A NEW AGE OF GLOBAL SECURITY: THE "UKRAINIAN QUESTION" AND "KOSOVO PRECEDENT"

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The research topic of this article is the "Ukrainian Question" in perspective of "Kosovo precedent" within the framework of international law, current stream of international relations, contemporary world politics and global security. The aim of the article is to investigate the possible solutions for the current Ukrainian political crisis through the prism of "Kosovo precedent" and global security perspectives. The article consists of nine sections dealing with the Ukrainian identity, historical background of the Ukrainian statehood, the 2014 Euromaidan *coup d'état* and the beginning of the Ukrainian crisis, "Kosovo precedent" and the "Ukrainian Question", the possible political solution of the current Ukrainian crisis founded on the example of "Kosovo precedent", a global geopolitical context of the "Ukrainian Question" and "Kosovo precedent", the geopolitical convergence between the US and Russia as a geostrategic background of the "Ukrainian Question", Russian geopolitical and national interest in Ukraine, and finally conclusions of the investigation. The fundamental conclusion of the research is that "Kosovo precedent" has already served and will further serve in the near future as the foundation for territorial decomposition of Ukraine by neighbouring Russia, opening the doors for a new age of global security and international relations.

Key Words: *Ukraine, Kosovo, separatism, international law, humanitarian intervention, international relations, global politics, global security*

A *Ukrainian* identity?

Ukraine is an East European territory, which originally formed the western part of the Russian Empire from the mid-17th century.[1] That is the present-day independent state and separate ethnolinguistic nation as a typical example of Benedict Anderson's theory-model of

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[1] This article is a critical contribution to the following edition of the books: Roger E. Kanet (ed.), *Russian Foreign Policy in the 21st Century*, New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011; Elizabeth A. Wood et al, *Roots of Russia's War in Ukraine*, New York−Chichester, West Sussex, Columbia University Press−Woodrow Wilson Center Press, 2016.

the "imagined community" – a self-constructed idea of the artificial ethnic and linguistic-cultural identity. According to Anderson, the nation is abstract and mainly subjective social construction that defies simple, objective definition, yet it has been for the last two centuries the crucial basis of conflict in world politics and international relations through assertion of their expressed nationalism.[2] However, nationalism is quite broad ideology, which can be easily transformed into political movement that became the case, for instance, exactly with the Ukrainian self-imagined ethnonational identity. Political actions, in principle by all means on behalf of its own nation, usually encompass a very large scale of political ideas and practice also including ethnic cleansing and/or genocide of particular other national groups that happened, for example, in the WWII when the Poles, Russians, Jews and Gypsies (Roma) experienced the genocide committed by the Ukrainian Nazi-Fascist nationalists (the *Banderists*).

Before 2014 Ukraine was the home of some 45 million inhabitants among whom, according to the official data, there was around 77 percent of those who declared themselves as the Ukrainians. Nevertheless, many Russians do not consider the Ukrainians or the Belarus as "foreign", but rather as the regional branches of the Russian nationality. In difference to the Russian case, the national identity of the Belarus or the Ukrainians was never firmly fixed, as a matter of fact, as it has always been in the constant process of changing and evolving.[3] The process of self-constructing the identity of the Ukrainians after 1991 has basically been oriented vis-à-vis Ukraine's two most powerful neighbours: Poland and Russia. In other words, self-construction of the Ukrainian identity (like the Montenegrin or the Belarus) could have been done so far just to claim that the Ukrainians are not either the Poles or the Russians, but what they really are is of a great and endless debate. Therefore, an existence of an independent state of Ukraine, nominally as a national state of the *Ukrainians*, is open to doubt indeed from both historical and ethnolinguistic perspectives.

The Slavonic term *Ukraine*, for instance, in the Serbo-Croat case *Krajina*, means a *Borderland* in English – a provincial territory situated on the border between at least two political entities: in this particular historical case, between the Kingdom of Poland and the Grand Duchy of Lithuania as the Republic of Both Nations (1569−1795) and the Russian Empire.[4] The term has mostly been used from the time of the Treaty (Truce) of Andrusovo in 1667 between these two states. In other words, *Ukraine* and the *Ukrainians* as a natural objective-historical-cultural identity have never existed as it was considered only as a geographic-political territory between two other naturalhistorical entities (Poland and Russia). All (quasi)historiographical mentioning of this land and the people as *Ukraine/Ukrainians* referring to the period before the mid-17th century are quite scientifically incorrect. However, in many (pro)Western academic writing cases it is politically inspired and coloured with the purpose to present them as something crucially different from the historical process of ethnic genesis of the Russians.[5]

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[2] Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, Revised edition, London: Verso, 2016.

[3] On the Ukrainian self-identity construction, see [Karina V. Korostelina, *Constructing the Narratives of Identity and Power: Self-Imagination in a Young Ukrainian Nation*, Lanham, Maryland: Lexington Books, 2014].

[4] A German historical term for Ukraine would be a *mark* – a term for the state borderland, which existed from the time of the Frankish Kingdom/Empire of Carl the Great.

[5] For instance, Alfredas Bumblauskas, Genutė Kirkienė, Feliksas Šabuldo (sudarytojai), *Ukraina: Lietuvos epocha, 1320−1569*, Vilnius: Mokslo ir enciklopedijų leidybos centras, 2010.

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Historically speaking, it was a Roman Catholic Vatican that was in fact beyond the process of creation of the "imagined community" of the *Ukrainian* national identity for the very confessional-political purpose to separate the people from this borderland territory from the Orthodox Russian Empire. Absolutely the same thing, as a matter of comparison, was done by Vatican's clientstate Austria-Hungary in regard to the national identity of Bosnian-Herzegovinian population when this province was administered by Vienna-Budapest from 1878 to 1918 as it was the Austria-Hungarian government, which created a totally artificial and new ethnolinguistic identity – the *Bosnians*, just not to be the (Christian Orthodox) Serbs, who were at that time a strong majority of the provincial population.[6] Therefore, to be a Bosnian meant not to be a Serb with a final consequence to become a Roman Catholic, which means a Croat. Similarly, in the case of Ukraine, to be a *Ukrainian* means primarily not to be a Christian Orthodox Russian.

The creation of the ethnolinguistically artificial *Ukrainian* national identity and later on a separate nationality was a part of a wider confessional-political project by Vatican in the Roman Catholic historical struggle against the Eastern Orthodox Christianity (the Eastern "schism") and its churches within the framework of Pope's traditional proselytizing policy of reconversion of the "infidels". One of the most successful instruments of a soft-way reconversion used by Vatican was to compel a part of the Orthodox population to sign the Union Act with the Roman Catholic Church and recognize in such way the supreme power of the Pope and dogmatic *filioque* ("and from the Son" – the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son). Therefore, the ex-Orthodox believers, who became the Uniate Brothers or the Greek Orthodox believers became in a great number later on pure Roman Catholics, who changed their original (from the Christian Orthodox time) ethnolinguistic identity, as well. This is, for instance, very clear in the case of the Christian Orthodox Serbs in Zhumberak area of Croatia, who passed the way from the Christian Orthodox Serbs to the Greek Christian Orthodox believers, but later became the Roman Catholics and today they are finally the Croats. Something similar occurred in the case of Ukraine. The Union of Brest with a part of the Orthodox population within the borders of the Roman Catholic Lithuanian-Polish Commonwealth (today Ukraine) was announced by Vatican on October 9th, 1596..[7] The crucial issue in this matter is that today Ukraine's Uniates and the Roman Catholics are mostly anti-Russian oriented having at the same time strong *Ukrainian* national feelings. Basically, both the *Ukrainian* and the *Belarus* present-day ethnolinguistic and national identities are historically founded on the anti-Christian Orthodox policy of Vatican within the territory of ex-Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth that was in essence an anti-Russian policy.

The Lithuanian historiography on the Church Union of Brest in 1596 clearly confirms that:

"…the Catholic Church more and more strongly penetrated the zone of the Orthodox Church, giving a new impetus to the idea, which had been cherished since the time of Jogaila and Vytautas and formulated in the principles of the Union of Florence in 1439, but never put into effect – the subordination of the GDL Orthodox Church to the Pope's rule".[8]

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[6] Лазо М. Костић, *Наука утврђује народност Б-Х муслимана*, Србиње−Нови Сад: Добрица књига, 2000.

[7] Arūnas Gumuliauskas, *Lietuvos istorija: Įvykiai ir datos*, Šiauliai: Šiaures Lietuva, 2009, 44; *Didysis istorijos atlasas mokyklai: Nuo pasaulio ir Lietuvos priešistorės iki naujausiųjų laikų*, Vilnius: Leidykla Briedis, (without year of publishing), 108.

[8] Zigmantas Kiaupa et al, *The History of Lithuania Before 1795*, Vilnius: Lithuanian Institute of History, 2000, 288.

In other words, the rulers of the Roman Catholic Grand Duchy of Lithuania (the GDL) from the very time of Lithuania's baptizing in the period 1387−1413 by Vatican had a plan to catholicize all Orthodox believers from the GDL, among whom the overwhelming majority were the Slavs. As a consequence, the relations with Moscow became very hostile as Russia accepted a role of the protector of the Christian Orthodox believers and faith and therefore the Church Union of Brest was seen as a criminal act by Rome and its clientstate the Republic of Two Nations (Poland-Lithuania).

Today, it is absolutely clear that the most pro-Western and anti-Russian part of Ukraine is exactly the West Ukraine – the lands that were historically under the rule of the Roman Catholic ex-Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth and later on the former Habsburg Monarchy (Austria-Hungary). This is obvious, for example, by the presidential election voting results in 2010 as the pro-Western regions voted for Y. Tymoshenko while the pro-Russian regions of the East Ukraine did it for V. Yanukovych. It is a reflection of the post-Soviet Ukrainian identity dilemma between *Europe* and *Eurasia* – a dilemma that is common for all Central and East European nations, which historically played the role of a buffer zone between the German *Mittel Europa* project and the Russian project of the pan-Slavonic unity and reciprocity.

The fact is that the western territories of the present-day Ukraine are mainly populated by the Roman Catholics, the East Orthodox and the Uniates. This part of Ukraine is mostly nationalistic and politically pro-Western oriented. The East Ukraine is in essence a Russophone territory and subsequently "tends to look to closer relations with Russia".[9] The necessary preconditions for de-Russification and Ukrainization of the local inhabitants were founded by Vatican policy of signing the union with the Christian Orthodox believers in the present-day West Ukraine since 1596. In the course of time, as a consequence of such policy by the Roman Catholic Church, Ukraine became sharply divided by confession, national feelings, economic development, linguistic identity and geopolitical orientation to such extent that today Ukraine is an example of the "failed state".[10]

According to scholarly definition, "a failed state is a state that is unable to perform its key role of ensuring domestic order by monopolizing the use of force within its territory".[11] It is basically a synonym for the "quasi-state", which is internationally recognized as a sovereign community, but it is not able to protect the basic needs of its own citizens. Ukraine and Kosovo, among many other states, clearly belong to the category of the "failed-states", "which are unable to govern their societies without significant external support".[12] However, in some cases, the external intervention in the inner affairs of the state is justified as the state is (allegedly) "failed" and therefore unable to solve some fundamental internal problem(s) as it became the official explanation of the NATO for its own military intervention in 1999 against Serbia and Montenegro. Before the intervention in Kosovo, the NATO succeeded to obtain substantial public backing by controlling main

[9] John S. Dryzek, Leslie Templeman Holmes, *Post-Communist Democratization: Political Discourses Across Thirteen Countries*, Cambridge−New York: Cambridge University Press, 2002, 114.

[10] Зоран Милошевић, „Друштвени процеси у самосталној Украјини", *Радови*, Филозофски факултет, Источно Сарајево, 2005, 289.

[11] Andrew Heywood, *Global Politics*, New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2001, 121.

[12] John Baylis, Steve Smith, Patricia Owens (eds.), *The Globalization of World Politics: An Introduction To International Relations*, Fourth edition, New York: Oxford University Press, 2008, 549.

mass-media sources, which had the task to wash brains of the audience. Nevertheless, Kremlin can practice the same NATO policy from 1999 of solving the inner problems of the "failed state" in the future in the case of (the East) Ukraine or any other state around Russia (for instance, Moldova, Azerbaijan, the Baltic States, etc.).

According to the 2001 census, 17.3 percent out of Ukraine's 45 million inhabitants were the Russians, but 30 percent spoke the Russian language. Subsequently, a great part of those who identified themselves as the *Ukrainians* recognized that their native language is, in fact, the Russian. In addition, there were 83 percent of Ukraine's inhabitants in 2008 who chose the Russian as a *lingua franca*. There is also a mixture of the Russian and Ukrainian language with predominant Russian vocabulary spoken in the countryside – the *Surzhik*.[13]

The Ukrainian authorities have not properly solved the problem of the official language in the country until now as it is officially defined that the *Ukrainian* is spoken in the western regions of the country while the Russian is spoken in the eastern provinces of Ukraine and even used as a *lingua franca* by majority of the population. Therefore, an official bilingualism would be a matter of a real solution of many current ethnopolitical problems in Ukraine. If Belgium can be an officially bilingual state, there is no any obstacle for Ukraine to be the same.

Historical background of the Ukrainian statehood

The German occupation forces were the first to create and recognise short-lived state independence of Ukraine in January 1918 during the time of their own inspired and supported anti-Russian Bolshevik Revolution of 1917−1921. As re-occupied by the Bolshevik Red Army, the eastern and southern parts of the present-day territory of (the Greater) Ukraine joined the USSR in 1922 as a separate Soviet Socialist Republic (without Crimea),[14] while the western territories of the present-day Ukraine were occupied by Poland in the spring of 1920 and annexed. There was not any kind of territory within Poland with the name of Ukraine differently to the Soviet Union's case from the same period of time (1922−1939).[15] The population of the West Ukraine did not even resist the Polish invasion and occupation of their land and did not show great enthusiasm for the idea of the Ukrainian nationalist leader Symon Petliura to establish the *Ukraine People's Republic*. His nationalistic army soon passed to the Polish side, but became remembered after anti-Semitic pogrom, which was repeated on a much larger scale two decades later by Stepan Bandera – a Nazi Ukrainian leader who became the idol of many Euromaidan patriots in 2014. Nevertheless, for J. Pilsudski's Poland, Ukraine was the main springboard for the military assault on the USSR and its destruction as it was an idea by the Polish military headquarters in 1932−1933 when the Soviet Ukraine suffered a great famine caused by the anti-agricultural policy of J. V. Stalin's administration.

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[13] Срђан Перишић, *Нова геополитика Русије*, Београд: Медија центар „Одбрана", 2015, 273−275.

[14] According to the 1926 Soviet census of Crimea, the majority of its population were the Russians (382.645). The second largest ethnic group were the Tartars (179.094).

[15] According to Lonnie R. Johnson, in 1931 there were 10.1 percent of the speakers of the Ukrainian language as their native tongue out of a total number of Poland's population [Lonnie R. Johnson, Central Europe: *Enemies, Neighbors, Friends*, New York−Oxford, 1996, 36].

Therefore, (a Jew) V. I. Lenin[16] has to be considered as the real historical father of the Ukrainian statehood and the contemporary nationhood. Ukraine was the most fertile agricultural Soviet republic. However, it was catastrophically affected by (a Georgian) J. V. Stalin's economic policy in the 1930s in particular, which neglected agricultural production in favour of speedy industrialisation of the country. The result was a great famine (*holodomor*) in the period 1932−1933 with around seven million people dead, and the majority were the ethnic Russians. A territory of the present-day Ukraine was devastated during the WWII by the Nazi German occupation forces from 1941 to 1944, who installed a puppet and criminal Nazi-Fascist regime of S. Bandera (1900−1959) in Ukraine that committed genocide against Poles, Jews and Russians.[17] For instance, the Ukrainian militia (12.000) directly participated in the 1942 holocaust of some 200.000 Volhynian Jews together with 140.000 German policemen. The Ukrainian mass killers mastered their job from the Germans and applied their knowledge on the Poles, as well.[18] However, after the war, the former members of the Ukrainian Nazi-Fascist forces were channelled by the CIA out of the territory controlled by the USSR in Europe like the Nazi-Fascist collaborators from the Baltic States (Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania), Slovakia and Croatia. The most important channel to evacuate those notorious criminals was Vatican with its very close historical ties to the far-right movements and chauvinistic extremists in the Central, Eastern and South-East Europe. A central figure in this project and process was a Croat Monsignor Prof. Dr. Krunoslav S. Draganović, who ran escape routes for the Croat Ustashi fugitives and served as the main representative of the Nazi-Fascist Independent State of Croatia in Vatican.[19] His colleague, the Ukrainian Archbishop Ivan Buchko, helped free a Ukrainian Waffen SS legion by intervening directly with the Pope Pius XII.

After the war, J. V. Stalin, supported by the Ukrainian party-cadre N. Khrushchev, deported about 300.000 Ukrainians from their homeland as they were accused for the collaboration with the Nazi-Fascist regime during the war and the participation in genocide done by S. Bandera's government. However, after the war the Ukrainians were directly rewarded by Moscow for the collaboration with the Germans and participation in S. Bandera's organized genocide as the lands of Transcarpathia, littoral Moldova (Bessarabia), Polish Galicia and part of Romania's Bukovina became annexed by the Soviet Socialist Republic of Ukraine in 1945 followed by Crimea in 1954. These territories, which have never been a part of any kind of Ukraine and are not overwhelmingly populated by the ethnolinguistic Ukrainians, were included into the Soviet Ukraine primarily due to the political activity of the strongest Ukrainian cadre in the USSR – N. Khrushchev, the person who inherited Stalin's throne in Moscow in 1953. At this place, a parallel with Croatia is an absolute: for the Croat committed genocide against the Serbs, Jews and Roma by A. Pavelić regime (a Croat version of S. Bandera) during the WWII in the territory of the Independent State of Croatia a post-war (Socialist Republic of) Croatia was awarded by a Croat-Slovenian dictator of Yugoslavia J. B. Tito with the lands of Istria, Adriatic islands and Dubrovnik – all of them have never been in any kind of the state of Croatia before the WWII.

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[16] V. I. Lenin was a Jew, but not ethnic Russian. His ethnic origin can explain his comprehensive anti-Russian politics.

[17] On Stepan Bandera, see [Grzegorz Rossoliński-Liebe, *Stepan Bandera: The Life and Afterlife of a Ukrainian Nationalist. Fascism, Genocide, and Cult*, Stuttgart, ibidem, 2014].

[18] Timothy Snyder, *Tautų rekonstrukcija: Lietuva, Lenkija, Ukraina, Baltarusija 1569−1999*, Vilnius: Mintis, 2009, 183.

[19] Драгољуб Р. Живојиновић, *Ватикан, католичка црква и југословенска власт 1941−1958*, Београд: Просвета−Терсит, 1994, 232−276.

M. Gorbachev's policy of deliberate dissolution of the USSR from the time of Reykja-vik bilateral meeting with the US President Ronald Reagan in 1988 caused a revival of the ethnic nationalism of the Ukrainians, who proclaimed independence on August 24th, 1991 (confirmed in referendum on December 1st, 1991 only by those who did not boycott it)[20] in the wake of anti-Gorbachev's military putsch in Moscow (mis)using the political situation of paralyzed central government in the country. The state independence of Ukraine was proclaimed and later internationally recognized within the borders of the Greater Stalin-Khrushchev's Ukraine with at least 20% of ethnic Russian population living in a compact area in the eastern part of the country, making a qualified (2/3) majority of Crimea's population. The following years saw the rift with neighbouring Russia over the main political task by Kiev to commit the Ukrainization (assimilation) of ethnic Russians (similar to the policy of the Croatization of ethnic Serbs in Croatia orchestrated by the neo-Nazi-Fascist (Ustashi) Government in Zagreb led by Dr. Franjo Tuđman). At the same time, the Russian majority in Crimea constantly required the peninsula's re-unification with mother Russia, but got only an autonomous status within Ukraine – a country which they never considered as their natural historical homeland. The Russians of Ukraine were becoming more and more unsatisfied with conditions in which they lived from the time when in 1998−2001 the Ukrainian taxation system collapsed, which meant that the central government in Kiev could not pay the salaries and pensions to its own citizens. A very weak Ukrainian state became in fact unable to function normally (as a "failed state") and as a consequence it did not have the power to prevent a series of po-litically motivated assassinations followed by popular protests, which had also been very much inspired by economic decline of the country.[21]

As a matter of fact, it has to be stressed that the Ukrainian historiography on their own history of the land and the people is extremely nationalistic and in most cases not objective like many other national historiographies. It is basically politically coloured with the main task to present the Ukrainians as a natural ethnolinguistic nation, who have been histori-cally fighting to create a united independent national state, but unjustifiably claimed certain territories to be of ethno-historical "Ukrainian" nature. As a typical example of such ten-dency to rewrite history of the East Europe according to the nationalistic and politically cor-rect framework is, for instance, the book by Serhy Jekelčyk on the birth of a modern Ukrainian nation in which, among other quasi-historical facts based on the self-interpreted events, it is written that the USSR in the period 1939−1940 annexed the "West Ukrainian land" from Poland and Romania.[22] However, this "West Ukrainian land" was never a part of any kind of Ukraine before the WWII since Ukraine as a state or administrative province never existed before V. I. Lenin created a Soviet Socialist Republic of Ukraine within the

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[20] When the citizens of the Soviet Ukraine voted on independence from the USSR in a referendum in 1991, most of Ukraine's Russians voted in favour due to economic benefits rather than national self-determination. Nevertheless, "in the early years of Ukrainian independence there was hyperinflation and collapsing output at the same time; hence the pejorative term 'Ukrainianization'" [Robert Bideleux, Ian Jeffries, *A History of Eastern Europe: Crisis and Change*, London−New York: Routledge, 1999, 615].

[21] On the history of Ukraine and the Ukrainians, see more and compare with [Andrew Wilson, *The Ukrainians: Unexpected Nation*, New Heeaven: Yale University Press, 2009; Serhii Plokhy, *The Gates of Europe: A History of Ukraine*, New York: Basic Books, 2015; Anna Reid, *Borderland: A Journey Through the History of Ukraine*, New York: Basic Books, 2015].

[22] Serhy Jekelčyk, *Ukraina: Modernios nacijos gimimas*, Vilnius: Baltos lankos, 2009, 17.

USSR in 1923, but at that time without the "West Ukrainian land" as it was not a part of the USSR. Moreover, the Ukrainians as a formed nation did not live in many parts of the "West Ukrainian land". They were just minority in this part of the Central Europe meaning that Ukraine did not even have ethnic rights over the biggest part of the "West Ukraine".[23] A real ethnolinguistic Ukrainization of the "West Ukrainian land" started after the WWII.

We can find another example of nationalistic misleading of the Ukrainian historiographical writings in the academic brochure on Bukovinian Metropolitan's Residence published in 2007 by the National University of Chernivtsi. In the brochure it is written that this university is "…one of the oldest classical universities of Ukraine",[24] which is true only from the present-day rough political perspective, and not from moral-historic point of view. Namely, the university is located in the North Bukovina, which the Habsburg Monarchy obtained in 1775. From 1786 the land was administrated within the Chernivtsi district of Galicia and one hundred years after the affiliation of Bukovina to the monarchy, the *Franz-Josephs-Universität* was inaugurated on October 4th, 1875 (the name day of the emperor). In other words, the university's origin as the whole Bukovina has nothing to do with any kind of both historical Ukraine and ethnic Ukrainians as it was outside of administrative territory of Ukraine before 1940, when the whole North Bukovina became annexed on August 13th by the USSR according to the *Hitler-Stalin Pact* (or the *Ribbentrop-Molotov Pact*) signed on August 23rd, 1939.[25] Therefore, two notorious bandits (both highlanders; one Nazi from Austria and the other Bolshevik from Georgia) decided to transfer the North Bukovina to the USSR and after the WWII the land became part of the Greater (Stalin's) Ukrainian SSR. Nevertheless, while the Ukrainian nationalists claim that "Russia" (in fact anti-Russian USSR) occupied Ukraine, the annexation of the North Bukovina and other territories from Poland, Czechoslovakia and Romania in 1940 are for them a legitimate act of historical justice. Here we have to notice that according to the same Pact, the territories of the independent states of Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia were annexed by the USSR as well, which is considered by their historians and politicians as "occupation" meaning an (illegal) act of aggression that breaks the international law and legitimate order. Nevertheless, they never accused Ukraine of doing the same in regard to the occupied lands from its three western neighbours in 1940/1944.[26]

Political assimilation of certain separate Slavonic ethnolinguistic groups in Ukraine was and is one of the standardized instruments for creation and maintenance of the Ukrainian national identity in the 20th century. The most brutal case is of the Ruthenians (Rusyns), who were simply proclaimed historical Ukrainians known under such name until the WWII. Their land, which was in the interwar period a part of Czechoslovakia, which was annexed by the USSR at the end of the WWII and became a part of the Greater Soviet Ukraine, was simply renamed from Ruthenia into the Sub-Carpathian Ukraine. However, the Ruthenians

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[23] Even today around half of Ukraine's state territory is not populated by the Ukrainians as a majority of the population. Moreover, in some regions there are no Ukrainians at all. Therefore, the cardinal question arose : Which principles are state borders of Ukraine formed on?

[24] *The Architecturial Complex of Bukovynian Metropolitan's Residence*, Chernivtsi: Yuriy Fedkovych National University of Chernivtsi, 2007, 31.

[25] *Ibid*.

[26] See, for instance [Priit Raudkivi, *Estonian History in Pictures*, Tallinn: Eesti Instituut, 2004 (without numeration of the pages); Arūnas Gumuliauskas, *Lietuvos istorija (1795−2009)*, Šiauliai: Lucilijus, 2010, 279−295].

and the Ukrainians are two officially recognized separate Slavonic ethnolinguistic groups, for example, in Serbia's Autonomous Province of Vojvodina, where the Ruthenian (Rusyn) language is even standardized and studied together with the Ruthenian philology and literature at the separate department at the University of Novi Sad. Unfortunately, the Ruthenian position in Ukraine is even worse in comparison with the Kurdish position in Turkey as the process of Ruthenian assimilation is much faster than inthe Kurdish case.

From the current perspective of the Ukrainian crisis and in general from the point of solving the "Ukrainian Question" a very historical fact has to be noticed that a part of the present-day East Ukraine became legally incorporated into the Russian Empire in 1654 as a consequence of the decision made by the local hetman of Zaporozhian territory Bohdan Khmelnytsky (c. 1595−1657) based on the popular revolt against the Polish-Lithuanian (the Roman Catholic) occupation of Ukraine, which broke out in 1648.[27] It means that the core of the present-day Ukraine voluntarily joined Russia, therefore escaping from the Roman Catholic Polish-Lithuanian oppression. Subsequently, B. Khmelnytsky's ruled territory has to be considered from a historical point of view as the motherland of all present-day Ukraine – the motherland which already chose Russia in 1654.

The 2014 *coup d'état* and the Ukrainian crisis

A current Ukrainian crisis, in fact a civil war, which started at the very end of 2013, is based on the internal interethnic antagonisms lasting for decades primarily in the Ukrainian-Russian relations including, above all, the "Crimean Question" as an apple of discord between Ukraine and Russia from 1954.[28] The crisis came from Lithuania's capital Vilnius, where in November 2013 an Association Agreement between the EU and Ukraine had to be signed. At that time (July 1st−December 31st 2013) Lithuania presided the European (Union) Council and formally had full political responsibility for breaking out of the crisis as being the host of the event, which the EU absolutely blamed on only Ukraine's President V. Yanukovych for the failure of the Agreement as he rejected to sign it for the very good reason as Moscow offered to Kiev much better deal than Brussels.[29]

V. Yanukovych's decision was primarily based on the logic of a state-national interest as he preferred much more favourable economic-financial offer by Moscow (also including *de facto* legalization of stealing the Russian gas to Europe that was transported via Ukraine) for the purpose to try to resolve inner economic, social and political crisis, which threatened stability of the Ukrainian society and state from 1991. The official Kiev recognizes that for Ukraine (up to 2014) Russia was:

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[27] Alfredas Bumblauskas, *Senosios Lietuvos istorija, 1009−1795*, Vilnius: R. Paknio leidykla, 2007, 306; Jevgenij Anisimov, *Rusijos istorija nuo Riuriko iki Putino: Žmonės. Įvykiai. Datos*, Vilnius: Mokslo ir enciklopedijų leidybos centras, 2014, 185−186.

[28] On the "Crimean Question" from the western perspective, see [Gwendolyn Sasse, *The Crimea Question: Identity, Transition, and Conflict*, Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard Ukrainian Research Institute, 2014].

[29] Nevertheless, the western pro-Neocon historiography and political science is directly blaming Russia and especially Russian President Vladimir Putin for all political troubles in Ukraine after the Vilnius Summit in 2013. See, for instance [Elizabeth A. Wood et al, *Roots of Russia's War in Ukraine*, New York−Chichester, West Sussex: Columbia University Press−Woodrow Wilson Center Press, 2016].

"…the largest trade partner and a huge market. In addition, many Ukrainians have family and friendly relations with the Russian people. In this connection, it should be noted that Europeans are actually interested in stable partnership between the two countries. Ukraine remains the major transit country for Russian natural gas transported to Europe, and it is very important for Kyiv to make sure that Europeans regard it as a reliable and predictable partner".[30]

It was obvious that such V. Yanukovych's turn toward the Russian Federation would also mean the closest political ties between Kiev and Moscow in the future – a cardinal reason for the EU and the USA to directly fuel a new color revolution in Ukraine for the purpose to overthrow V. Yanukovych and install instead of him their own puppet regime, which will drive the country to both the EU and the NATO. The Ukrainian 2013/2014 colored revolution was carried out according to the model of the first CIA sponsored East European color revolution that was organized in Serbia (Belgrade) at the beginning of October 2000 (the "2000 October 5th Revolution").[31] The protest of the "people" in Kiev in 2014 was finally ended by a classic street-style *coup d'état* like in Belgrade 14 years ago[32] and installation of a classic (pro-USA/EU/NATO) marionette regime, as well. As it is known from any introductory course on democracy, any kind of *coup d'état* (putsch) is illegal and unconstitutional. As in the 2000 Belgrade Coup case, the 2014 Kiev Coup case was formally justified as a "popular revolt" against the dictator, who was ousted in February 2014.[33] In fact, however, an unlawful removal of a legally and legitimately elected head of the state by the USA/EU sponsored and supported ultranationalistic and even a neo-Nazi-Fascist colored political upheaval of the "Euromaidan" protesters in Kiev[34] and some other bigger western Ukrainian cities (like Lvov) directly provoked a new popular colored revolution in the Russian-speaking provinces of the East Ukraine and Crimea with a final consequence of a territorial secession of self-proclaimed Luhansk, Kharkov, and Donetsk People's Republics and Crimea (according to Kosovo pattern from 2008).

In regard to the 2014 Kiev Coup, according to Paul Craig Roberts, Washington used its funded NGOs ($5 billion according to Assistant Secretary of State Victoria Nuland at the National Press Club in December 2013) to begin street protests when the elected Ukrainian Government turned down the offer to sign an Association Agreement with the EU.[35] Similarly to the Ukrainian coup in 2014, the Guatemala coup in 1954, when democratically elected Government of Jacobo Arbenz became overthrown, was also carried out

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[30] *Ukraine. A Country of Opportunities*, Kyiv: the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine, 2010, 6.

[31] In the official literature and memoirs on this revolution, however, the fact that it was directly financed and sponsored by the CIA and the Western financed NGOs is not mentioned at all. See for instance [Dragan Bujošević, Ivan Radovanović, *5. Oktobar: Dvadeset četiri sata prevrata*, Beograd: Medija centar Beograd, 2001]. On the coloured revolutions from the pro-NATO/EU/USA viewpoint see [Evgeny Finkel, Yitzhak M. Brudny (eds.), *Coloured Revolutions and Authoritarian Reactions*, New York: Routledge, 2015].

[32] Dragan Bujošević, Ivan Radovanović, *5. Oktobar: Dvadeset četiri sata prevrata*, Beograd: Medija centar Beograd, 2001. The English title of this memoir book is: *5. October: Twenty four hours of the coup d'état.*

[33] See documentary movie by Paul Moreira, *Ukraine: The Masks of the Revolution*, Premieres Lignes Production−Canal +, France, 2016.

[34] Tony Cartalucci, "BBC Now Admits: Armed Nazis Led 'Revolution' in Kiev, Ukraine", *Global Research*, March 7th, 2014: http://www.globalresearch.ca/bbc-now-admits-armed-nazis-led-revolution-in-kiev-ukraine/5372232.

[35] On this issue, see more by the same author in [Paul Craig Roberts, *The Neoconservative Threat to World Order: Washington's Perilous War for Hegemony*, Atlanta, GA: Clarity Press, Inc., 2015, 7−16].

by the CIA. Nonetheless, following R. Reagan's logic used in the US-led military invasion of Grenada in 1983, the Russian President could send a regular army of the Russian Federation to occupy Ukraine for the security reasons of Russian citizens, who were studying at the universities in Kiev, Odessa or Lvov. Similar R. Reagan's argument (to protect the US students in Grenada) was (mis)used, among others, by Adolf Hitler in April 1941 to invade and occupy the Kingdom of Yugoslavia as, according to the German intelligence service, the German minority in Yugoslavia (the Volksdeutschers) were oppressed and terrorized by the new (pro-British) Government of General Dušan Simović after the coup in Belgrade committed on March 27th, 1941.[36] Nonetheless, a new anti-Russian government in Kiev launched a brutal linguistic and cultural policy of Ukrainization directly endangering the rights of ethnolinguistic Russians, who represent a clear majority of the population of the Luhansk and Donetsk regions of the East Ukraine, Crimean Peninsula respectively[37] and other non-Ukrainian population, as well, who supported a pro-Russian course of the country.[38]

"Kosovo precedent" and the Ukrainian suicide

The revolt and colored revolution by the Russian-speaking population in the East Ukraine in 2014 finally resulted in separation of Crimea from Ukraine founded on the *Declaration of Independence of the Crimea* as a legal document followed by the people's referendum on joining Russia based on the formal self-determination rights according to the model and practice of, for instance, the Baltic states in 1990, when they declared independence from the USSR.[39] It is clear from the official declaration by the Supreme Council of Crimea on peninsula's independence that this legal and legitimate act is founded on the international law and the people's right to self-determination, and also based on the so-called "Kosovo precedent" – a Western created "precedent" in 2008, which came as a boomerang to Ukraine six years later. Basically, "Kosovo precedent" is a clear representative example of a flagrant violation of the international law and order including, above all, the UN Charter and the UN 1244 Resolution on Kosovo. This "precedent" was firstly created in 1999 by brutal NATO military aggression on the independent and sovereign state of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) without any mandate of the UNSC that was followed by unilateral proclamation of

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[36] On this issue, see more in [Коста Николић, *Историја Равногорског покрета 1941−1945*, Књига прва, Београд: Српска реч, 1999, 25−42].

[37] In the recent future, if Kiev continues with its anti-Russian and pro-NATO/USA/EU political-military course, it is expected that the *Republic of NovoRussia* is going to be declared as an independent state with a real possibility to join the Russian Federation as Crimea already did in 2014. On Russian foreign policy and national identity, see [Andrei P. Tsygankov, *Russia's Foreign Policy: Change and Continuity in National Identity*, Lanham, Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield, 2016].

[38] On the issue of the Ukrainian crisis from the Western perspective, see [Andrew Wilson, *Ukraine Crisis: What It Means for the West*, New Haven−London, Yale University Press, 2014; Richard Sakwa, *Ukraine: Crisis in the Borderlands*, London−New York: I. B. Tauris, 2015; Rajan Menon, Eugen Rumer, *Conflict in Ukraine: The Unwinding of the Post-Cold War Order*, Massachusetts: Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 2015].

[39] Lithuania, for instance, declared its independence on March 11th, 1990 [Arūnas Gumuliauskas, *Lietuvos istorija: Įvykiai ir datos*, Šiauliai: Šiaures Lietuva, 2009, 142].

Kosovo independence by Kosovo Parliament in February 2008 (but without people's referendum on independence) and its recognition by a part of the world (satellite states of the Neocon *Pax Americana*).[40] In such way, the West created "precedence" which by definition has to be a unique case of the time in the international relations and global politics theoretically meaning that it cannot serve as a foundation or example for any similar case all over the world.[41]

Kosovo independence in 2008 was in fact founded on the illegal military action by the NATO in 1999 against Serbia and Montenegro as it violated the basic purpose of the foundation (in 1945) and existence of the UN, therefore, transforming the NATO into a global gangster organization. The reason why the US administration, or any other administration of the NATO member state, in 1999 did not ask for permission of the UNSC to launch a campaign against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia is that such permission would never be given for two reasons: 1. The arguments to launch air strikes against Serbia and Montenegro have been based on the false information and pure political lies as the claim that the Yugoslav authorities are preparing massive action of ethnic cleansing of Kosovo Albanians was a typical "false flag" example in the post-Cold War history of international relations; and 2. By such permission based on the "false flag" information the fundamental purpose of the existence of the UN would be neglected as:

"The [UN] main purpose was to maintain international peace and security, in the sense of dissuading states from attacking each other, and to organize counter-measures if this happened".[42]

A "Kosovo precedent" was in 2010 internationally and formally legally empowered by the expressed opinion of the UN International Court of Justice that a proclamation of Kosovo independence in 2008 does not violate the international law on self-determination (independence), which is true from the most general point of the UN Charter, but at the same time it violates the same UN Charter, which defends and supports territorial integrity of the states and their domestic law. It has to be clearly noticed that in 1945, when the UN were established, state sovereignty was understood and protected as a central value and principle of the international relations and global security. According to this principle, states are (formally) equal members of the international community (the UN), and also equal in regard to the international law, which clearly says that the state sovereignty and state borders are inviolable – the law harshly violated by the NATO in 1999. A principle of sovereignty directly implies three things: 1. that state does not recognize any higher authority than itself; 2. that there was no superior (international or supranational) jurisdiction; and 3. the Gov-

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[40] On the Neocon concept of *Pax Americana* and the US global hegemony, see [Paul Craig Roberts, *How America Was Lost: From 9/11 to the Police/Warfare State*, Atlanta, GA: Clarity Press, Inc., 2014; Cushman Cunningham, *Conspiracy Facts: Neocons Unmasked*, Fort Myers, FL: Critical Thinking Institute, 2015].

[41] Kosovo separation from Serbia was very much prepared and advocated by the Western academicians, especially historians, who laid out "scientific" foundations for Kosovo independence. It was, for example, the case by prominent British historian from Harvard University Noel Malcolm and his book on Kosovo history [Noel Malcolm, *Kosovo: A Short History*, New York: New York University Press, 1998]. The main (political) purpose of the book was to dispute Serbian claims to Kosovo and to prepare academic framework for Kosovo independence.

[42] John Baylis, Steve Smith (eds.), *The Globalization of World Politics: An Introduction to International Relations*, Second edition, New York: Oxford University Press, 2001, 332. Nevertheless, the NATO member states, which participated in the criminal action of bombing Serbia and Montenegro for 78 days in 1999 violated this fundamental purpose of creation and existence of the UN.

ernments of states had exclusive jurisdiction within their own borders – a principle confirmed in Article 2(7) of the UN Charter. Subsequently, a military intervention is in direct opposition to the principles of the international law including legal consequences coming out from it, as well, for instance, Kosovo self-proclaimed independence in 2008. It is a clear position by, for instance, the "Restrictionist" international lawyers, who insist on absence of basis for humanitarian intervention in the international law. They argue that the common good is going to be preserved at best by maintaining a ban on any kind of use of force that is not authorized by the UNSC. However, the fact is that the UN Charter does not give the UNSC any authority to use force for humanitarian purposes.[43] Finally, it is true that states do not intervene for primarily humanitarian reasons as almost all the time states have a mixture of motives for military intervention. Nevertheless, the court's opinion is, formally, just of the advisory nature, but in practice it has serious implications and consequences within the framework of global politics. The first coming consequence was the case of Crimean separation from Ukraine in 2014 that was clearly stated by both the local Crimean authorities and Russian Government.

Undoubtedly, "Kosovo precedent" has not only shaken, but even destroyed the very foundations of the international law based primarily on the UN Charter and resolutions. As a direct outcome, it provoked a "boomerang effect" in the case of Crimean secession from Ukraine and annexation by Russia in 2014. Crimea broke relations with Ukraine calling for the same formal reasons used by the Albanians in the case of the 2008 "Kosovo precedent" followed by other legal arguments. Nevertheless, the Western countries recognized Kosovo independence from Serbia, but not Crimean, Donetsk and Luhansk separation from Ukraine despite the fact that all of these cases are formally and officially based on the same legal and moral arguments. Moreover, in difference to "Kosovo precedent", separation cases in Ukraine are based on the results of the plebiscites.

The Western policy of double standards is very visible from the following written statement on Kosovo independence by the US administration of April 17th, 2009 that was submitted to the UN International Court of Justice:

"Declarations of independence may, and often do, violate domestic legislation. However, this does not make them violations of international law."[44]

We have not heard similar statements by the same US administration on the independence cases of the Republic of Serbian Krayina, the Republic of Srpska, the Republic of Transnistria, the Republic of Abkhazia, the Republic of South Ossetia or three separatist republics in the East Ukraine and Crimeaso far. Obviously, the UN International Court of Justice accepted the US statement on Kosovo independence and two statements issued on July 22nd, 2010 that:

"No general prohibition may be inferred from the practice of the Security Council with regard to declarations of independence", and

"General international law contains no prohibition on declarations of independence".

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[43] Paul R. Viotti, Mark V. Kauppi, *International Relations and World Politics: Security, Economy, Identity*, Fourth edition, Upper Saddle River, New Jersey: Pearson Education International, 2009, 185.

[44] From this perspective, the southern *Confederation* had absolute legal and moral rights to proclaim independence from the USA in 1861, which means that at that time the US President Abraham Lincoln (who invaded the southern *Confederation* and committed crimes in its territory) was a war criminal.

According to the abovementioned statements, however, it is clear that Moscow was absolutely truthful in the case of Crimean secession, but with an important distinction: Russia did not bomb Ukraine previously as the NATO did with the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia in 1999 before Kosovo secession from Serbia.

The West did not offer a possibility of federalization of Serbia with Kosovo as a federal unit to Belgrade because the independence of Kosovo was advocated as the optimal solution for Kosovo problem. However, Moscow is exactly advocating federalization as the best solution for the Ukrainian crisis with the East Ukrainian Russian-speaking regions as a single federal territory. Crimea, following the logic of both historical and ethnic rights, has to be a part of Russia as the peninsula has nothing to do with Ukraine, but has much to do with Russia. Even Turkey or Greece has more rights on Crimea in comparison to Ukraine.

The scenario of federalized Ukraine would surely positively influence the process of stopping already ongoing the new Cold War between the West (the NATO and the EU) and the bloc of the countries around Russia, China and Iran.[45] However, if the Western mentors of the Euromaidan Government in Kiev reject such Russian proposal it is most probable that Ukraine will be left to commit a suicide as the Western policy of double standards promoted by the US and the EU in the 2008 Kosovo case will continue to have a boomerang effect in the rest of the East Ukraine following the Odessa region, as well.

Humanitarian intervention and final solution of the "Ukrainian Question"

Current Ukrainian crisis in this case can be solved according to the 1667 Andrusovo Treaty signed on February 9th between Poland-Lithuania and Russia. According to the Treaty, the present-day territory of Ukraine was simply divided between two states: the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth (the Republic of Both Nations) and the Russian Empire with the Dnieper river as a demarcation line. In other words, Russia received from Poland-Lithuania territories eastward from Dnieper with Kiev and the whole Zaporizhia region (from both sides of the river).[46] Therefore, Dnieper became a (natural-political) border between "Europe" and Russia with the present-day Ukraine divided into two *borderlands*. As it is said at the beginning of this article, the Slavonic word *Ukraine* means in English a *borderland*. Therefore, it is clear even from the name of the country what is going to be its ultimate destiny. Sooner or later, it does not matter. The case of the Republic of Serbian Krayina (Ukraine) proved it clearly in the 1990s – the *Borderland* can be only a periphery of some more natural state. It does not matter on which side of the border.[47]

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[45] On this issue, see [Marvin Kalb, *Imperial Gamble: Putin, Ukraine, and the New Cold War*, Washington: The Brookings Institution, 2015].

[46] Ignas Kapleris, Antanas Meištas, *Istorijos egzamino gidas. Nauja programa nuo A iki Ž*, Vilnius: Leidykla "Briedas", 2013, 125−126.

[47] The independent state of Serbian Krayina was declared on December 19th, 1991 by the Constitutional Assembly (Parliament) of the Serbian Autonomous Region of Krayina in Knin. The Republic was occupied and cancelled by Croatian military and police forces on August 4th−9th, 1995 within the operation "Storm" [Вељко Ђурић Мишина (уредник), *Република Српска Крајина: Десет година послије*, Београд: Добра воља, 2005, 26, 48].

At this point we cannot forget a humanitarian intervention aspect of the final solution of the "Ukrainian Question", as well. In general, "intervention" is considered as forcible action taken by some state(s) against another one(s), but without consent of the attacked side. Therefore, "humanitarian intervention" is a military intervention carried out by some state(s) for the sake of protecting human rights (usually as group minority rights). Speaking from the very moral point of view, a humanitarian intervention is based, or at least (mis)used as a formal pretext, on the notion of being "humanitarian", which means to be concerned with the interest of and benefits to mankind, particularly if the suffering of someone has to be reduced.[48] The concept of humanitarian intervention was (mis)used especially after the Cold War in the cases of Iraq (in 1991 to create "safe havens" for the Kurds by establishing a no-fly zone policed by three NATO Pact countries: the USA, UK and France), Somalia (in 1992 to create a protected environment), Haiti (in 1994 to restore order by the civil authority), Rwanda (in 1994 to create "safe zone" for the Hutu refugees), Kosovo (in 1999 to protect the Albanians from Serbian military and police forces), East Timor (in 1999 to prevent possible ethnic cleansing by Indonesian security forces) and Sierra Leone (in 2000 to protect the UK citizens at the time of the local civil war).[49]

Very controversial wars of humanitarian intervention in abovementioned cases, in which only the Western powers participated, were formally justified on humanitarian grounds. However, in majority of these cases the intervention had in essence very political and geopolitical real background clearly shown by the cases of Kosovo and Sierra Leone. The case of Yugoslav civil wars in the 1990s was a good example of a new form of war in post-Cold War era, which occurred as a consequence of "fracture of statehood" that is now implied in Ukraine, too. Such wars and conflicts (in ex-Yugoslavia, Rwanda, Somalia, Yemen) bring new forms of regional "insecurity caused by nationalistic, ethnic, and religious rivalries within states and across state boundaries".[50]

In the south Serbian province of Kosovo the violent conflict started on February 28th, 1998 since Serbian security forces fought with the local Muslim Albanian separatist and terrorist detachments of the so-called Kosovo Liberation Army – a type of Balkan Hezbollah. After series of diplomatic efforts to solve the Kosovo crisis under the US auspices failed, the US administration planned the NATO airstrikes against Serbia and Montenegro, although Russia opposed it. Nevertheless, knowing that Russia will surely use its veto right in the UNSC in order to prevent the UN to sanction military action against Serbia and Montenegro, the NATO launched military aggression on March 28th, 1999 against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, "effectively supporting the Kosovar Albanian rebels".[51] As a consequence, after 78 days of bombardment the Yugoslav army and Serbian police forces withdrew from Kosovo, which became occupied by the NATO peacekeeping force – the Kosovo Force (KFOR).

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[48] On human rights and humanitarian intervention from academic point of view, see more in [Andrew Heywood, *Global Politics*, New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2001, 303−330].

[49] On the concept and ideas of humanitarian intervention, see [Brendan Simms, D. J. B. Trim (eds.), *Humanitarian Intervention: A History*, Cambridge−New York, Cambridge University Press, 2011; Aidan Hehir, *Humanitarian Intervention: An Introduction*, New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013; Thomas G. Weiss, *Humanitarian Intervention: Ideas in Action*, Cambridge−Maiden, MA: Polity Press, 2016].

[50] John Baylis, Steve Smith, Patricia Owens (eds.), *The Globalization of World Politics: An Introduction To International Relations*, Fourth edition, New York: Oxford University Press, 2008, 237.

[51] Steven L. Spiegel, Jennifer Morrison Taw, Fred L. Wehling, Kristen P. Williams, *World Politics In A New Era*, Belmont, CA: Wadsworth/Thomson Learning, 2004, 319.

The NATO military intervention in 1999 was a typical way to exercise a new type of war for the upcoming 21st century – the *Virtual War*, which is a war with few casualties. The Western liberal (quasi)democracies in the last several decades (after the Vietnam War) have shown great reluctance to accept heavy military casualties because such casualties can easily undermine public support for the war effort. The NATO intervention in 1999 against Yugoslavia was such a war in which the NATO countries employed their technological superiority in order to reduce a high risk of their own casualties to the absolute minimum if possible. However, for all victims of the NATO bombing in 1999 the war was surely not of virtual nature, but rather the real one since a war cannot be of a virtual character. A war is intensely physical and thus it has a tendency to violence and destruction. The very nature of a war is to use the violence and therefore the real casualties are unavoidable, which means that an idea of some kind of a Virtual War is pure utopia. The intervention was done just in a context of fears about the possibility of ethnic cleansing, but not on the real ground. However it finally forced Serbia to withdraw its complete security forces from the province. Subsequently, Kosovo became the NATO colony on whose territory a huge US military base was created. The province was finally separated from Serbia by proclamation and recognition of its self-proclaimed independence in 2008, which was in fact a real and ultimate geopolitical goal of the formal humanitarian intervention in 1999.

In Sierra Leone, after a prolonged civil war, the UK Government decided to send the British military forces to the country to formally protect the UK citizens, but in fact ultimately to support the elected Government against the rebel forces that have been accused of carrying out atrocities against the civilians.

Here, we have come to the crux of the matter of current Ukrainian crisis and most probably of the "Ukrainian Question" in general. It is well known that Russian president V. Putin is extremely frustrated with the NATO 1999 Kosovo humanitarian intervention since it is seen by Moscow as a great humiliation of Russia and the Russian national pride and the regional state interest. It is also well known that the Euromaidan regime in Kiev committed and has been still committing terrible war crimes in the Donbass region, which can be classified as ethnic cleansing and even a form of the genocide as thousands of the Donbass region inhabitants were brutally killed (among them around 200 children) and approximately one million of them became refugees in Russia.[52] For Moscow, it is very easy, at least formally, to "prove" the acts of war crimes of Kiev Euromaidan junta in the Donbass region as it was, similarly, very easy for Washington to formally "prove" Serbian war crimes in Kosovo before the NATO intervention in 1999. As a result, Moscow can all the time launch Russian military humanitarian intervention in the East Ukraine with a consequence of its final separation from Kiev. A "Kosovo precedent" is still on agenda, especially after the results of the 2016 US Presidential elections.

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[52] On shocking UN High Commissioner for Human Rights' 13th Report on the war crime atrocities committed by the Ukrainian Government in the East Ukraine in the period from November 16th, 2015 to February 15th, 2016, when the Minsk Agreements were in force, see [Arina Tsukanova, „Schocking UN Report Lists Crimes by the Ukrainian Authorities", *Strategic Culture Foundation*, June 11th, 2016: http://www.strategic-culture.org/news/2016/06/11/shocking-un-report-lists-crimes-ukrainian-authorities.html].

The West and The Rest:
A global geopolitical context of the „Ukrainian Question"
and „Kosovo Precedent"

Both the „Ukrainian Question" and „Kosovo precendent" have to be understood and investigated from a global perspective, primarily from the context of a geopolitical conflict between the USA and Russia after the Cold War. Peaceful dissolution of the USSR according to the agreement between Mikhail Gorbachev and Ronald Reagan in 1988 in Reykjavik brought a new dimension to global geopolitics in which Russia, as a legal successor state of the USSR, was up to 2008 playing an inferior role in global politics, when an American Neocon concept of *Pax Americana* became the fundamental framework in international relations. Therefore, for instance, Boris Yeltsin's Russia capituled in 1995 to the American design regarding a final outcome of the USA/EU policy of destruction of ex-Yugoslavia in November 1995 (the *Dayton Agreeement*) followed by even worse political capitulation in the case of Washington's Kosovo policy that became ultimately implemented in June 1999 (the *Kumanovo Agreement*). Russia became in the 1990s totally geopolitically humiliated by the USA and its West European clients to such extent that we can call the period of B. Yeltsin's servile policy toward the West as a *Dark Time* of the history of Russian international relations, when the Serbs became the main losers, who were and still are extremely demonized by the Western mass-media and academic institutions.[53]

An ideological-political background of B. Yeltsin's foreign Russian policy was the *Atlanticism* – an orientation in foreign policy that stresses the fundamental need to cooperate (at any price) with the West, especially in the area of politics and economy. In other words, the integration with the West and its economic-political standards became for B. Yeltsin's Russia, governed by the Russian Liberals, the order of the day. This trend in the Russian foreign policy in the 1990s had the roots in the 19th century geopolitical and cultural orientation of the Russian society by the so-called Russian „Westerners", who became the opponents to the Russian „Slavenophiles" and thought that the ultimate aim of the Russian foreign policy was to create the Pan-Slavonic Commonwealth with the leadership of Russia.

The actual outcome of the Russian Liberals „in the years following Yeltsin's election was catastrophic as, for instance, Russian industrial production dropped by nearly 40%, over 80% of Russians experienced a reduction in their living standards, health care disintegrated, life expectancy fell along with the birth rate, and overall morale collapsed".[54] However, the political influence of the Russian Liberals became drastically weakened by Vladimir Putin's overtaking power in Russia from 2000 onwards and especially from 2004. A new global course of the Russian foreign policy after 2004 became directed to

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[53] As a very example of such moral, cultural and civilizational demonization of the Serbs by the Western academic writings is [John Hagan, *Justice in the Balkans: Prosecuting War Crimes in The Hague Tribunal*, Chicago−London: The University of Chicago Press, 2003].

[54] John Baylis, Steve Smith (eds.), *The Globalization of World Politics: An Introduction to International Relations*, Second edition, New York: Oxford University Press, 2001, 124.

the creation of multipolar world, but not unipolar *Pax Americana* one as the American Neocons wanted. Therefore, the Caucasus, Ukraine and Syria became directly exposed to the Russian-American geopolitical struggle while Kosovo has been still left to the exclusive US sphere of interest. Nevertheless, it can be expected in the near future that post-Yeltsin's Russia will take decisive geopolitical steps with regard to Kosovo because from 2000 the Russian foreign policy has become more and more imbued with the neo-Slavophile geopolitical orientation advocated by Aleksandar Solzhenitsyn (1918−2008) as a part of a more global Euroasian geopolitical course of the post-Yeltsin's Russian Federation supported by many Russian Slavophile intellectuals like the philosopher Aleksandr Dugin.

I. L. Solonevich probably gave one of the best explanations of Russian geopolitical situation and peculiarity in comparison to those of the USA and the UK focusing his research on the comparative analysis of geography, climate and levels of individual freedoms between these countries:

„The American liberties, as well as American wealth are determined by American geography. Our [Russia's] freedom and our wealth are determined by Russian geography. Thus, we'll never have the same freedoms as the British and Americans have, because their security is guaranteed by the seas and oceans, but ours could only be guaranteed by military conscription".[55]

Semuel P. Huntington was quite clear and correct in his opinion that the foundation of every civilization is based on religion.[56] Huntington's warnings about the future development of global politics that can take a form of direct clash of different cultures (in fact, separate and antagonistic civilizations) is unfortunately already on the agenda of international relations. Here we came to the crux of the matter in regard to the Western relations with Russia from both historical and contemporary perspectives: the Western civilization being based on the Western type of Christianity (the Roman Catholicism and all Protestant denominations) has traditional animosity and hostility towards all nations and states of the East Christian (Orthodox) confession. As Russia used to be and is the biggest and most powerful Christian Orthodox country, the Euroasian geopolitical conflicts between the West and Russia started from the time when the Roman Catholic common state of the Kingdom of Poland and the Grand Duchy of Lithuania launched its confessional-civilizational imperialistic wars against the Grand Duchy of Moscow at the very end of the 14th century; i.e., when (in 1385) Poland and Lithuania became united as the personal union of two sovereign states. The present-day territories of Ukraine (which at that time did not exist under this name) and Byelorus (White Russia) became the first victims of Vatican policy to proselytize the Eastern Slavs. Therefore, the biggest part of the present-day Ukraine became occupied and annexed by Lithuania until 1569[57] and by Poland after the Lublin Union in 1569. In the period from 1522 to 1569 there were 63% of

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[55] Irina Isakova, *Russian Governance in the Twenty-First Century: Geo-strategy, Geopolitics and Governance*, London−New York: Frank Cass, 2005, 12.

[56] Samuel P. Huntington, *The Clash of Civilization and the Remaking of World Order*, London: The Free Press, 2002.

[57] On the Lithuanian occupation period of the present-day Ukraine, see: [Alfredas Bumblauskas, Genutė Kirkienė, Feliksas Šabuldo (sudarytojai), *Ukraina: Lietuvos epocha, 1320−1569*, Vilnius: Mokslo ir enciklopedijų leidybos centras, 2010].

the East Slavs in the territory of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania out of its total population.[58] From the Russian perspective, an agressive Vatican policy of reconversion of the Christian Orthodox population and their denationalization could be prevented only by military counter-attacks to liberate the occupied territories. However, when it happened from the mid-17th century until the end of the 18th century a huge number of the former Christian Orthodox inhabitants had already become the Roman Catholics and the Uniates with their original national identity lost.

The conversion to the Roman Catholicism and creation of the Union with Vatican in the territories occupied by the Polish-Lithuanian common state until the end of the 18th century divided the Russian national body into two parts: the Christian Orthodox, who remained to be the Russians and the pro-Western oriented converts, who basically lost their initial ethnonational identity. This is especially true in Ukraine – a country with the greatest number of the Uniates in the world due to the Brest Union in 1596 with Vatican. The Uniate Church in (the West) Ukraine openly collaborated with the Nazi regime during the WWII and thus it was banned after the war until 1989. Nevertheless, it was exactly the Uniate Church in Ukraine to propagate an ideology that the „Ukrainians" were not (Little) Russians, but a separate nation, who are not in any ethnolinguistic and confessional connection with the Russians. Therefore, a way to successful Ukrainization of the Little Russians, Ruthenians and Carpatho-Russians during the Soviet rule was opened.. After the dissolution of the USSR, the Ukrainians became an instrument of fulfilment of the Western anti-Russian geopolitical interests in the East Europe.[59]

The unscrupulous Jesuits became the fundamental West European anti-Russian and anti-Christian Orthodox hawks to propagate an idea that Christian Orthodox Russia does not belong to a real (Western) Europe. Due to such Vatican's propaganda activity, the West gradually became antagonistic to Russia and its culture was seen as disgusting and inferior, i.e. barbaric as a continuation of the Byzantine Christian Orthodox civilization. Unfortunately, such negative attitute toward Russia and the East Christianity is accepted by the contemporary US-led West, which regard Russophobia as an ideological foundation for its geopolitical projects and ambitions.[60] Therefore, all real or potential Russian supporters have become geopolitical enemies of the *Pax Americana* like the Serbs, Armenians, Greeks, Byelorussians, etc.

A new moment in the West-Russian geopolitical struggles started when the Protestant Sweden became directly involved in the Western confessional-imperialistic wars against Russia in 1700 (the Great Northern War of 1700−1721), which Sweden lost after the Battle of Poltava in 1709, when Russia finally became a member of the concert of the Great European Powers.[61] A century later the Napoleonic France took the role in the historical process of „Eurocivilizing" of „schismatic" Russia in 1812 that also finished by the West

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[58] Ignas Kapleris, Antanas Meištas, *Istorijos egzamino gidas. Nauja programa nuo A iki Ž*, Vilnius: Leidykla "Briedas", 2013, 123.

[59] About this issue, see more in [Зоран Милошевић, *Од Малоруса до Украјинаца*, Источно Сарајево: Завод за уџбенике и наставна средства, 2008].

[60] Срђан Перишић, *Нова геополитика Русије*, Београд: Медија центар „Одбрана", 2015, 42−46.

[61] David Kirbz, *Šiaurės Europa ankstyvaisiais naujaisiais amžiais: Baltijos šalys 1492−1772 metais*, Vilnius: Atviros Lietuvos knyga, 2000, 333−363; Peter Englund, *The Battle that Shook Europe: Poltava and the Birth of the Russian Empire*, London: I.B.Tauris & Co Ltd, 2003.

European fiasco,[62] similar to Pan-Germanic warmongers during both world wars. However, after 1945 up to the present, the „civilizational" role of the Westernization of Russia has been assumed by the NATO and the EU. From this perspective, both Ukraine and Kosovo became directly involved in the geopolitical confrontation between the West and Russia. Immediately after the collapse of the USSR the West had an enormous geopolitical achievement around Russia, especially in the territories of ex-Soviet Union and the Balkans , by imposing its client satellite Boris Yeltsin as the President of Russia..

Nevertheless, the West started to experience a Russian geopolitical blowback from 2001 onwards when the B. Yeltsin's time pro-Western political clients got gradually removed from the decision-making positions in Russian governmental structures. What the new Russian political establishment correctly understood is that the Westernization policy of Russia is nothing else, but just an ideological mask for economic-political transformation of the country into the colony of the Western imperialistic gangsters led by the US Neocon administration[63] alongside with the task of the US/EU to externalize their own values and norms permanently. This „externalization policy" is grounded on the thesis of *The End of History* by Francis Fukuyama[64] „that the philosophy of economic and political liberalism has triumphed throughout the world, ending the contest between market democracies and centrally planned governance".[65] Therefore, after the formal ending of the Cold War in 1989, the fundamental Western global geopolitical project is *The West and The Rest*, according to which the rest of the world is obliged to accept all fundamental Western values and norms according to the *Hegemonic Stability Theory* of a unipolar system of the world security.[66] Nevertheless, behind such doctrinal unilateralism as a project of the US hegemony in global governance in the new century clearly shows the unipolar hegemonic concept of *Pax Americana* with Russia and China as the crucial opponents to it.

According to the *Hegemonic Stability Theory*, global peace can occur only when one hegemonic centre of power (state) acquires enough power to deter all other expansionist and imperialistic ambitions and intentions. The theory is based on a presumption that the

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[62] On Napoleon's military campaign on Russia in 1812 and its fiasco, see [Paul Britten Austin, *The Great Retreat Told by the Survivors*, London−Mechanicsburg, PA: Greenhill Books, 1996; Adam Zamoyski, *1812: Napoleon's Fatal March on Moscow*, New York: Harper Press, 2005].

[63] The US-led NATO bombing of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia in 1999 is only an example of a gangster policy of violation of the international law and the law on war, when civilian facilities became legitimate military targets. Therefore, the attack on Serbian television station in downtown of Belgrade on April 23rd, 1999 attracted criticism by many human rights activists as it was apparently selected for bombing being „the media responsible for broadcasting propaganda" [*The Independent*, April 1st, 2003]. The same bombing policy was repeated by the same gansters in 2003 in Iraq, when the main television station in Baghdad was hit by cruise missiles in March 2003 and the next day followed by destruction of the state radio and television station in Basra [A. P. V. Rogers, *Law on the Battlefield*, Second edition, Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2004, 82−83]. According to the international law expert Richard Falk, the 2003 Iraq War was the „crime against Peace of the sort punished at the Nuremberg trials" [Richard Falk, *Frontline*, India, No. 8, April 12−25th, 2003].

[64] Francis Fukuyama, *The End of History and the Last Man*, Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1992.

[65] Charles W. Kegley, Jr., Eugene R. Wittkopf, *World Politics: Trend and Transformation*, Tenth edition, USA: Thomson−Wadsworth, 2006, 588; Andrew F. Cooper, Jorge Heine, Ramesh Thakur (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Modern Diplomacy*, New York: Oxford University Press, 2015, 54−55.

[66] David P. Forsythe, Patrice C. McMahon, Andrew Wedeman (eds*.), American Foreign Policy in a Globalized World*, New York−London: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 2006, 31−50.

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concentration of (hyper)power will reduce the chances of a classical world war (but not local confrontations) as it allows a single hyperpower to maintain peace and manage the system of international relations between the states.[67] Examples of ex-*Pax Romana* and *Pax-Britanica* have clearly offered support to the American hegemons for imperialistic idea that (the US-led) unipolarity would bring global peace and, henceforth, inspired the viewpoint that the world in a post-Cold War era under *Pax Americana* will be stable and prosperous as long as the US global dominance prevails. Therefore, hegemony, accor-ding to this viewpoint, is a necessary precondition for economic order and free trade in global dimension suggesting that the existence of a predominant hyperpower state wil-ling and capable of using its economic and military power to promote global stability is both divine and rational orders of the day. As a tool to achieve this goal a hegemon has to use coercive diplomacy based on the ultimatum demand that puts a time limit for a target to comply and a threat of punishment for resistance as it was, for example, the case in January 1999 during the „negotiations" on Kosovo status between the US diplomacy and Yugoslav Government in Rambouillet (France).

However, in contrast to both the *Hegemonic Stability Theory* and the *Bipolar Stability Theory*, a post-Yeltsin's Russian political establishment advocates that a multipolar system of international relations is the least war prone in comparison with all other pro-posed systems. This *Multipolar Stability Theory* is based on a concept that polarized global politics does not concentrate power, as it is supported by a unipolar system, and does not divide the globe into two antagonistic superpower blocs, as in a bipolar system, which promote a constant struggle for global dominance (for example, during the Cold War). The multipolarity theory perceives polarized international relations as a stable system because it encompasses a larger number of autonomous and sovereign actors in global politics, as well as raising the number of political alliances. This theory is in essen-ce presenting a peace-through model of pacifying international relations since it is fundamentally based on counter-balancing relations between the states in the global arena. In such a system, an aggression policy is quite hard to happen in reality since it is prevented by multiple power centres.[68]

A new policy of international relations adopted by Moscow after 2000 is based on a principle of the globe without hegemonic leadership – a policy which started to be imple-mented at the time when the global power of the US as a post Cold War hegemon declines because it makes costly global commitments in excess of ability to fulfill them followed by the immense US trade deficit. The US share of global gross production is in the process of constant fall ever since the end of the WWII. Another serious symptom of the US erosion in international politics is that the US share of global financial reserves drastically declined, especially in comparison to the Russian and Chinese share. Today the US is the largest world debtor and even the biggest debtor that has ever existed in history ($ 19.5trillion or 108 percent of the GDP) mainly, but not exclusively, due to huge military spendings toget-her with tax cuts that reduced the US federal revenue. The US administration is covering the deficit in current account balance with the rest of the world (in 2004, for instance, it was

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[67] William C. Wohlforth, „The Stability of a Unipolar World", International Security, No. 24, 1999, 5−41.

[68] Charles W. Kegley, Jr., Eugene R. Wittkopf, *World Politics: Trend and Transformation*, Tenth edition, USA: Thomson−Wadsworth, 2006, 524.

$650 billion) by borrowing money from private investors (mostly from abroad) and foreign central banks (the most important ones are of China and Japan). Therefore, such US financial dependence on the foreigners to provide the funds necesssary to pay the interest on the American public debt leaves the USA extremely vulnerable, especially if China and/or Japan would decide to stop buying the US bonds or sell them. Subsequently, the world strongest military power is at the same time the greatest global debtor with China and Japan being direct financial collaborators (or better to say – the quislings) of the US hegemonic leadership policy of *Pax Americana* after 1989.

Undoubtedly the US foreign policy after 1989 has been still unrealistically following the French concept of *raison d'état* that indicates the Realist justification for policies pursued by state autority, but in the American eyes, first and foremost of these justifications or criteria is the US global hegemony as the best guarantee for the national security followed by all other interests and associated goals. Therefore, the US foreign policy is based on a *realpolitik* concept that is a German term referring to the state foreign policy ordered or motivated by power politics: the strong do what they want and the weak do what they must. However, the US is becoming weaker and weaker and Russia and China are becoming stronger and stronger.

Geopolitical convergence and confrontation between the US universal state and Russia as a leader of the global resistance to the empire as a geostrategic background of the „Ukrainian Question"

The end of the Cold War era in 1989 brought during the first following years a kind of international optimism that the idea of the „end of history" realy can be realized as it was a belief in no reason for the geopolitical struggles between the most powerful states. The *New World Order* spoken out firstly by M. Gorbachev in his address to the UN on December 7th, 1988 was originally seen as the order of equal partnership in the world politics reflecting „radically different international circumstances after the Cold War".[69]

Unfortunately, the Cold War era finished without the „end of history" as the US have continued the same policy from the time of the Cold War against Moscow – now not against the USSR, but against its successor Russia. Therefore, for the Pentagon, the Cold War era in fact never ended as the fundamental political task to eliminate Russia from the world politics has still not been accomplished. Regardless of the fact that in 1989 Communism collapsed in the East Europe, followed by the end of the USSR in 1991, which brought a real possibility for creation of a new international system and global security,[70] the eastward enlargement of the NATO from March 1999 (the Fourth enlargement) onwards is a clear proof of the continuation of the US Cold War time policy to-

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[69] Jeffrey Haynes, Peter Hough, Shahin Malik, Lloyd Pettiford, *World Politics*, New York: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 2013, 97.

[70] John Baylis, Steve Smith (eds.), *The Globalization of World Politics: An Introduction to International Relations*, Second edition, New York: Oxford University Press, 2001, 111.

ward Moscow, which actually creates uncertainty about the future of the global security. After the end of the USSR and the Cold War, there were many Western public workers and academicians who questioned firstly why the NATO has to exist at all and secondly why this officially defensive military alliance is enlarging its membership when the more comprehensive Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (the CSCE, today the OSCE) could provide the necessary framework for security cooperation in Europe including Russia.[71] However, the NATO was not dissolved, but quite contrary, adopted the same policy of futher (eastward) enlargement like the EU. The Kosovo crisis in 1998−1999 became a formal excuse for the enlargement of both US client organizations for the „better security of Europe". The EU Commission President, Romano Prodi, in his speech before the EU Parliament on October 13th, 1999 was quite clear in this matter.[72] However, if we know that the Kosovo crisis followed by the NATO military intervention (aggression) against Serbia and Montenegro was fully fuelled exactly by the US administration, it is not far from the truth that the Kosovo crisis was provoked and maintained by Washington, among other purposes, for the sake of giving a formal excuse for futher eastward enlargement of both the EU and the NATO.

The dismissal of the USSR by M. Gorbachev in 1989−1991 produced a huge power vacuum in the Central and East Europe that was in the coming years filled by the NATO and the EU. The eastward enlargement of both the NATO and the EU emerged in due time as a prime instrument by Washington to gradually acquire control over the ex-Communist territories around Russia. A standard Western academic cliché when writing on the eastward enlargement of the EU is that those ex-Communist East European states:

„... wanted to join a club of secure, prosperous, democratic, and relatively well-governed countries. They saw themselves as naturally belonging to Europe, but deprived of the opportunity to enjoy democracy and the free market by Soviet hegemony and Western European acquiescence to that state of affairs. With the fall of Communism this historical injustice had to be remedied, and accession to the EU was to make their return to Europe complete".[73]

However, it is not clear why seven West European states currently out of the EU cannot see all mentioned advantages of the EU membership. Even one of the member states (the UK) decided in 2016 to leave the club (Brexit) and one of the chief reasons for this decision was exactly the eastward enlargement as the critical idea of all East European states to join the EU is to live on the West EU member states' financial support. Nevertheless, from the geopolitical perspective, the new EU member states coming from the East Europe (from the 2004 enlargement onwards) are the US Trojan Horse in the club, which openly support the American foreign policy of the imperial design, but with their prime duty as the members of both the EU and the NATO to take an active participation in the coming Western military crusade against Russia in the form of the WWIII.

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[71] Karin M. Fierke, Antje Wiener, "Constructing Institutional Interests: EU and NATO Enlargement" in Frank Schimmelfennig, Ulrich Sedelmeier (eds.), *The Politics of European Union Enlargement: Theoretical Approaches*, London−New York: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 2005, 99.

[72] European Commission, "Speech by Mr Romano Prodi, President of the European Commission, on Enlargement", European Parliament Brussels, October 13th, 1999, SPEECH/99/130.

[73] Jan Zielonka, *Europe as Empire: The Nature of the Enlarged European Union*, New York: Oxford University Press, 2006, 49.

However, these East European nations are going to be the first to experience direct consequences of the war as being a critical part of the Western front line combat zone against Russia.

Surely, one of the most fundamental anti-Russian actions in Europe at the post-Soviet era was the US decision to expend the NATO eastward by offering full membership to three ex-Warsaw Pact members: Poland, the Czech Republic and Hungary. Therefore, Reagan-Gorbachev agreement from Reykjavik in 1988 was unilaterally and brazenly violated by Washington under the formal excuse of a combination of events−V. Zhirinovsky showing in the 1993 elections in Russia, domestic pressure on B. Clinton from his Republican opponents at the Congress, and what the US administration saw as the abject failure of the EU to provide an answer to a European problem of the Yugoslav civil war (1991−1999). Washington quickly accused the Europeans of being incapable of dealing with the Yugoslav crisis that was a major test which the EU failed to pass, but honestly speaking, all the EU peace-making efforts dealing with the Yugoslav crisis really failed for the very reason that they were directly sabotaged by the US diplomacy. Nevertheless, the first new action by the enlarged NATO, only two weeks after its Fourth enlargement, was savage bombing of Serbia for the sake to put its Kosovo province under the NATO occupation. This action finally forced V. Putin to compel the „Western clown" B. Yeltsin to resign on December 31st, 1999.

It has to be recognized that the Cold War bipolarity after 1989 was, at least up to 2008, superseded by the US-led unipolarity – hegemonic configuration of the US accumulated hyperpower in global politics that presented quite new challenges to the international relations. However, after the event of 9/11, the US administration started to act bythe accelerating achievement after the Cold War of supreme political and military power in the globe for the sake of completing the mission of a global hegemon. The US administration, however, purposely presented the 9/11 attack as the work of (only) a network of Al Qaeda, an Islamic terrorist organization led by Osama bin Laden, who was a Saudi millionaire's son, but „who learned his terrorist trade, with U.S. assistance, fighting Soviet forces in Afghanistan in the 1980s", as well.[74] The US administration of the President George W. Bush responded very quickly and by the end of 2001 the Taliban regime in Afghanistan, which was a radical Islamic regime providing the base of operations for Al Qaeda, became demolished and the biggest part of the country occupied or controlled in the coalition with the US satellite states. That was the beginning of the announced „War on Terrorism" that actually had to serve as a good excuse to further strengthen the US position as the global policeman followed by the invasion of Iraq in 2003. Therefore, a policy of global unipolarity – a condition of a global politics in which a system of international relations is dictated by a single dominant power-hegemon that is quite capable of dominating all other states, became the order of the day for both the Pentagon and the White House.

With the US military invasion of Afghanistan in 2001 and Iraq in 2003 the US stood alone (with the military support by the UK as the fundamental American client state after 1989) at the summit of the hierarchy of the international relations and global politics up to

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[74] Steven L. Spiegel, Jennifer Morrison Taw, Fred L. Wehling, Kristen P. Williams, *World Politics In A New Era*, Belmont, CA: Wadsworth/Thomson Learning, 2004, 329.

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2008, when Russia finally decided to protect its own geopolitical and historical interests in some part of the world – in this particular case at the Caucasus. In other words, in the years 1989−2008 the US, became the sole state in the world with the military and political capability to be a decisive factor in the global politics at any corner of the world. In the abovementioned years, the US military expenditure exceeded all other states together – a clear sign of a hegemonic global policy of Washington. It seemed that the US had an extraordinary historical ability to dictate the future of the world according to its wishes and design as America became a single world hyperpower and the universal empire stronger than Roman or British empires.

By definition, the empire is an universal state having preponderant power and a real ability to act independently without any restraint.[75] Therefore, the empire works alone rather than in concert with other states, or at least with those which we can call the Great Powers[76] – a fundamental mistake and sin, which finally provokes an apocalyptic animosity and clash with the rest of the world. This animosity, from historical perspective, after certain time provokes a blowback by the others that, in the case of the US empire, came from Russia in 2008. The Central Caucasus, the East Ukraine and the West Middle East today became the regions of direct clash of geopolitical interests on the global chessboard between declining US empire and the rising economic, political, financial and military power of Russia. Even from 1990 (the First Gulf War) the US crossed the moral boundaries in abusing its hyperpower through defiant and brutal unilateralism, becoming, as all other universal states (empires), hated and feared rogue civilization („rogue gangster state" according to Stephen Lendman). The universal state acts as an international outlaw by its own rules, values, norms and requirements like the US and its NATO satellites in the case of barbaric bombing of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia for 78 days in 1999.

According to Noam Chomsky, in the fall of 2002 the most powerful state that has ever existed in history declared the basic principle of its imperial grand strategy as a self-intention to keep its global hegemony by the threat to use or by use of its own superpowerfully equipped military arsenal that is the most critical US dimension of power in which Washington reigns supreme in the world.[77] It was clearly confirmed by the White House on September 17th, 2002 as a part of the US national security strategy that it was going to be no longer bound by the UN Charter rules governing the use of force:

„Our forces will be strong enough to dissuade potential adversaries from pursuing a military build-up in hopes of surpassing, or equaling, the power of the United States".[78]

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[75] On this issue, see more in [Robert Kaplan, *Warrior Politics: Why Leadership Demands a Pagan Ethos*, New York: Random House, 2002]. On the political ideology of a universal state, see [Elen Arveler, *Politička ideologija Vizantijskog carstva*, Beograd: Filip Višnjić, 1988].

[76] A Great Power is such state which is ranked among the most powerful states in the world according to hierarchical state-system. There are four fundamental criteria to identify a Great Power state: 1. It is in the first rank of military competence, having full capacity to protect its own national security and to influence other countries; 2. It is economically powerful state; 3. It has global spheres of interest; and 4. It uses a "forward" foreign policy having actual, and not only potential, impact on international relations and world politics [Andrew Heywood, *Global Politics*, New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2001, 7].

[77] Noam Chomsky, *Hegemony or Survival: America's Quest for Global Dominance*, London: Penguin Books, 2004, 11.

[78] White House, *The National Security Strategy of the United States of America*, Washington, September 17th, 2012.

After 1989 the hawks of the US hegemonic world order openly emphasise the necessity of America's self-serving pre-eminent role in the world politics, as Hillary Clinton, for instance, put it at her confirmation hearing as the US Secretary of State in 2009:

„So let me say it clearly: the United States can, must, and will lead in this new century... The world looks to us because America has the reach and resolve to mobilize the shared effort needed to solve problems on a global scale – in defense of our own interests, but also as a force for progress. In this we have no rival".[79]

However, those H. Clinton's words were ungrounded as the US empire had already been in the process of declination. The gradual decline and probably ultimate demise of the US empire, as any other empire in history, cannot be understood without previous knowledge on the nature and driving forces of the imperial system. After 1991 the USA remained to function as a „military society" like , for instance, the Roman Empire or the Ottoman Sultanate. That is to say more precisely the driving force behind the US empire left to be an „external objective" – the perceived needs to reconstruct the world according to its own values and norms. However, such a very ambitious project requires a very systematic policy of overall mobilization of the whole society, economy and politics. Since such mobilization implies all the time sacrifice of a particular sector of domestic economy for the sake of fulfiling the expansionist aims, the system's functioning is basically reinforced by the need to replenish resources used up at the previous stage[80] – the need which the US simply could not accomplish successfully.

 The US, as a matter of fact, had already found their own military dominance in the world very costly to maintain . The American soldiers are deployed in almost 80 countries from the Balkans to the Caucasus and from the Gulf of Aden to the Korean Peninsula and Haiti. Today the US administration is constantly trapped by the *Imperial Overstretch Effect* – the gap between the resources and ambitions, especially in the foreign (imperialistic) policy, which is formally wrapped into the phrase of „domestic security" needs or international „humanitarian mission". Undoubtedly, the US costly imperial pursuits and particularly military spending have weakened the American economy in relation to its main rivals – China and Russia.

There are a number of scholars (N. Chomsky, M. Chossudovsky, etc.) and public workers (like P. K. Roberts) who predict that after the *Pax Americana* a multipolar system of international relations will emerge. The fact is that *multipolarity*, as a global system with more than two dominant power centers, is clearly advocated by V. Putin's administration in Kremlin instead of both *bipolarity* or *unipolarity*. This concept of multipolarity in international relations has to include besides the US the BRICS countries, Japan and the EU, as well. Since a multipolar system includes several comparatively equal Great Powers, it is a complex system by nature and hopefully more prosperous for maintaining the global security. In fact, from 2008 the world has been in the process of power transition that is surely the dangerous period as hyperpower of the USA is directly challenged by the rise of its rivals – Russia and China. Subsequently, the current Ukrainian and Syrian crisis are the consequences (a global „collateral damage") of such period of po-

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[79] Amitav Acharya, *The End of American World Order*, Cambridge, UK: Polity Press, 2014, 51.

[80] Andrew C. Janos, *East Central Europe in the Modern World: The Politics of the Borderlands from pre- to post Communism*, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2000, 330−331.

wer transition, which has already marked the beginning of a new Cold War that can be soon transformed into the Hot Peace era. Nevertheless, the US administration is not anymore in position to run with the *Bush Doctrine*[81] that is the unilateral grand strategy of the George W. Bush administration in order to preserve the unipolar world under the US hegemony by keeping America's military capacity beyond any challenge by any other state in the world as, certainly, the US hegemony has already been challenged by both Russia and China. Those two countries are currently in the process of making their own alliance bloc advocating *multilateralism* as a cooperative approach to manage shared global problems and keep collective security by collective and coordinated actions (groupthinking) by the Great Powers.

The fundamental task of the US foreign policy after 1989 is to protect its own concept and practice of the unipolar geopolitical order in the world, while Russia is trying to create a multilateral global geopolitical order with the other BRICS countries . The BRICS group of countries (Brasil, Russia, India, China and South Africa) clearly express the global phenomenon of the „Rise of the Rest" against the US unipolar hegemony. The rise of the BRICS marks a decisive shift in the global counter-balance of power toward the final end of America's hegemony. The significance of these four fast-growing economies and their global geopolitical power is already visible and recognized with the predictions that up to 2021 the BRICS countries can exceed the combined strength of the G-7 countries.[82] Therefore, we here deal with two diametrically opposite geopolitical concepts of the world order in the 21st century.[83] The current Ukrainian and Syrian crises are just practical expression of it. From the very general point of view, the US administration does not oppose the Russian geopolitical projects because of the fear of the reconstruction of the USSR, but rather for the sake of fulfiling its own global geopolitical projects according to which Russia has to be a political and economic colony of the West like all the former Yugoslav republics are today, but just formally exist as the „independent" states. The most immediate US task in dealing with Russia after 2000 is to prevent Moscow to create an Eurasian geopolitical and economic bloc by (mis)using the EU and NATO policy of the eastward enlargement in the East Europe and the Balkans. Ukraine plays in this matter one of the fundamental roles as, according to notorious US Russophobe of the Polish origin Z. Brzezinski, Ukraine is the new and important space on the Eurasian chessboard as a geopolitical pivot for the reason that its very existence as an independent country helps to halt Russia to become an Eurasian empire, which means the center of world power. Therefore, the US policy in the East Europe has to concentrate on turning all regional countries against Russia, but primarily Ukraine, which has to play the crucial role of stabbing the knife to Russian backbone.[84]

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[81] The *Bush Doctrine* dealing with the "War on Terrorism" is formulated in two messages delivered to joint sessions of the US Congress on September 20th, 2001 and January 29th, 2002 [Paul R. Viotti (ed.), *American Foreign Policy and National Security: A Documentary Record*, Upper Saddle River, New Jersay: Pearson Prentice Hall, 2005, 244−248]. The *Bush Doctrine* is directly supported by the *USA Patriot Act* of October 24th, 2001. The idea of *Bush Doctrine* is in fact very similar to the idea of the *Reagan Doctrine* of 1985 formulated to fight the Sandinista regime in Nicaragua.

[82] Andrew Heywood, *Global Politics*, New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2001, 447.

[83] Срђан Перишић, *Нова геополитика Русије*, Београд: Медија центар „Одбрана", 2015, 221.

[84] On this issue, see more in [Zbigniew Brzezinski, *The Grand Chessboard: American Primacy and Its Geostrategic Imperatives*, New York: Basic Books, 1997].

The Huntington's thesis about the unavoidable clash of the antagonistic cultures in the post-Soviet time basically served as academic verification of the continuation of America's hegemonic global policy after 1989. The author himself „was part leading academic and part policy adviser to several US administrations−and had occupied this influential space since the late 1950s",[85] which means that Huntington directly participated in directing the US foreign policy during the Cold War. However, as the USSR together with its Communist satellites finally lost the war, and the US policy of the *Pax Americana* had to be continued after the Cold War, as well, by his article and later the book on the clash of antagonistic civilizations, as their value systems are profoundly different, Huntington actually paved the academic ground to the Pentagon to invent new and useful enemies that would give the US a new role and provide a new justification for America's continued hegemony in a post-Soviet world. One of these enemies became a post-Yeltsin's Russia as a country which decided to resist a global hegemony by anyone.

A new Russian foreign policy in the 21st century is specially oriented and directed toward refutation of predicting that the new century of the new millennium is going to be more „American" than the previous one. It means that the US-Russian relations after 2000 are going from the US-led „New World Order" to the multipolar „Resetting Relations".[86] The last military success of the *Pax Americana*'s geopolitical project was the Second Gulf War (the Iraq War) in 2003 launched by the US Neocon President George W. Bush not only to kick out the „Vietnam Syndrome", but more importantly to give an answer to all those experts, who had previously been predicting the erosion of the US influence in the global politics. The architects of a post-Yeltsin's Russian geopolitics, followed by all critics of the *Pax Americana* emphasize the dangerous effect of the American soft power in the shape of popular culture, dressing style , fast food, music, etc., as the products of the primitive sub-culture and quasi-civilization. Therefore, the global duty of the civilizations at the time of the clash of civilizations is to fight against the quasi-civilization, which degenerates the human face around the world. That is one of the critical tasks of Russia in the world policy after 2000 as one of the escalating Great Powers. The rising power of the post-Yeltsin's Russia as one of the leading countries which are challenging the US unipolar hegemony can be seen from the facts that only up to 2008 Russia has succeeded in doubling its GDP, tripling wages in real terms and reducing the unemployment and poverty.[87]

Russian geopolitical and national interest in Ukraine

There are two fundamental reasons why a loss of Ukraine, or at least its eastern half if Ukraine joins the NATO and the EU, is unacceptable for Russia and even catastrophic: geopolitical-strategic and historical-patriotic ones. To have the NATO troops in Ukraine for Russia is the same as to have the German Nazi Wehrmacht army in front of Moscow, Saint

[85] John Baylis, Steve Smith (eds.), *The Globalization of World Politics: An Introduction to International Relations*, Second edition, New York: Oxford University Press, 2001, 115.

[86] Roger E. Kanet, "From the 'New World Order' to 'Resetting Relations': Two Decades of US−Russian Relations" in Roger E. Kanet (ed.), *Russian Foreign Policy in the 21st Century*, London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011, 204−227.

[87] Richard W. Mansbach, Kirsten L. Taylor, *Introduction to Global Politics*, Second edition, London−New York: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 2012, 165.

Petersburg or Volgograd as it had already been the case during the WWII. Ukraine, known as the *Little Russia*, for the Russians is a symbol of the first Russian national state – Kievan Rus (882−1240) that was the land of the Russian ethnonational origin. Therefore, as the present-day territory of Ukraine was the birthplace of the Russian statehood, the current Ukrainian crisis also has a very strong historical dimension for Russia. From the very historical-patriotic viewpoint, Kiev as the city has to be the first choice for the capital of all Russia or united Russian lands, and not either Moscow or Saint Petersburg.[88] To lose Ukraine out of sphere of its own geostrategic and national interest for Russia means to return the wheel of history 300 years back and lose a buffer security zone against constantly aggressive military anti-Russian policy of the US-led NATO.

When Ukraine proclaimed the independence in 1991, that was recognized by Moscow, Russia lost its dominant position in the Black Sea region. If Ukraine joins the NATO, as a precondition to join the EU, this will result in apocalyptic consequences for Russian independence and national security. We cannot forget that from the end of the 18th century Crimea and Odessa were for Russia the centres of the naval power and even the culture. The loss of a strong geostrategic position in the Black Sea by the Ukrainian independence after 1991 was painful for Russia, but transferring Ukraine to the NATO domination will be simply catastrophic. However, having the control over Ukraine, or at least over Ukraine's eastern regions, is for Russia the matter of both geopolitical and national survival in the time of the *NATO World Order* (the NWO).

The other issue in regard to Russian geopolitical and national interest in Ukraine is the question of the Christian Orthodox religion and its believers. Traditionally, Russia assumed the role of the protectorate of all Christian Orthodox believers. This role is especially of the sensitive nature after 1991 in the territories of Russia's nearest neighbourhood – the republics of ex-USSR. In these territories to protect the Christian Orthodox believers for Russia means firstly to prevent their national de-Russification, and secondly, to keep their geopolitical orientation toward Moscow. The fact is that Ukraine's independence after the dissolution of the USSR brought a deepen schism within the bloc of the Christian Orthodox believers as they became divided into three Christian Orthodox Churches with only one legally recognized – Ukraine's Orthodox Church of Moscow Patriarchate, which is the strongest in the East and South Ukraine. After 1991 with great support by Kiev authorities the still unrecognized Ukraine's Orthodox Church of Kiev Pa-

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[88] For the sake of comparison, Russia has more historical, ethnic and moral rights to Kiev as its capital than Lithuania to the German Memel (Klaipėda in Lithuanian) to be only a part of its r state territory. The Lithuanians basically occupied the seaport of Memel by force in January 1923 under the excuse of creating the united (Greater) Lithuania [Arūnas Gumuliauskas, *Lietuvos istorija (1795−2009)*, Šiauliai: Lucilijus, 2010; 175−176]. Before 1923 Memel with its hinterland had never been a part of any kind of the Lithuanian state and the ethnic Lithuanians were a minority in the city that was populated by a clear majority of the Germans and the German speakers (Jews). More precisely, Memel together with its hinterland known as Memelgebiet was an ethnically mixed territory populated by some 142.000 inhabitants: 47% the Germans, 28% the Lithuanians and 25% the German-speaking Memellanders [Paul Robert Magocsi, *Historical Atlas of Central Europe*, Revised and Expanded Edition, Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2002, 133]. However, the landlocked post-WWI Republic of Lithuania desperately needed a port at the Baltic Sea that became the main reason for the Lithuanian „uprising" in the city, which finally brought Memel and Memelgebiet into Lithuania as a part of the region, which is called *Little Lithuania* (Mažoji Lietuva) by the Lithuanian historiography. Therefore, if Lithuania had the right to annex the (eastern) part of the *Little Lithuania* from Germany in 1923 there is no any obstacle for Russia to annex today at least the eastern parts of the *Little Russia,* which are populated by the clear Russian majority.

triarchate was established, which became eminently anti-Russian. The biggest number of supporters of this church is in Kiev and the Central Ukraine. The second unrecognized Orthodox church is Ukraine's Autocephalous Orthodox Church, also anti-Russian, which is strong only in the West Ukraine, and supported by the Ukrainian diaspora in the USA and Canada. Both of these unrecognized Orthodox churches have direct political and financial support by Ukraine's politicians, who are against cooperation with Russia. To support the only recognized Christian Orthodox church in Ukraine for Moscow means at the same time to beat anti-Russian ideological influence of the West and its warmongering policy against Russia and the Russians.

A political milieu in Ukraine totally corresponds to its confessional, linguistic and ethnonational structure and division. The West and Central Ukraine vote for pro-Western orientation of the country while the East and South Ukraine for better relations with Russia. Subsequently, the whole Ukraine cannot go to the EU/NATO bloc and it cannot be included in Russian sphere of geopolitical domination or be annexed by Russia. Naturally speaking, the best geopolitical option for Ukraine is to be divided into two parts (West & East) between the West and Russia (probably according to the 1667 Andrusovo Treaty). That is a fundamental, but unofficial, proposal by Kremlin taking into account historical, national, security and democracy reasons. We should not forget that among all Great Powers or their blocs Russia is mostly interested in the „Ukrainian Question" from historical and ethnonational point of view, but not the EU, the NATO or specially the USA, which has nothing to do with Ukraine from any perspective except to push Kiev into the war against Russia.

One of the most critical interests of Russia in the „Ukrainian Question" is to prevent further Ukrainization of the Russian-speaking population that was common practice in the USSR and the independent Ukraine after 1991. This process was accomplished under the ideological standpoint that all inhabitants of Ukraine are, or have to be, the Ukrainians. Therefore, there was no room for the Russians in Ukraine according to such ideological concept as the West Ukrainian identity was artificially created by the bureaucratic means imposed to the East and South Ukraine. Basically, the process of Ukrainization of Ukraine was accomplished according to the French nation state building model and subsequently there are many "Ukrainians" today whose mother tongue is in fact the Russian. The Soviet Communists created the new political nations by separating their identities from the Russian ethnolinguistic corpus. The "Ukrainians" and the "Byelorussians" are today the best examples of such anti-Russian national policy by the Soviet (Jewish, Georgian, Ukrainian) political leadership. The political-ideological centre of the process of Ukraine's Ukrainization is Galicia with Lvov as its administrative centre. This historical province of Ukraine is at the same time the most nationalistic, Russophobic, Nazi and pro-NATO/EU oriented. For the Galicians, Russia and the Russians are not Europe and the Europeans, but rather Asia and the Asians.

The anti-Russian political orientation of the US foreign policy after 1991 found extremely fertile soil exactly in the West Ukraine. Both the US administration and the Ukrainian nationalists tend to absolutely separate whole Ukraine from Russia and to alter the national identity of Ukraine's Russian-speaking population thus transforming Ukraine into a part of the US-created geopolitical *Cordon Sanitaire* against Russia. The greatest American success in execution of such project was in 2004, when the US administration

brought the pro-American and anti-Russian President Viktor Yushchenko to power in Kiev after the Orange Revolution that was in fact *coup d'état*.

Nevertheless, Russia did not give up the idea to protect its own national and geopolitical interest in Ukraine. Differently to the US, Russia has the legitimate historical and ethnocultural right to make different types of alliances and cooperation treaties with Ukraine and even to discuss Ukraine's internal affairs with Kiev administration. However, the answer from Moscow to illegitimate colour revolution in Ukraine in 2004 was inadequate at that time, but ten years later Russia finally decided to protect its geopolitical and national interest in Ukraine in order not to repeat the cardinal mistake by J. V. Stalin in 1941 before the Barbarossa Operation started. In general, B. Yeltsin's administration did not care at all about the Russians outside Russia, who were left to cope by themselves with Russophobic policies by the local governments in Russia's nearest neighbourhood, especially in Ukraine and the Baltics. From 2008 Moscow did start more actively to defend its own interest in the "Regions of Privileged Interests"[89] which are around Russia and populated by the Russian-speaking population, either of ethnic Russian origin or not.

The fundamental mistake done by Kremlin in dealing with Ukraine after 2004 for the sake of protecting the Russian geostrategic and national interest was the choice of the wrong man – Viktor Yanukovych, who was the leader of the Party of the Regions in Ukraine. The party made a self-image as the party struggling for as close relations with Russia as possible, but in fact it was the very corrupted political organization[90] that collaborated with the political establishment and oligarchs from the West Ukraine and other Russophobic political environment in Ukraine for the sake of keeping the power. V. Yanukovych himself, as well as his party, practically did nothing either to prevent further Ukrainization of the Russian speakers or to fight against extreme Ukrainian nationalism. The only advantage of V. Yanukovych for Moscow was that Ukraine signed with Russia in 2010 a new agreement on the status of the Russian navy in Sevastopol and other seaports in Crimea. The old agreement was prolonged until 2042. However, Ukraine did not accept Kremlin's offer to join the Custom Union with Russia and/or the Common Economic Space as a foundation for the future Eurasian Union regardless of the fact that Moscow offered very prosperous economic projects and benefits to Ukraine.

V. Yanukovych's administration, nevertheless, started to negotiate with the EU for the sake of using its economic projects and financial benefits, which in comparison to Russian offer have been of less use for Ukraine. Therefore, during the US/EU sponsored *coup d'état* in winter 2013/2014 V. Putin did not crucially support V. Yanukovych to stay in power, but instead only gave him refugee shelter in Russia when the Ukraine's President had already become ousted by the mob. At that time, many of V. Yanukovych's party officials collaborated with the new absolutely pro-Western oriented revolutionary Government in Kiev followed by all Ukraine's oligarchs. It practically meant that Ukraine's southern and eastern regions were going to be politically shushed even by the military intervention of the West Ukraine. That is the real reason for the current civil war in Ukraine beyond which the US geopolitical fingers lie.

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[89] John Berryman, "Russia, NATO Enlargement, and 'Regions of Privileged Interests'" in Roger E. Kanet (ed.), *Russian Foreign Policy in the 21st Century*, London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011, 228−245.

[90] Anders Åslund, *Ukraine: What Went Wrong and How to Fix It*, Washington: Peterson Institute for International Economics, 2015, 91−93.

Russia's moral, national, patriotic and human duty was to protect the population from the South and East Ukraine in order to prevent a humanitarian catastrophe and even ethnic cleansing as it happened with the Serbs in Kosovo after the NATO occupation of this province of Serbia in June 1999. V. Putin simply decided not to repeat the cardinal mistakes done by B. Yeltsin's administration in dealing with the Yugoslav crisis in the 1990s. Kremlin figured out quite well that the final time for beating the Western crusade on Russia had already come: now or never. Subsequently, the first decision of Moscow was to return Crimea in March 2014 to its motherland Russia, sending in this way a quite clear sign to the Western crusaders to stop with their warmongering policy against Russia or to face the consequences. Crimea, with at least 2/3 of the Russian population, became re-included in Russia after the referendum when this option was supported by 97 percent of the Crimean electorate. The second step in Russia's policy dealing with a new political situation in Ukraine is to support existence of the regional historical-cultural self-identity of the Donbass region in the East Ukraine as the part of *Novorossiya*. This project is the optimal solution to protect the Russian national identity of the East Ukraine, and also the project which can encourage predominantly Russian-speaking Republic of Transnistria to survive between Moldova and Ukraine. Consequently, the US/EU geopolitical *Drang nach Osten* against Russia will be thwarted in the most effective way and, what is the most important thing, without direct military confrontation that can escalate into the WWIII.

The US-led *New World Order* in international relations and world politics that was established after the dissolution of the USSR and the Warsaw Pact in 1991 has been from 2008 under the direct challenge by Russia and considerable changes and modifications. From the time of the „Ukrainian Question", which started in March 2014 with re-annexation of the Crimean Peninsula by the Russian Federation and separation of the Russian-speaking eastern provinces of Ukraine from the central administration in Kiev, a new age of global security came to agenda to replace the previous one in the recent future. The crux of the matter in regard to territorial decomposition of Ukraine in 2014 was the Kosovo model founded on „Kosovo precedent", which was used by the Western Governments in 2008 for the sake of territorial dismemberment of the Republic of Serbia by the recognition of self-proclaimed Kosovo independence.

It is the fact that „Kosovo precedent" represents a flagrant violation of the international law for two reasons: 1. The NATO military aggression on the sovereign and independent Federal Republic of Yugoslavia for 78 days in 1999 without a mandate of the UNSC; and 2. The international recognition of the unilateral declaration of state independence of the „Republic of Kosovo" in February 2008 by the USA and the majority of the EU and other Western countries. Nevertheless, „Kosovo precedent" was in 2010 legally empowered by the decision in the form of an advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice in the Hague (the Netherlands), which stated that Kosovo's unilateral declaration of independence does not violate the international law. We believe that this opinion was in accordance with the political interest of the US and its Western satellite states.

Surely, „Kosovo precedent" has questioned the very foundations of the international law and above all the UN Charter, opening doors for a boomerang effect all over the world that became firstly applied in the case of Crimea's secession from Ukraine in 2014. This secession is formally based on the same international legal grounds as in the case of Kosovo in 2008, but at the same time with much more legal arguments. The case of

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Crimean boomerang effect was followed by the independence referendum in Donbass region of the East Ukraine that further complicated the „Ukrainian Question" in global politics and international relations with its very possible final solution based on territorial division of Ukraine between Russia and the West.

Finally, the fundamental conclusion of the research is that "Kosovo precedent" has already served and will further serve in the recent future as the foundation for the territorial decomposition of Ukraine by neighbouring Russia and probably some other countries (like Moldova), opening in such way the doors for a new age of global security and international relations in which the US will not any more enjoy the position of a global hegemon.

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