent, one can argue that although it proposes a certain political philosophy and some "rules" that can be applied to explain certain political phenomena, it cannot produce definitive and clear cut solutions on complex international problems, without causing war. With that as a given, classic as well as neo-classic realists are going for the second-best, which is a global power equilibrium; a state of things that serves the basic values of international peace and security by preventing wars from happening, by preventing the domination of one powerful actor and by always keeping in mind that humans are not as we would like them to be.[54]

Kenneth Waltz is the top contemporary scholar of neorealism. In his work *Theory of International Politics*, he argues that the main ideological difference between neorealism and the classic realism lays on the fact that it is not the political leaders who produce political decisions, based on some personal or other ethical code and values, but is the international system's structure that leads them to certain decisions. Their choices are very limited or even none existing in an anarchic world, where the states may be legally equal, but they are unequal in terms of other, mostly economic and military, capabilities. Waltz's theory is inspired by the aspirations of behaviorism and is based on the perception of the international system as a deterministic one, where values are irrelevant and predictions can be made on international developments, based on scientific-like rules that can be discovered.[55]

As far as the second dimension that we have mentioned earlier and needs to be explored, the one that also takes individuals into account, there was a relevant theory developed in Great Britain during the Cold War, one that although some of its most eminent representatives where not British, was left to been known as the "English School", or "international society".[56] This theory accepts the significance of power and rejects behaviorist approach in the matters of international relations. It focuses on the role of the state and the interstate relation system in general, while it rejects the Hobbesian view of the

[52] R. Jackson – G. Sorensen, *Introduction to International Relations. Theories and Approaches*, ed. P. Tsakonas, Gutenberg, Athens 2006 p. 122-123.

[53] J. Baylis, S. Smith, P. Owens, *The Globalization of World Politics*, Epicenter, Athens 2011, p.118

[54] R. Jackson – G. Sorensen, *Introduction to International Relations. Theories and Approaches*, ed. P. Tsakonas, Gutenberg, Athens 2006 p.127.

[55] Ibid, p.133-139.

[56] Ibid, p.91.

international system as a jungle. It rejects the idea of war as endemic to the system.[57] These international relations scholars, give great importance to the individuals as well, sometimes even greater than of the states'. Unlike contemporary liberalism though, the English School, does not give too much credit to intergovernmental or non-governmental organizations. According to this theory, states matter but people matter the same, or even more.[58]

In short, the international society is essentially a middle path between British liberal institutionalism and American realism.[59] The governments are responsible for defending their national interests, but also have to be in line with international rules and regulations; a balance that in the real world is most of the times very difficult to be achieved.

The last of the theoretical approaches that is going to help us better understand the motives and more accurately assess the actions taken by the two major international actors in Yugoslavia, is that of social constructivism. As an international relations' theory, social constructivism belongs to those known as meta-positivistic, although it retains some positivistic elements, like the importance of scientific explanation, in its methodological practices. It argues that what is known as "international relations", is practically a human mental construction and not something that it exists on its own. It represents the sum of ideas and principles established by certain people, at a certain time period, which we all accept as real and act accordingly. This construction, this "society world", inductively can be altered if the thoughts and the ideas of the participants change. Even though this society world also contains people and material things, like borders, weapons, natural resources etc, the key element is the way that all of these are organized and interact with each other. The mental element that lays behind of all of these and combines them, is the most important factor. According to a famous quote of Alexander Wendt, the most profound scholar of constructivism, "anarchy is what states make of it".[60]

2.2.3.2   Assessing the US and the EU role in the Bosnian crisis

In our effort to understand the US's and the EU's motives, and explain and assess their actions during the period of the Yugoslav crisis, we will use the traditional approach. That is because it is the author's conviction that international *relations* is exactly that: relations between real people and not something that exists on its own, outside society, waiting for someone to discover the true and unquestionable rules that makes it work. It is

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[57] http://www.lse.ac.uk/internationalRelations/news/misc-news/Wilson-ES-Bologna-.pdf

[58] R. Jackson – G. Sorensen, *Introduction to International Relations. Theories and Approaches*, ed. P. Tsakonas, Gutenberg, Athens 2006, p.93.

[59] http://www.lse.ac.uk/internationalRelations/news/misc-news/Wilson-ES-Bologna-.pdf

[60] A. Wendt, *Anarchy is what States Make of it: The Social Construction of Power Politics*, International Organization, Vol. 46, No. 2. (Spring, 1992), p. 395.

human beings, with personal values and ethics that are called to make the tough decisions, knowing that these decisions are going to cost lives; lives of real people, soldiers and civilians alike, irrelevant of their side. The men and women that need to take such decisions are not robots, so the human factor can never be ignored while studying cases like the one in hand. This traditional approach we are going to use, which argues that the use of force always has to have an excuse and, thus, can never be totally separated by moral value estimations[61], can only be seconded by the behaviorist approach. Not replaced by it.

Having our selected assessing method clarified, we will briefly reset the general background of that period, in an effort to better understand the mindset of the leaders. The Cold War was over and the United States and the western allies were the undisputed winners. In the still existing, nuclear capable USSR, Gorbachev's political fate was uncertain, while the country's internal situation was, also, far from stable. Although the US were, by then, the only military superpower, the world was shifting to multipolarity in political and economical terms, thus, according to neorealists, to a more fluid and potentially unstable state. The American president George Bush Senior, had invaded Iraq with the declared goal of freeing Kuwait. Furthermore, the soviet threat had ceased to exist, raising questions about NATO's usefulness and the US's military presence in Europe. The West European Union (WEU) was already reactivated since 1984 and there was aspirations from certain European countries, especially from Germany and France[62], to transform it into Europe's independent defense pillar, under the upcoming Maastricht treaty and the institutionalization of the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP). That, in conjunction with some other economic matters, produced tensions between the two sides of the Atlantic. These tensions could be seen in the US response, also known as the Dobbin's Demarche, to the WEU's ministerial proposal for organizing an army division, based on EC members' national brigades, for immediate action in Yugoslavia.[63] Furthermore, there was the fact of the German reunification and all of the implications, psychological, economical and practical, that it was producing and the different national interests of the EC member-states in the Balkan region.

A key reason that the crisis in Yugoslavia was not decisively tackled at its early stages was that even if the Cold War had ended, its mentality was still present. Constructivists would argue that although a massive and sudden change had taken place, that of the collapse of the Soviet Union, the "society world" had not yet fully realized it, so, in a way, that fact was still in the process of becoming the new reality. As an outcome, the western leaders maintained

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[61] Ibid, p. 79.

[62] J.A Myers, *The Western European Union: Pillar of NATO or Defense Arm of the EC?* Center for Defense Studies, London, 1992, p. 53.

[63] S. Woodward, Balkan Tragedy, Chaos and Dissolution after the Cold War, The Brookings Institute, Washington D.C. 1995, p. 457.

their already surpassed mentality and for once again, they were ready to support whoever presented himself as an anticommunist, in support of their stated objective of clearing Eastern Europe of its last remnants of Soviet influence.[64] It was easier and it did make sense at that time to also include Yugoslavia in this category of states, those needing to be "purged" from their communist past, despite of the latter's non-aligned political tradition. On this basis, the new Slovenian and Croatian nationalistic governments that came in power in the 1990's elections and whose ex-communist leaders skillfully created an image of their election's victory as one of the democrats against the communist dictators in Belgrade, were granted the exclusive right of credible speech. The distinction between federal officials and officials of the Serbian government was purposely faded, while the West was overlooking on human rights abuses and signs of political repressions on Serbs, like those of Croatia's against the Serbian minority in Krajina.[65]

It has previously been mentioned that the EC's international regime at that time, EPC, was not strong enough to impose and support independent military action in the Balkans. Despite of its restrictions though, the issue of military intervention was raised in 1991, both by NATO and the WEU, but it was the unwillingness of the United Kingdom to become engaged without a direct US involvement that led this Franco-German initiative to a failure.[66] The member states of the EC, especially those with immediate proximity to the region, as well as the EC as a whole, worried about the potentiality of a full scale war. They had a realistic problem to deal with; the serious possibility of a war literally at their back yard. The immigration flood that would primarily affect the European countries, combined with the creation of a lawless region in the heart of Europe, was a nightmare scenario. On the other hand, such a development would also be a humiliation for the EC/EU and the image that it was so hard trying to cultivate, that of a strong union of free countries, with common foreign and security policies, basing its collective might on soft power politics and on constructive dialog as the means of resolving inner and outer differences. This was the reality that Europe wanted to produce but the developments in Yugoslavia were not helping.

The basic problem, though, that the EC/EU was confronting, was actually internal. Member states could not come to an agreement about a common way of dealing with the situation in Yugoslavia. For once more, the national interests, mainly of the strongest European countries, were leading the way. The collapse of the Soviet Union had turned Germany from the central pillar of the Western bloc, to the front-line edge of a deep chasm.[67] The reunited Germany had to shape and maintain closer relations with the central-eastern European

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[64]Ibid, p. 152.

[65]Ibid.

[66] D. Triantaphyllou, *The interplay between the EU and the United States in the Balkans*, from *Shift or Rift*, G. Lindstrom (ed.), Institute for Security Studies (ISS), Paris 2003, p. 194.

[67]Ibid, p. 196.

countries (CEEC's), which already had strong economic ties with the late East Germany, in the pursuit of lowering the huge cost of the reunification.[68] As a result, Germany was far more interested about the future of these European countries, with which it also was in immediate geographical proximity and, thus, was trying hard to convince its EC/EU allies to adopt its Ostpolitik, Union-wide.[69] The argument of self-determination on which it built its reasoning for bringing the CEEC's closer to the EU, in order to retain its power, had to be applied on Yugoslavia as well. By unilaterally recognizing Slovenia and Croatia on the basis of self-determination, Germany drove the crisis to its climax.

France on the other hand, while looking for ways to enlarge WEU's importance as the European security pillar, was not so enthusiastic about the prospect of the EU's enlargement to the central-east; and it had good reasons not to. First, these countries had a really strong agricultural sector that would affect the EU's Common Agricultural Policy that France had tried so hard to shape in its favor. Second, this enlargement would absorb financial resources originally destined for EU programs aiming to help growth in other places, like the Maghreb and the Mediterranean region in general, were France had particular concerns.[70] Third, Germany's patronage towards the CEEC's meant that if they were to become EU members, the former would become even stronger. Thus, France, although in favor of joining Germany in stressing the primacy of new European security initiatives, mostly due to its fear of a predominant Germany, preferred the deepening of the EU, rather than its enlargement.[71] In Yugoslavia, France preferred not to confront Germany, despite its traditionally good relations with Serbia. Having as its primary aim to keep Germany under control, in a stronger union, France chose to play along.

The United Kingdom was watching its special relation with the US to losing its significance, having the latter indicating that it would be better of dealing with one international European actor, the EU, rather than twelve, or more, different states.[72] The UK was left with no other choice but to intensify its involvement into the European political arena, in order to remain on the front line of the Continent's policy making procedures.[73] Geographically far from the Balkans, the UK was not that much concerned about what was happening there. Playing along with Germany and France though, was enhancing its image as an active and powerful EU member and also reaffirmed its traditional role as the balancing factor between them; and that was something good.

In sum, national concerns and fear of dominance by one over the others were tackling a concerted EU approach for a common Balkan policy[74], in the early

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[68]Ibid.

[69]Ibid, p. 197.

[70]Ibid.

[71]Ibid.

[72]Ibid.

[73]Ibid, p.198.

[74]Ibid.

stages of the crisis. On the 27th of August 1991, the Arbitration Commission of the Peace Conference on Yugoslavia was created[75], but its contribution to its declared purpose was actually minimal. European major state actors, were clearly using a mixture of politics towards Yugoslavia, in which realism was the main ingredient. They were calculating gains and losses, in order to define their strategy on the matter, taking also into consideration being in line with the international law by supporting one of its two main guidelines; the self-determination right. The other one, the one concerning the inviolability of the national borders, was quietly left out of the equation. The mass media, with their tremendous power to shape the "social world" and to construct desirable realities[76], were doing their job methodically: they overexposed the right of the Slovenians, the Croats and the Bosnians for self-determination, the suppression of human rights that these people suffered by the Serbs, which was not a lie, but the fact that there was already an internationally recognized country, Yugoslavia, the borders of which were theoretically protected by the international law, was almost never mentioned. What was also rarely mentioned was that the Serbs as well had the right of self-determination and that they were also suffering suppressions of their human rights. In short, selective references to the international law and "social world's" manipulation, were to support a realistic, at its core, policy, which actually did not aim to violently disintegrate Yugoslavia; that was an unfortunate but manageable byproduct. The European Union as a whole, on the other hand, was trying to implement a different strategy, the proclaimed goal of which was to preserve Yugoslavia's unity, also according to the international law, based on the inviolability of borders. In this forum, other countries of the EU that were opposed to the foreseeable collapse of Yugoslavia, tried to convince the others that this course of action was not right. That it would create a precedent which would further unstable the region in the future. When Germany basically posed the dilemma of Yugoslavia's unity versus EU's unity, everyone chose the second.

Adopted EU Policy towards Yugoslavia

Impact on Interests	Germany	France	UK	Yugoslavia	EU
Positive	x				x
Negative		x		x	
Neutral			x		

On the other side of the Atlantic, things were clearer. The collapse of the Soviet Union had, as a side effect, the diminishing of Yugoslavia's previous strategic importance. Yugoslavia, in a purely realistic way of political thinking, was no longer needed and also the United States had more immediate matters

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[75]http://eprints.soas.ac.uk/2572/1/Badinter%20Commission.pdf

[76] N. Couldry, *Media, Society, World, Social Theory and Digital Media Practice*, Polity Press, Cambridge, 2012, p. 63.

to attend to in Iraq, than that of a local scale crisis in the Balkans. The US made some diplomatic efforts to preserve the unity of the country, but its final stance was produced by the fact that no vital interests were at stake anymore in the region. According to the legendary words of the head of the State Department at that time, James Baker, "the United States had no dog in the fight".[77] The only commitment that President Bush made in Christmas of 1992, was that the US would intervene only in the case of a crisis spillover to Kosovo.[78]

In assessing the US's political decisions on the matter, we can undoubtedly support that those decisions were made mainly on the theoretical basis of realism and neorealism. No dog in the fight meant net gains and losses calculations. The US did not want Yugoslavia to collapse. It was preferable for them to have a single state in the region, especially one with a strong possibility of soon becoming an EU member. When the citizens of three constituent parties of this federation decided, through referendums, to secede, even if their decision was against their common federal constitution, the US had no reason to intervene. The foreseeable implosion of the country, although unwanted, still would not have any major impact on US's vital interests. It is true that they could have enforced a cease fire when the fighting began, by putting US or NATO troops on the ground. But why doing so? Why should the American government risk the lives of Americans or ally soldiers in a war that was not of its own making and in which it had nothing to gain whatever the outcome? The people of Croatia and Slovenia had elected nationalist governments. Those same people voted in favor of a secession from the Yugoslav state. Bosnian people did the same, while the unrest in Croatia was still ongoing. It was very obvious what would happen to them if they were to choose this particular path; and they did. The US had a logically sound basis for constructing a policy that did not take the loss of Yugoslavian lives into account. In addition to this, an intervention based on humanitarian reasons was out of the question at that time. It became an option when the constructivist "society world" had incorporated the slaughters and the bloodsheds, the majority of which still had not happened yet, and another reality was produced where humanitarian interventions were acceptable or even compelling. Was the decision of the US not to intervene in the crisis and leave things to develop on their own, in accordance with international law? Absolutely! In an anarchic international system, everybody is responsible for their actions. If these actions lead to a state's own distraction, no one has the obligation to enforce another course of action on that state. As about if the US's decision was moral or just, we should wonder: moral or just *to whom*? According to the English School, top decision makers are responsible for their state's interests and also for their decisions to be in line with international law and regulations. The US had the power to stop the upcoming

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[77] D. Serwer, The Balkans: from American to European leadership, in Shift or Rift, G. Lindstrom (ed.), Institute for Security Studies (ISS), Paris 2003, p.170.

[78] C. de Franco, *Media, Power and the Transformation of War*, Palgrave Macmillan, Houndmills, 2012, p. 60.

bloodshed from happening. By deciding not to, they were protecting the lives of their soldiers and at the same time nobody could raise any accusation against them for being inconsistent to the international law.

Another reason why the Americans did not intervene in Yugoslavia, was that they wanted the Europeans more energetically involved. After all, this was all happening in their neighborhood. They were already handful with fighting in Iraq and trying to deal with the aftermath of the Soviet Union's collapse. The perspective of opening another front in Europe was not appealing at all and continued not to be even after the 1992 presidential elections that brought Bill Clinton in power. Although that during his pre-election campaign he had threatened that as a president he would bomb the Serbs if they were to continue fighting the Bosnian government in Sarajevo, he did not do so for another two and a half years after his election.[79]

Although it is very important to separately study each side's course of action in our effort to assess the EU and the US involvement in the collapse of Yugoslavia, that would only produce a partial image of the bigger picture. It is actually the interplay between them that gives us a more detailed description of their actual role. The EU preference for soft power politics and its repulse to the use of traditional, military power was, and still is, well known. The US on the other hand, does not have such taboos and it is also well known that if the American top decision makers decide that their interests are better served by the use of military power, they will not hesitate to use it. Robert Kagan in his article *Power and Weakness*, described the American aspect by saying that it is as if the Americans are from planet Mars and the Europeans from Venous. Not a very polite metaphor, especially if the reader is a European military person. Nevertheless, that does not mean that the actual message is wrong.

The period 1991-1995 was supposed to be "the hour of Europe".[80] It never was. Although the EU did have vital interests in the region, they varied significantly among major EU member states, making it difficult at times even to find the lowest common denominator.[81] That led to ineffectiveness. On the other side of the Atlantic, the US had enough secondary interests which, if combined to Europe's lack of unity and its almost dogmatic unwillingness to use military force even in circumstances demanding this kind of action, led them to finally take the lead and to, eventually, take military actions in the Bosnian crisis. First tentatively, in 1994, and after decisively, in 1995. As the EU had not even yet decided on a desirable outcome, not to mention on a plan of achieving it, it followed willingly the Americans with a hard to hide sigh of relief.

On a theoretical level, that approach changing on the behalf of the two main actors and especially the US, was not unexpected. After almost three years of idling and living the Europeans to tackle, unsuccessfully as already described,

[79] D. Serwer, The Balkans: from American to European leadership, in Shift or Rift, G. Lindstrom (ed.), Institute for Security Studies (ISS), Paris 2003, p.171.
[80] Ibid, p. 176.
[81] Ibid.

the Bosnian crisis, things had changed. The international system's structure was altered. The inability of the UNPROFOR, consisting of 80% of west European troops, to accomplish its prime mandate of securing the designated Safe Areas and the subsequent massacre of 8000 Muslims in Srebrenica, cataloged the UN as an international organization unfit of performing credible military duties. NATO was the only logical alternative. The international public opinion was fed up by the atrocities happening in Yugoslavia, which they could be witnessed daily thanks to the mass media. This phenomenon, known as "the CNN effect", created pressure on the American government, of the bottom-up kind. In conjunction with the fact that the US was now undoubtedly regarded as the only existing superpower on the planet, made the American intervention on the basis of humanitarian reasons, not only possible, as it always had been, but also plausible. Although that kind of humanitarian reasoning was very appealing to the media and it was not made up after all, there were also other, more pragmatic factors involved in the American decision to finally intervene in Bosnia. Given the ineffectiveness of the UN on the ground and the apparent danger produced for the lives of the UN soldiers, mainly west Europeans as we mentioned, there was an issue of NATO Alliance being at risk.[82] In consequence, the US were obligated to intervene in order to save the Alliance. At the same time, President Clinton's republican presidential rival Senator Robert Dole critic of the Administration's failure to act in the Balkans, was gaining momentum.[83]

In sum, one can argue that the appropriate "policy mixture" had changed. That happened because the situation on the ground had changed, the political balances in the US and the EU had also changed and the "society's world" perceptions had changed as well. An intervention now was considered to be in accordance with the international law and regulations and most importantly, in accordance to the spirit of the law; in accordance with what was truly just. While in the early stages of the Bosnian crisis the multiple but secondary American interests in the region were the reason for the Americans not to interfere, in 1995 these same interests were perceived as additional reasons *in favor* of an American intervention. The EU had realized by then, although not openly admitting it, the necessity of the use of traditional "hard" power. Knowing that the US were both unmatched in military power and also willing to use it when the circumstances demanded it, the Europeans wisely accepted the American leadership, indirectly admitting their incompetence to handle "their house's" security issues. In 1994 the conflict between the Bosnians and the Croats ended and a federation between them was formed. In the spring of 1995, the Europeans agreed to the American proposal of automatically engaging NATO military response in case of an attack taking place against the UN protected

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[82]Ibid, p. 172.
[83]Ibid.

areas, known as Gorazde Rules.[84] In August of the same year, the open market in Sarajevo was heavily mortared, an attack that the Serbs were held responsible for. In combination with the Srebrenica massacre and under Gorazde Rules, an immediate NATO response and the beginning of aerial bombardment on the Serbian positions were triggered. As a result, a peace agreement, known as the Dayton Agreement, was enforced by the US to the Serbs which led to the formation of the Bosnian Federation and permanently ended the war.

3. The US and the EU in the Kosovo crisis

The Bosnian crisis made it very clear that when the EU and the US decided to work together and their interests were not opposite, they could be an effective team. After Dayton peace agreement and despite its whatever flaws, the situation in the region was overall improved. By the end of 1997 though, things started to deteriorate in Kosovo. As already mentioned, during the early stages of the Bosnian crisis, before the American and European intervention, President Bush Senior was officially committed by a letter sent to President Milosevic at Christmas of 1992, in which he stated that "in the event of conflict in Kosovo caused by Serbian action, the United States will be prepared to employ military force against the Serbians in Kosovo and in Serbia proper."[85] On the 13th of February 1993, President Clinton's new Secretary of State, Warren Christopher, stated "we remain prepared to respond against the Serbians in the event of a conflict in Kosovo caused by Serbian action."[86] Different administrations, same strategy. The Americans top policy makers had for sure realized that the new post-Cold War world structure, was a very dangerous and unstable one. Without the Soviet counterbalance, even a minor event, interpreted as such through the cold war prism, could now be potentially catastrophic. They knew that in the case of a Serbian/Kosovo-Albanian conflict, things could deteriorate very fast. Even though the Europeans claimed to have surpassed the Hobbesian "state of nature", at least among the EU member states, the world outside their walls was still working pretty much according to Hobbes. The US had no illusions about the language Milosevic understood better. Acting accordingly, they posed a clear and direct threat to him, knowing that a conflict in Kosovo had the potential of destabilizing the still fragile international structure by setting the whole South-East Wing of NATO on fire. In particular, a Serbian military operation in Kosovo would lead a lot of Kosovo Albanians seeking refuge in FYROM. That would successively result in the destabilization of this fragile state through the enhancing of its Albanian minority, potentially driving its neighbors, Albania, Bulgaria and Greece to take

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[84]Ibid, p. 178.

[85] http://www.nytimes.com/1999/04/18/world/crisis-in-the-balkans-statements-of-united-states-policy-on-kosovo.html

[86]Ibid.

advantage of the situation and seize long claimed portions of land off that state. According to the Americans' worst case scenario, that could bring Greece and Turkey to a war.[87] In order to avoid such a development that would undoubtedly undermine America's interests and also its image, this time the response was swift and decisive. It was a decision mainly based on realistic and neo-realistic argumentation and this was clearly apparent by the fact that the intervention was not legitimized by the UN.

At this point, it would be interesting to shortly referred to the impact this realist/neorealist-based decision had into shaping a new normative-based approach in world politics, through the "Responsibility to Protect" dilemma that had emerged from the crisis in the Balkans. The United Nation's Security Council had proven to be ineffective, in terms of producing unanimous decisions on matters like the need for intervention in Kosovo, Ruanda and elsewhere. Some of the members were in favor of an intervention, based on humanitarian reasons, while others were against it, based on states' sovereignty reasons. This normative gap opened a discussion in the UN that finally led to adopting a new policy on the matter. In September 2005 UN's World Summit, the Responsibility to Protect principle was formally accepted from all the member states.[88] Since then, it has been used as the legal basis for a series of UN Security Council's Resolutions, like resolution 1706 in August 2006 authorizing the deployment of UN peacekeeping troops to Darfur, resolution 1973 in 17 March 2011 that gave the green light on NATO bombing of Libya and other similar resolutions for Cote d' Ivoire, South Sudan, Yemen, Syria and the Central African Republic.[89] This is a vivid example of how two different approaches, the realist/neorealist and the normative, can actually produce combined real-world political solutions.

Returning to the Kosovo crisis, the Europeans were in a very difficult position once again. They knew that the problem in Kosovo, consisted of Serbian repression on the Kosovo Albanians and the renewed Albanian nationalism, was undermining the fragile stability of the region. OSCE's observer mission in the region, acting under the UNSCR 1199[90] and 1203[91] was not expected to do much of a difference on the ground, although it had Serbia's consent as well. Bosnian crisis had already made clear the fact that the use of military power in solving international problems was far from obsolete. Not wanting to jeopardize its benignant, soft-power based international profile, the EU was consciously abolishing a sine qua non aspect of a main international actor: ability and willingness to use hard power. Denial of using hard power nevertheless, did not necessarily mean denial of its usefulness. While at the beginning of 1999 the

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[87]D. Serwer, The Balkans: from American to European leadership, in Shift or Rift, G. Lindstrom (ed.), Institute for Security Studies (ISS), Paris 2003, p.171.

[88] http://www.un.org/en/preventgenocide/rwanda/about/bgresponsibility.shtml

[89] Ibid.

[90] http://www.osce.org/node/44552

[91] http://www.nato.int/kosovo/history.htm#B

situation was furthermore deteriorating in Kosovo, the Contact Group, already established back in 1992 and comprised by Germany, France, Italy, UK, Russia and the US (note the absence of the EU as an autonomous participant and the presence of its most influential member states), met on the 29th of January and agreed to convene urgent negotiations between the parties of the conflict, under international mediation. NATO supported and reinforced the Contact Group efforts by agreeing, on the 30th of January, to the use of air strikes if required and by issuing a warning to both sides of the conflict. The Europeans were for once more forced to turn to the Americans, via NATO, for some "hard-power" help. France organized two rounds of peace negotiations in Rambouillet, near Paris, from 6 to 23 February and in Paris from 15 to 18 March.[92] Milosevic was given an ultimatum of the kind "suicide or we will kill you" and he naturally chose the second option. According to Machiavellian thinking, the dilemma set forth to Milosevic was not an immoral act. In a Hobbesian world, still existing despite EU's ostrich, Machiavelli is always present, whispering that his Prince is more amoral than immoral[93], while next to him Thucydides is eternally portraying the perception of morality by those with power through his famous Milian Dialogue.[94]

The bombing of the Serbs by NATO forces began on the 23rd of the same month, code name Operation Allied Force, without the official approval of the UN Security Council, in which Russia is a permanent member and strongly opposed that course of action. Although the use of force against a sovereign member state of the United Nations was, according to the international law, an illegal act, the UN Secretary General Kofi Annan had stated that "the lessons of Bosnia had to be learned ... If it becomes necessary to use force, that is something we will have to look at ... the threat of force is essential and is there."[95] After 77 days of air strikes, the Serbs withdrew their forces from Kosovo and on the 10th of June NATO ceased the bombing.[96]

4.   Lessons learned: From Bosnia to Kosovo

One's assessment of the two most prominent international actors' role in the disintegration of Yugoslavia, would be incomplete without a comparison between their actions in Bosnian crisis and those in Kosovo, four years later. During the former, the UN's exclusive responsibility for conducting peacekeeping operations was undoubtable. The US's realist/neorealist cold war view of "no dog in the fight", along with the fact that nobody could accuse them of breaking the international law by not interfering, led them to a passive stance in the Bosnian crisis. Furthermore, the public opinion was still on cold-

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[92]Ibid.

[93] http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2012/apr/16/machiavelli-the-prince-benevolence

[94] http://web.mit.edu/dimitrib/www/Milos_Photos/Milian_Dialogue.html

[95] http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/265157.stm

[96] http://www.nato.int/kosovo/history.htm#2

war mode and the concept of a war based on humanitarian reasons, was, at the most, inconceivable and at the least, somebody else's job; namely the UN's. In addition to this, the Americans were already involved in the First Gulf War and although they did not want the development of an autonomous EU military capability, they did want their European allies to take some serious action on their part to tackle the crisis happening at their doorstep. When it became apparent that the UN, mostly due to its organizational structure, was incapable of successfully performing, simultaneously, peace-keeping *and* peace-enforcing duties, on a randomly interchangeable basis and also that the EU was highly unlikely to come to an overall agreement between its member states on the issue, the US marginalized the UN by enhancing NATO's involvement and also offered to its European allies a way out of their dead end by taking the lead. With the latter's substantial help, mostly in implementing the Dayton agreement and in reconstructing Bosnia, their cooperation made the ending of the Bosnian crisis possible.

When the civil unrest in Kosovo began gathering momentum in 1998, the Americans continued to take most of the initiative by injecting international observers into the situation while hesitating, initially, to fulfill their Christmas warning towards the Serbians.[97] Although American and European diplomats, alongside with non-diplomat civilians, were deployed in Kosovo during the summer and fall of that year closely monitoring the situation, the fighting continued and intensified. It was at that time that the seed-like precedent of the EU – US's common enterprise of Dayton implementation, gave its fruits. They both knew that it was at their common interest not to leave this emerging crisis unattended. The Americans, because of the aforementioned worst case scenario of a Greco – Turkish war over FYROM and the Europeans, in order to avoid a new war refugee wave, the creation of a "law and order black hole" at their doorstep and also because they did not want to suffer another public humiliation on their, practically still non existing, common foreign and security policy. One must never forget that appearance, in constructivist terms, is a basic reality shaper. The final outcome was that in Kosovo the US and the EU did not lose time and they did act as swiftly and as decisively needed in order to put a relatively early end to the emerging crisis. The UN's role as a peacekeeping force was from the beginning non-existing and the organization came on the front stage only after the NATO bombing was over and Kosovo needed to build its new socio-economical infrastructures.

Despite the fact that the Europeans consented in giving Milosevic, alongside with their American counterparts, the already mentioned ultimatum that practically meant war, they viewed this military-based approach towards the Balkans as insufficient.[98] Although sometimes inconvenient, the soft power

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[97] D. Serwer, The Balkans: from American to European leadership, in Shift or Rift, G. Lindstrom (ed.), Institute for Security Studies (ISS), Paris 2003, p. 180.
[98] Ibid, p. 181.

tradition that the repeatedly war ravaged Europe had developed after WWII, was strong. Especially Germany, wanted to offer a "carrot" together with the already existing really big "stick".[99] EU's sweetest carrot was and it still remains the offer of full membership status. The invention of the "Stability Pact" as a prelude of greater integration of the Balkans states into the EU and its acceptance by the Americans, in the general frame of their common goal to incorporate these states into the western institutions, signified the transformation of the Balkan peace process and the beginning of a leadership shift from Washington to Brussels.[100] It was a "win-win" choice. The US were disengaging from a theatre that, after the Cold War, never really mattered to them, they could do so having already being labeled by most of the western and local public opinion as the world's undeniable peace-keepers, democracy-defenders and oppression-opposers, while their humanitarian-based intervention, although still not in accordance with the international law's letter, was considered to be in accordance with the international law's spirit. The Europeans on the other hand, by taking the lead in the region from their American counterparts, were finally becoming the crucial regulating factor on the matters of great importance to them, in their continent. They were also undertaking an important new role in the transatlantic division of labor, that of the designated social, economic and infrastructure rebuilders. In this way, they could now globally project the so desperately needed image of unity and at the same time retain their much praised "soft power" profile.

5. Conclusions

The disintegration of Yugoslavia was a major international incident, in which the unfortunate developments obviously bore the trademark of the US's and EU's intervention. It was not so much a matter of what these two powerful, in different ways, international actors did, especially in the Bosnian crisis; it was more a matter of what they did not do. As very eloquently Suzan Woodward describes it in her work *Balkan Tragedy, Chaos and Dissolution after the Cold War* "… They failed [the US and the EU] to appreciate that they had been internal players in the story all along." That failure, alongside with a climate of general euphoria that the end of the Cold War had produced, that of a new world, one of reduced security threats and of prevailing western values and policies[101], drove them to dramatically underestimate the dynamics of the situation in the Balkans. When the conflict intensified and they started to realize that they had to intervene, it was already too late for those supporting a moderate approach of the Yugoslav unfolding dismantle. The nationalists had already have the upper hand in "telling the story" as they saw fit and the

[99]Ibid.
[100]Ibid.
[101]S. Woodward, Balkan Tragedy, Chaos and Dissolution after the Cold War, The Brookings Institute, Washington D.C. 1995, p. 148.

Westerners adopted their definition of the conflict, doing in this way exactly the opposite of their stated goals of intervention.[102]

The adoption of the nationalistic narrative of the story by the westerners, happened for a series of reasons. Trapped in the Cold War mentality, saw it easier to accuse the federal government of Yugoslavia for oppressing its constitutive republics, desperately seeking their right of self-determination against a communist Serbian government. Furthermore, by adopting the nationalistic narrative, they also had a very convenient and easy to serve to the public explanation for the conflict, that of the ancient hatred among the different nationalities comprising Yugoslavia. President Clinton's relative statements were characteristic of this approach.[103] In addition to this, the western public opinion was still not ready to accept peacekeeping interventions by no one else apart from the UN. So an early intervention, would have being very difficult to gain any serious public support. That became possible after the undisputed failure of the UN forces to stand up to their mandate requirements.

The Europeans had, apart from the above, to also find a way of matching their different national interests, on the one hand, and the need to project an image of unity, on the other. The signing of the Maastricht Treaty at that time, was only making the contradiction between this two much more obvious. The different national interests of the EU's most prominent members and mostly the threat of a unilateral recognition of Slovenia and Croatia by the recently reunified Germany, left no other option to France, the UK and the rest of the EU member states, but to follow Germany down the road of Yugoslavia's dismantling, in the name of the European unity. When the crisis deepened and the war spread because of Bosnia's declaration of independence, when the massacres started to reach the western households through the media, when the UN had shown its weakness to protect the innocents and when it became apparent that the Europeans would keep negotiating, endlessly and purposelessly while the victims continued to pile up, the US decided that the time was right to intervene. They took the lead, gave NATO the primacy on the field, removed the UN from the picture and offered the EU a way out of their dead end.

This project proved to be, despite its flaws, a successful one. The new division of labor across the Atlantic, the Americans doing what they were best at, namely the use of hard power and the Europeans doing what *they* were best at, namely the use of soft power through economic, political and social reconstruction, was a good bargain for both sides. This concept was also implemented in the case of Kosovo, minus the Bosnian time waste. Already possessing the know-how from their previous experience, they both acted in concert and produced the desirable, for them, outcome, with relatively minimal

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[102]Ibid, p. 147.

[103] http://www.nytimes.com/1999/04/02/world/crisis-balkans-clinton-s-speech-kosovo-we-also-act-prevent-wider-war.html

losses of human lives, having also the support or at least the silent consent of the public opinion and being in accordance with the spirit of the international law.

In sum, one can come to the overall conclusion that the US and the EU, either by their actions or by their absence of action, played a fundamental role in the disintegration of Yugoslavia. We have tried to find the reasoning behind the top policy makers' decisions on the matter of the Yugoslav crisis and to explain how this reasoning, influenced by so many different factors – net gains and losses, public opinion, changes in domestic parties' balances, pressure from the oppositions, national interests, the need of appearances – had as a final product the dissolution of a sovereign state. A state that if different course of action had been followed and if different balances had been formed, today might have been the 29th EU member state.

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