



UNIVERSITETI I EVROPËS JUGLINDORE
УНИВЕРЗИТЕТ НА ЈУГОИСТОЧНА ЕВРОПА
SOUTH EAST EUROPEAN UNIVERSITY

FACULTY OF CONTEMPORARY SOCIAL SCIENCES

Lulzim Peci

NATO's ROLE ON THE STABILITY AND SECURITY OF THE WESTERN BALKANS:
SMALL STATES AND A HYPER POWERFUL ALLIANCE

Ph.D. Dissertation

Tetovo, November 2020

Thesis supervisor: Prof. Dr. Veton Latifi, SEEU University

Declaration of Authorship

Hereby, I certify that I am the original author of this thesis.

This thesis has been proof read by Blerina Jashari - Zyrapi

Tetovo, November 2020

Lulzim Peci

Abstract

This doctoral thesis conducts a comprehensive inquiry of the role that NATO had on preserving the security and stability in the Western Balkans, from the dissolution of former Yugoslavia, until 2015. In analyzing this role, a multi-dimensional theoretical approach is employed, that encompasses alliances, power (hard, soft and smart), small states, and regional stability and security. Through this approach, the key developments of the 1990's are analyzed, which have concurrently altered the geopolitics of the Balkans and transformed NATO, including the Alliance's military interventions in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo, its involvement in the North Macedonia, transformation of defense and security policies of the Western Balkans countries, national security choices for membership, or neutrality, NATO's memberships of Albania and Croatia, and implications of the Article V on the inter-state borders in the region.

The research results prove that NATO's involvement has transformed the inter-state relations among the countries of the region, from the conditions of 'hot war' to those of 'cold war' and 'cold peace,' following the military interventions in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo, from 'cold peace' to 'normal peace,' following the PfP membership of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, and Serbia, and from 'normal peace' to 'high level peace,' following the NATO memberships of Albania and Croatia, with the exception of relations between Serbia and its neighbors, that have remained at the level of 'normal peace,' and those of Serbia with Kosovo, that are at the level of 'cold peace.' These results also prove that NATO's military intervention has provided the regional hard military balance, while the PfP membership of Serbia has marked the birth of an era of military non-dominance in the region. Finally, this thesis sheds light on the balance of power character of the wars in the region, through the introduction of theoretical notions of patron poles, poles, sub-poles, and composite poles, and it also identifies the correlation of perceived enlargement costs with the stability and security benefits that NATO acquires with the membership of small states.

Key Words: NATO, Western Balkans, Power, Small States, Regional Stability.

Abstrakt

Kjo tezë doktrate bën një kërkim gjithëpërfshirës të rolit që NATO-ja e kishte për ruajtjen e sigurisë dhe të stabilitetit në Ballkanin Perëndimor, që nga shpërbërja e ish-Jugosllavisë e deri më 2015. Në analizën e këtij roli është zbatuar një qasje teorike shumë-dimensionale, që ka përfshirë aleancat, fuqinë (të fortë, të butë dhe të mençur), shtetet e vogla, dhe stabilitetin e sigurinë rajonale. Përmes kësaj qasjeje janë analizuar zhvillimet kyçe të viteve 1990, të cilat njëkohësisht e kanë ndryshuar gjeopolitikën e Ballkanit dhe e kanë transformuar NATO-n, përfshirë intervenimet ushtarake të Aleancës në Bosnje e Hercegovinë dhe në Kosovë, përfshirjen e saj në Maqedoninë Veriore, transformimin e politikave të mbrojtjes e sigurisë së vendeve të Ballkanit Perëndimor, zgjedhjet e sigurisë kombëtare për anëtarësim ose neutralitet, anëtarësimet në NATO të Shqipërisë dhe të Kroacisë, dhe implikimet e Nenit V në kufijtë ndërshtetërorë në rajon.

Rezultatet e hulumtimit dëshmojnë se përfshirja e NATO-s i ka transformuar marrëdhëniet ndërshtetërore ndërmjet vendeve të rajonit, nga kushtet e 'luftës së nxehtë' në ato të 'luftës së ftohtë' dhe të 'paqes së ftohtë,' pas intervenimeve ushtarake në Bosnje e Hercegovinë dhe në Kosovë, nga 'paqja e ftohtë' në 'paqen normale,' pas anëtarësimit në PfP (Partneritetin për Paqë) të Bosnjes e Hercegovinës, Malit të Zi dhe të Serbisë, dhe nga 'paqja normale' në 'paqe të nivelit të lartë,' pas anëtarësimit në NATO të Shqipërisë dhe Kroacisë, me përjashtim të marrëdhënieve midis Serbisë dhe fqinjëve të saj, që kanë mbetur në nivelin e 'paqes normale,' dhe atyre të Serbisë me Kosovën, që janë në nivelin e 'paqes së ftohtë.' Këto rezultate po ashtu dëshmojnë që intervenimi ushtarak i NATO-s e ka krijuar balancin e fortë ushtarak rajonal, ndërkohë që anëtarësia në PfP e Serbisë e ka shënuar lindjen e epokës së mos-dominimit ushtarak në rajon. Së fundi, kjo tezë hedh dritë në karakterin e balancit të fuqive të luftërave në rajon, përmes futjes së nocioneve të poleve patrone, poleve, sub-poleve, dhe poleve kompozite, dhe kjo po ashtu e identifikon korrelacionin e kostove të përceptuara të zgjerimit me benefitet e stabilitetit dhe të sigurisë që NATO-ja i përfiton me anëtarësimin e shteteve të vogla.

Fjalët kyçe: NATO, Ballkani Perëndimor, fuqia, shtetet e vogla, stabiliteti regional.

Апстракт

Оваа докторска теза спроведува сеопфатно истражување за улогата што НАТО ја имаше за зачувување на безбедноста и стабилноста на Западен Балкан, од распаѓањето на поранешна Југославија, до 2015 година. При анализата на оваа улога, се користи мултидимензионален теоретски пристап, кој опфаќа алијанси, моќ (тврда, мека и паметна), мали држави и регионална стабилност и безбедност. Преку овој пристап се анализираат клучните случувања во 90-тите години на минатиот век, кои истовремено ја променија геополитиката на Балканот и го трансформираа НАТО, вклучително и воените интервенции на Алијансата во Босна и Херцеговина и Косово, нејзиното учество во Северна Македонија, трансформацијата на одбраната и безбедносните политики на земјите од Западен Балкан, изборите за национална безбедност за членство или неутралност, членството на Албанија и Хрватска во НАТО и импликациите на членот V на меѓудржавните граници во регионот.

Резултатите од истражувањето докажуваат дека ангажманот на НАТО ги трансформира меѓудржавните односи меѓу земјите од регионот, од услови на „жешка војна“ во услови на „студена војна“ и „студен мир“, по воените интервенции во Босна и Херцеговина и Косово, од „студен мир“ до „нормален мир“, по членството во ПЗМ на Босна и Херцеговина, Црна Гора и Србија и од „нормален мир“ до „мир на високо ниво“, по членството на Албанија и Хрватска во НАТО, со исклучок на односите меѓу Србија и нејзините соседи, кои останала на ниво на „нормален мир“ и оние на Србија со Косово, кои се на ниво на „студен мир“. Овие резултати исто така докажуваат дека воената интервенција на НАТО ја обезбеди регионалната тврда воена рамнотежа, додека членството на Србија во ПЗМ го одбележа раѓањето на ерата на воена недоминација во регионот. Конечно, оваа теза фрла светлина врз карактерот на рамнотежата на силите на војните во регионот, преку воведување на теоретски поими за полови покровители, полови, подполови и композитни полови, а исто така ја идентификува корелацијата на перцепираните трошоци за проширување со придобивките за стабилност и безбедност што ги стекнува НАТО со членството на малите држави.

Клучни зборови: НАТО, Западен Балкан, моќ, мали држави, регионална стабилност

List of Acronyms

CFR:	:Committee on Foreign Relations
CIA	:Central Intelligence Agency
CJTF	:Combined Joint Task Forces Concept
CRS	:Congressional Research Service
DCI	Defence Capabilities Initiative
DIB	:Defence Institution Building
DIRI	:U.S. Defense Institution Reform Initiative
EAPC	:Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council
ESDP	:European Security and Defense Policy
EU	:European Union
EUFOR	:European Union Force
FAS	:Federation of American Scientist
FRY	:Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro)
GDP	:Gross Domestic Production
GOK	:Kosovo Government
IFOR	:Implementation Force
IICK	:Independent International Commission on Kosovo
IMS	:International Military Staff
IPAP	:Individual Partnership Action Plan
YA	:Yugoslav People's Army
KFOR	:Kosovo Force

KLA	:Kosovo Liberation Army
KSF	:Kosovo Security Force
LDK	:Democratic League of Kosovo
MAP	:Membership Action Plan
MFARS	:The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Serbia
NAC	North Atlantic Council
NACC	:North Atlantic Cooperation Council
NALT	:NATO Advisory and Liaison Team
NAM	:Non-Alignment Movement
NATO	:North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NLA	:National Liberation Army
NPT	: Non-Proliferation Treaty
OSCE	:Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe
PAP	:Partnership Action Plan
PARP	:Planning and Review Process of the Partnership
PBH	:Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina
PCC	:Partnership Coordination Cell
PD	:Democratic Party of Albania
PDP	:Party for Democratic Prosperity
PDSH	:Democratic Party of Albanians
PfP	:Partnership for Peace
PSE	:Partnership for Peace Staff Elements
RFERL	:Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty

SAR	:Serbian Autonomous Region
SFOR	:Stabilization Force
SFRY	:Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia
U.S.	:United States of America
UN	:United Nations
UNMIK	:United Nations Administration in Kosovo
UNPREDRP	:United Nations Preventive Deployment Force
UNPROFOR	:United Nations Protection Force
UNSC	:United Nations Security Council
USIP	:United States Institute of Peace
VJ	:Yugoslav Army
WMD	:Weapons of Mass Destruction
WWI	:First World War
WWII	:Second World War

Table of Contents

Abstract	iii.
List of Acronyms	vi.
List of Illustrations	xi.
Foreword.....	xii.
Introduction	1.
I. Alliances, Power and Small States	7.
I.1. An Overview of Evolution of the Alliance Theory in International Relations	8.
I.2. Hard, Soft and Smart Power in International Relations	24.
I.3. Small States: Alliances and Neutrality.....	32.
II. Explaining NATO's Cooperative and Enlargement Instruments	45.
II.1. NATO's Post Cold War Transformation: From Classical to a Post-Modern Alliance	48.
II.2. The Development of Partnership and Membership Instruments	65.
III. The Projection of NATO's Hard Power	73.
III.1. NATO's Intervention in Bosnia and Herzegovina	77.
III.2. NATO's Intervention in Kosovo	89.
III.3. NATO's Involvement in Macedonia	99.
III.4. The Effects on the Regional Security and Stability	107.
IV. The Projection of NATO's Soft Power	111.
IV.1. Transformation of Security and Defense Policies of the Western Balkans Countries	113.
IV.2. National Security Choices: Membership or Neutrality	123.
IV.3. The Effects on the Regional Security and Stability	128.
V. The Projection of NATO's Smart Power	131.
V.1. Enlargement in the Western Balkans	133.
V.2. Article V and its implications on the inter-state borders	137.

V.3.	The Effects on the Regional Security and Stability	144.
VI.	Conclusion	146.
VI.1.	Research Questions	146.
VI.2.	Research Hypotheses	151.
VI.3.	Theoretical Achievements and Applicability of the Western Balkans Case: Possibilities and Limitations	153.
	Bibliography	162.

List of Illustrations

Charts and Figures

a.	Theoretical Framework	5.
1.1.	Power as resources and Power as Behavior Outcome.....	26.
4.1.	Total Armed Personnel of the Western Balkans Countries (1992 – 2001).....	114.
4.2.	Total Armed Personnel of the Western Balkans Countries (2002 – 2015).....	118.
4.3.	GDP of the Western Balkans Countries.....	118.
4.4.	Military Expenditure (%GDP)	118.
6.1.	NATO's Projection of the Hard, Soft and Smart Power in the Western Balkans...	146.
6.2.	Effects of NATO's Involvement on the Regional Security and Stability	147.
6.3.	The transformation Dynamics of the Armed Forces in the Western Balkans.....	148.

Tables

2.1.	Estimated Warheads in Belarus, Kazakhstan, and Ukraine in 1991.....	50.
3.1.	The Military Balance of Forces in the War Theatre in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia	79.

FOREWORD

In 1990, as a young man, I was impressed by the coverage of CNN of the modern warfare that was introduced by the United States and its allies during the operation “Desert Storm” against Iraqi invasion in Kuwait. That was approximately the time when Kosovo’s autonomy was illegally abolished by Belgrade, and when the dissolution of Yugoslavia was looming on the horizon. I was concerned that a war might start soon, but the ‘CNN effect’ impression that I got on the first Iraqi war, pushed me to the blind belief that the United States and its allies will intervene in the region, for not allowing the explosion of the Yugoslav “powder keg.”

Unfortunately, the bloody dissolution of Yugoslavia begun after a short time, and I started to watch the international news that on a daily basis were transmitting the scenes of war atrocities in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia. Western diplomats were frequently meeting with the leaders of the warring sides, but the situation on the ground was unceasingly getting from bad to worse. I was not able to understand why NATO was not intervening militarily in the region. The US and its allies had such a preponderant power, they had defeated Iraq in Kuwait in such a short time, but, on the other hand, they were hesitating to undertake any serious steps towards Belgrade that was waging war and committing ethnic cleansing unseen ever since the end of the WWII. I admit that my belief was troubled, but not the hope I nurtured in myself, that NATO will ultimately intervene to stop human sufferings, and to create conditions for people of the region to solve their disputes in a democratic manner and by peaceful means. At the end of the day, during those dark times, that hope of mine was the single motive that prevented me from emigrating to the West, like so many other young people of my country.

Miraculously, many years later, in 1998, I got a scholarship from the Spanish Foreign Ministry to study international relations at the prestigious University Institute “Ortega y Gasset” in Madrid. My M.A. thesis proposal, titled “The Limits of NATO Enlargement,” was approved by the Institute at the beginning of 1999, exactly at the time when the war was rapidly escalating in Kosovo. I decided to study the Alliance that intervened in Bosnia and Herzegovina and which I expected to do so in Kosovo. My belief was still a troubled one, but hopes had not faded at all.

The March 24th of 1999 was the day I will never forget. At long last, the Alliance finally started the war against Yugoslavia. I was convinced that the surrender of Milošević was a matter of days, but it proved that I was totally wrong. There was no doubt that the Alliance would win, but the question remained on how long the war was to last, and how much will the unprotected Albanian population in Kosovo suffer the atrocities of Serbia's armed forces. Milošević surrendered after three months, and around 10,000 Kosovar Albanians were killed by Serbian authorities during that time. Kosovo finally got free and protected by the most powerful alliance on earth.

Thus, the issues pertaining to NATO and the region, remained my continuous research interests throughout the last two decades, and I have decided to bring them to another level, by conducting a doctoral research on these topics. In completing this thesis, I was solely driven by a desire to enrich the academic knowledge on the role of NATO in the Western Balkans since the dissolution of Yugoslavia, because its presence and policies are of existential importance for the peace, stability, and the well-being of the peoples of the region. Can someone imagine today, the region without NATO's presence and enlargement?. Those who were sufficiently big during the 1990's, and who felt the war on their skin, are most probably the only ones who can give a correct answer. For myself, I hope that this work, with all of my academic, theoretical, and practical experiences intermingled within it, will contribute in clarifying this, and many other answers related to NATO and the region.

Introduction

The demise of the Soviet Union, and the bloody dissolution of the Former Yugoslavia have changed fundamentally the threat perceptions of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), which ultimately led to the transformation of the Alliance. As a consequence of the profound changes in the geopolitical circumstances at the global stage, NATO remained the single hyper-powerful alliance on earth, with preponderant military and economic strength, which has been termed by Krauthammer as the “unipolar moment” (Krauthammer, 1990). Nevertheless, the demise of the Soviet Union, and the collapse of communism, left a security vacuum in the wider Euro-Asian area, which was prone to intra- and inter- conflicts and other security risks, ranging from failed states, to the proliferation of the weapons of mass destruction (WMD).

In parallel with its internal structural reform, in 1993, NATO started the discussion on the membership in the Alliance, of the former communist countries of Central and Eastern Europe that were rather small states. This discussion led to a policy that resulted into a gradual enlargement of NATO, initially with the introduction of the Partnership for Peace, in 1994, and the “Study on NATO Enlargement,” in 1995. The first countries to join NATO were the Czech Republic, Hungary, and Poland, in 1999.

On the other hand, in the beginning of 1990's, the wars that break out in former Yugoslavia, showed the potential for spreading outside of its territory, which threatened the European and international stability. The feasible political–military responses to this threat were not clarified within NATO virtually until Dayton Agreement and the escalation of the Kosovo War, when the Alliance, for the first time in its 50 years history, waged a war against an independent state. Undoubtedly, the crisis in former Yugoslavia was one of most important factors of NATO's Post-Cold War transformation and capability adaptation to deal with the new challenges that of the European and international security.

NATO's involvement in the Western Balkans that is solely “inhabited” by small states, was extensively researched by scholars over the last two decades. The academic discourse on NATO's role in the region has been mainly dominated by examination of the projection and efficiency of

its hard power. The effects of the projection of Alliance's soft power – doctrinal transformation of the national security and defense policies of the region's countries – were researched only sporadically. Furthermore, the scholarly work has not examined at all the projection of the NATO's smart power, through the enlargement, as well as the specific impact of the Article V of the Washington Treaty on the security and stability in the Western Balkans. This dissertation aims to contribute in filling this gap of the scholarly work, through providing new theoretical explanations of NATO's role on the security dynamics and the stability in Western Balkans, starting from the dissolution of Yugoslavia, in the beginning of 1990's, until the end of 2015.

The Research Questions and Hypotheses

In order to provide a thorough analysis of the topic of NATO's Role on the Security and Stability in the Western Balkans, this dissertation puts forward two research questions, that it aims to answer, and three hypotheses, that it aims to test.

The research questions:

- a) What is NATO's Role on the Security and Stability of the Western Balkans?
- b) What is the Power Transformation Dynamics of the Western Balkans Countries and NATO?.

The research hypotheses:

Hypotheses 1: Projection of NATO's Hard Power has ensured stability through deterrence of possible aggressive intentions within the Western Balkans, the re-balancing of power, and has prevented possibilities for escalation of inter-ethnic conflicts in the region.

The projection of NATO's hard power in Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1995, has deterred aggressive intentions of Milošević and Tudjman against this country, but it has not deterred the conflict potential in Kosovo and Macedonia. The projection of NATO's hard power in Kosovo, in 1999, has finally deterred Serbia, and rebalanced military power in the Western Balkans, and, in addition, it has also prevented possibilities for escalation of the conflict in Macedonia in 2001.

Hypotheses 2: The projection of NATO's soft power through Partnership and Membership Instruments has achieved doctrinal transformation of security and defense policies of the Western Balkans countries.

The projection of NATO's soft power through Partnership and Membership instruments has exercised a decisive influence on changing the patterns of hard balancing, and the doctrines of massive conscription armies of the Western Balkans countries. Consequently, the national armed forces of the countries of the region did become professional armies, and their offensive capabilities against their neighbors were stripped significantly, ultimately transforming the Western Balkans into a relatively stable and secure space, with a high degree of security, and a low level of conflict potential.

Hypotheses 3: The projection of NATO's smart power through enlargement is locking the interstate borders in the Western Balkans.

NATO membership of Albania and Croatia has faded ambitions for "greater states" in the Western Balkans. The case of German unification in 1990 has provided a precedent within the Alliance regarding the unification of two independent countries, when one of them is a NATO member. All the NATO members firstly gave their consent for the unification of the Federal German Republic with the Democratic Republic of Germany, and only after that, they welcomed the Unified Germany in NATO. If this is to be applied in, let us say, the case of hypothetical unification of Albania with Kosovo, or of Croatia with the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, then the prior consent of all the NATO members will be required, which, in these hypothetical cases, is highly improbable to be achieved. Therefore, the projection of NATO's smart power through enlargement is providing a crucial increase of the level of security in the Western Balkans, by locking the interstate borders, and by virtually ending the projects for "Greater Nation States."

The Aim of the Research and the Research Objectives:

The aim of this dissertation is to investigate and provide a new theoretical and practical understanding of NATO's role on the security and stability in the Western Balkans, of the power transformation dynamics of the region's states, and of their national security choices in relation to their membership in the Alliance or neutrality. In this regard, the following research objectives

have been put forward, namely, explaining the impact of projection of Alliance's hard, soft and smart power, on the security and stability of the Western Balkans, explaining the correlation of the projected NATO's power, with the power transformation dynamics of the countries of the region, and understanding the main drivers that have shaped their national security choices.

The Structure of the Dissertation

This dissertation is organized in six chapters. The first chapter discusses thoroughly the evolution of the Alliance's theories through the lenses of the realist school of international relations, the nature of power in international relations, with a particular focus on hard, soft and smart power, international and regional stability, and small states, and alliances.

The second chapter briefly analyzes the Post-Cold War evolution of NATO, and its partnership and membership instruments as a background research for a deeper understanding of NATO's involvement in the Western Balkans.

The third chapter analyses the background of the projection of NATO's hard power in Bosnia and Herzegovina and in Kosovo, and its military involvement in Macedonia, its impact on the balance of power, and effects on the security and stability in the Western Balkans. In addition, this chapter introduces new theoretical notions of patron poles, poles, composite poles, and sub-poles, as a framework for analyses of the wars in the former Yugoslavia through the lenses of the balance of power and the alliance security dilemma.

The fourth chapter analyses the impact of the projection of NATO's soft power in the Western Balkans countries through partnership and membership instruments, in changing their security and defense policies that resulted with the changing nature of their military forces, and its effect on regional security and stability.

The fifth chapter analyses the specific dimension of the projection of NATO's smart power in the region, by introducing a new theoretical concept labeled as the Alliance's Security–Stability Correlation, that gives an explanation on why a hyper-powerful alliance, like NATO, admits within its ranks small countries with negligible military capabilities.

The concluding chapter synthesizes the major findings and arguments of the previous chapters, by summarily presenting the results of the testing of the research hypotheses, provides a synthesized answers to the research questions introduced in this dissertation, and a guidance on the possibilities and limitations of applicability of the achieved research results in other regions.

The Research Methodology and Literature Review.

The scope of this doctoral research requires the use of various methodological approaches. First and foremost, in terms of theoretical analyses, throughout this dissertation is used a multi-dimensional approach, as presented in the following figure, that presents a new framework for analyzing the interrelation of NATO, small states, power projection, regional security and stability.

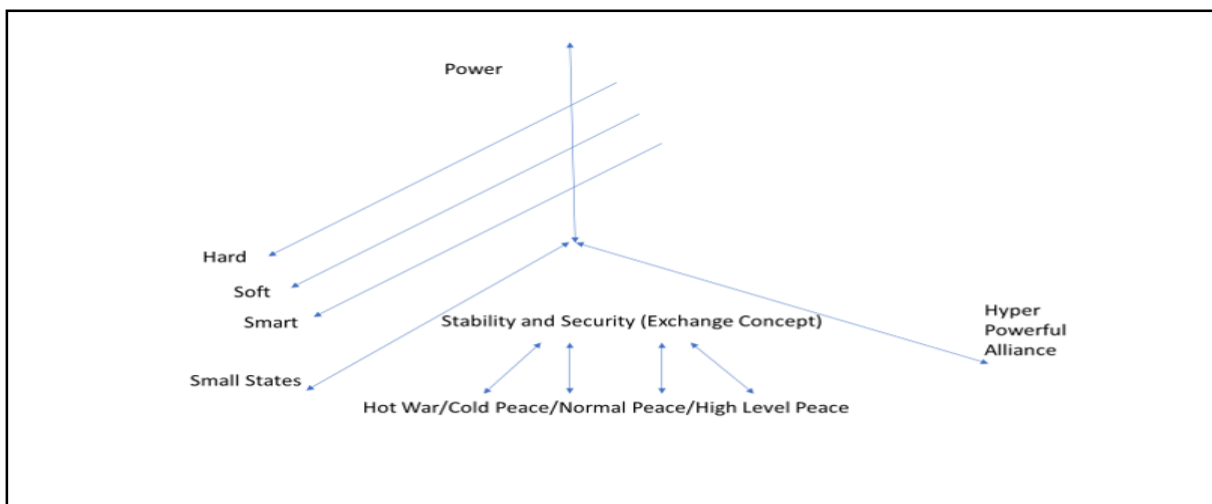


Chart a. Theoretical Framework

This dissertation utilizes extensively qualitative research methodology, namely, historical, empirical, and correlation based investigation, The primary resources include 65 documents published by NATO, United Nations, Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), World Bank, United States and the national governments of the Western Balkans countries, as well as 25 interviews with renowned international and regional experts, namely Dr. Jamie Shea, Dr. Daniel Serwer, Dr. David L. Phillips, Dr. Alexis Wahlas, Dr. Edward Joseph, Amb. (Ret.) Gregory

Zore, Dr. Janusz Bugajski, Dr. Franz Lothar Altmann, Dr. R. M.¹, Amb. (Ret.) Michael Schmunk, Dr. Plamen Pantev, Dr. Enver Hasani, Dr. Bekim Sejdiu, Dr. Nano Ružin, Dr. Agon Demjaha, Fatmir Mehdiu, Dr. Arian Starova, Dr. Albert Rakipi, Dr. Denisa Sarajalić, Dr. Selmo Cikotić, Sanjin Hamidičević, Sonja Biserko, Dr. Filip Ejduš, Dr. Sandro Knezović and Gen (Ret). Xhavit Gashi, whose insights provide a particular scientific weight to this dissertation.

The used secondary resources contain a wide range of academic literature, containing more than 140 books and book chapters, and 75 articles published in journals, from the classical scholarly contributions of Edward. H. Carr, Hans Morgenthau, George Liska, Robert Dahl, to the neo-classical and contemporary scholarly contributions, like those of Kenneth Waltz, Stephen Walt, Joseph Nye, Robert Keohane, David A. Baldwin, John Mearsheimer, Glen H. Snyder, Benjamin Miller, etc., 30 research papers and report, and more than 40 online resources, that include newspapers articles, interviews, etc., and which are listed in the bibliography of this dissertation

¹ The identity of Dr. R.M. is not disclosed due to his personal preference.

I. Alliances, Power and Small States

Introduction

This chapter sets the stage for theoretical contemplations on the topic of this dissertation that aim to explore the role of NATO on the security and stability in the Western Balkans, as well as power relations and transformation dynamics between small states of the region and the Alliance.

In this regard, the first sub-chapter, “An Evolution of the Alliances Theory in International Relations,” briefly presents realist theoretical perspectives on alliance formation, politics, and behavior, through the realist conceptual lenses. It starts with the pioneering theoretical contributions that were propounded around the mid XXth century, and ends up with the contemporary ones, of the current decade. In addition, this sub-chapter lays ground for advancing theoretical understanding of NATO's role in the Western Balkans, which this dissertation aims to achieve.

The second sub-chapter, “Hard, Soft and Smart Power in International Relations Theory,” presents the key concepts and definitions of power in international relations, with a special focus on the concepts of soft, hard and smart power. This will serve as theoretical background for explaining different dimensions of NATO-s power, and of its role in the security and stability in the Western Balkans.

The last sub-chapter, “Small States: Alliances and Neutrality, and Stability,” presents the key theoretical perspectives on the concepts of small states, international and regional stability, alliances, and neutrality. This sub-chapter sets the stage for theoretical understanding of the small states' national security choices, namely, on joining alliances, pursuing neutrality or non-alignment, which is also applicable in the case of Western Balkans countries.

I.1. An Overview of the Evolution of the Alliances Theory in International Relations

Every endeavor to provide a theoretical depiction of international relations, usually starts with realism. This is largely a reflection of the fact that realism has been the first clearly articulated theory of international relations. Moreover, realism purports to have uncovered scientific truths – quite pessimistic ones, at that – about some of the key features of international politics, such as war and peace, power and security.

According to the leading scholars of the realist theory of international relations, alliances are one of the key features of international politics ever since Ancient Times,² and as such they are a faithful reflection of the anarchic structure of international system. In this vein, the monumental historic and warfare strategies accounts of Thucydides' *The War of the Peloponnesians and the Athenians*, and Sun Tzu's *The Art of War*, written, respectively, in the fifth and sixth century BC, are considered to be the ancient ascendant scholarly works of the realist international relations and alliance theories.

The human history has not been merciful to the development of this theoretical discipline. More than ten centuries later, Niccolo Machiavelli's *The Prince* (XVIth century), and Thomas Hobbes's *Leviathan* (XVIIth century), marked the beginning of a new age in the study of international affairs. But, international relations theory, as a particular scholarly discipline, emerged only around the mid XXth century, with the E.H. Carr's *Twenty Years' Crisis* (1939), and Hans Morgenthau's *Politics among Nations* (1948), remarkable books, and first modern realist theoretical contributions, arguing that the quest for both, power, and relative balance of power, are driving aspirations in the conduct of international affairs.

The first comprehensive work on the theories of alliances appeared almost a decade and half later, with George Liska's book, *Nations in Alliance: The Limits of Interdependence* (1962). Liska's work was considered as the dominant theoretical account in the field of alliance theory for almost the next three decades (Snyder, 1997, p. 1). According to Liska "alliances are against, and only

² For further inquiry of the treaties and alliances since the Ancient Times see (Charles, and Alan, 2006).

derivatively for, someone or something,” thus considering a common threat as the key driver for alliance formation (Liska, 1962, p. 12). He argues that weaker states align with bigger powers with the aim of protecting themselves from the potential aggressors and for achieving status and stability (Ibid, p. 13). In addition, he argues that the formation of defensive alliances is rationalized by a common ideology, and that the alliance's efficiency depends on its capability to deter the common threat, as well as that the two most important reasons for dissolution of alliances are the unequal distribution of costs and benefits, and disappearance of the common threat (Liska, 1962:, pp. 168-195).

The land-marking theoretical contributions in this field have emerged by the end of the Cold War, and they are Kenneth Waltz's structural neorealist theory of balance of power, introduced in his book *Theory of International Politics* (1979), and Stephen Walt's balance of threat theory elaborated in his book *The Origins of Alliances* (1987). Today, they are both considered as the classical balance of power theories on alliances. The basic rationale of the neorealist balance of power – threat theorists is based on the fact that there is no “world government” to defend nations from the aggressive external threats, and consequently, every state is forced to build and mobilize its own resources to deal with those threats, including seeking alliances with other states, in order to shift the balance of power to their own favor.

In this vein, Waltz argues that the structure of the international system is a “prerogative of a type of order that prevails among states and respective distribution of power/capabilities within that order.” (Waltz, 1979, p. 99) Along these lines of structural realism, Waltz further argues that the balance of power in a self-help anarchic system is achieved through internal balancing (increasing economic and military capabilities) and external balancing (strengthening and enlargement of own alliances, or weakening or minimizing the opposing ones), in order to match the power of the strongest state, regardless of its intentions (Ibid, p. 120). Waltz's theory entails that the emergence and re-adjustments of the balance-of-power in an anarchic order system is a consequence of changes in the distribution of relative capabilities, and as such recurrently are formed in the international system, whereas the way weaker states balance depends on the distribution of capabilities among the greater powers.

Waltz asserts that alliances are created by states that naturally do not have all of their interests in common, whereas those interests that they have in common are usually negative ones – fears from the power of other states or alliances. Therefore, according to him, alliance's strategies are a result of compromise, due to the fact that the interests of allies and their thinking on securing themselves are never identical. Consequently, the creation of alliances is a result of struggles among states to ensure the balance of power – stability of international system through equilibrium – regardless of their non-identical interest in securing themselves, in which system no other state or alliance possesses the unmatched preponderance of power, and as such alliances serve as a mean for assuring mutual security (Ibid, p.166).

Stephen Walt has refined the balance of power theory by including the dimension of perceived threats in the process of alliance formation. He contradicts Waltz's theory by introducing the argument that if states would balance only to aggregate power, one could expect many US allies to align with USSR, as an alternative to address disbalance of power between Western and Eastern allies (Walt, 1990, p. 275). Furthermore, in contrast to Waltz's balance of power theory, Walt argues that states align with each other in order to balance against threats, rather than against power alone, whose level is affected by aggregate power, geographic proximity (ability to project power diminishes with distance), offensive capabilities (potential to threaten the territorial integrity and sovereignty of other states at an acceptable costs) and perceived intentions (Ibid, p.4). In addition, he concludes that balancing – “allying with the others against the prevailing threat” – is far more common than bandwagoning – “alignment with the source of danger,” whereas when facing a power with a higher level of danger, states may balance by allying with other powerful states (Ibid, p. 22), which represents the key feature of the balance of threat theory.

In this vein, a significant contribution to the alliance theory was also given by Patricia Weitsman, who asserts that the state's behavior in relation to the level of threats it faces determines its balancing pattern; namely, in case of facing an existential threat, states usually bandwagon, in case of a high threat they balance, in case of medium-high threat they tether, and in case of low threat they hedge (Weitsman, 2004, pp.18-24).

Contrary to these theoretical backgrounds, the absence of hard balancing against the US power and the endurance of NATO after the disappearance of the Soviet/Russian threat became a fact of life of international politics in the first three decades after the Cold War. This caused a heated debate on the validity and theoretical limits of the neo-realist alliance theories. However, in one of his last papers (Structural Realism after the Cold War), Waltz concludes that balance of power has not occurred in the first decade after the Cold War, but it will do so “tomorrow” (Waltz, 2000). In doing so, he criticized explanations of the democratic peace theory³ in preventing wars, while recognizing a limited role to the international institutions (Ibid.). He leaves the theoretical explanation on the timing of “tomorrow’s” occurrence to the theories of foreign policies since the “international political theory deals with the pressures of structure on states, rather than with how the states will respond to these pressures” (Ibid, 27).

Nevertheless, the scholarly contributions to the alliance theory after the Cold War continued to be dominated by the neoclassical realism, and marked important achievements, especially with the concepts like Glen Snyder’s *alliance security dilemma*, John Mearsheimer’s *offensive realism*, Randall L. Schweller’s *underbalancing*, James J. Wirtz’s *balance of power paradox*, Thazha Varkley Paul *soft balancing*, Hans Mouritzen’s & Anders Wivel’s *constellation theory* and Stephen Walt’s *unipolarity*.⁴

Glenn Snyder’s work is focused mainly on alliances in a multipolar system. He argues that alliances are the primary instrument of the national security policies of the individual states, whereas the principal means of national security are viewed in narrow terms – armaments, alignments, alliances, military action, and the settlement of conflicts with adversaries (Snyder, 1997, p. 5). He considers these methods as tools for increasing capabilities, or for blocking the

³ The key assumption of the democratic peace theory is that democracies are very unlikely to engage in wars with one another, a fact that has a strong empirical backing. Initial principles of the democratic peace theory were introduced by Immanuel Kant in his essay *Perpetual Peace: A Philosophical Sketch*, published in 1795 (For further exploration on Immanuel Kant’s writings see for example: (Kleingeld, 2006). Today, this theory represents the most robust liberal IR theoretical explanation of the war and peace.

⁴ A similar overview of the alliance theories, but quite different in its content, was introduced by Kajsa Ji Noe Oest, in his working paper “The End of Alliance Theory,” published by the Institute of Political Science of the University of Copenhagen in 2007.

adversaries from achieving their goals and for moderating adversaries' possible aggressive intentions (Ibid). He asserts that the threat is a correlation of the level of conflict of interest with the foe, of the prospect that the foe anticipates to use force, and of the relative military capability of the state against its foe (Ibid, p.35). In this line of thought, Snyder further argues that alignments continuously change with the changing of power relations (slow pace), of common and conflicting interests (frequently), and of issue priorities (from one alignment to another) (Ibid, p.8).

According to him, there are two reasons that cause alliance formation in a multipolar system. Firstly, some states are not satisfied with their moderate security, and they want to increase it substantially by allying with other states, and secondly, they will ally with others in order to avoid isolation or to prevent others from allying against them (Snyder, 1984, p.462). However, when the interests of the allies become divergent or subject to profound change, the alliance's security dilemma may occur in the form of a choice between assistance or non-assistance of allies, and tensions among them, between fears of entrapment - being dragged into a conflict because of an ally's interest that is not perceived as common by the others, and of abandonment – from the defection of an ally from honoring the alliance's commitment, up to realignment with the opponent (Ibid, p. 466 – 467).

Snyder identifies five determinants of choice in the alliance security dilemma: the relative direct and indirect dependence of the partners on the alliance, the level of strategic interests that allies have in defending each other, the degree of explicitness in the alliance agreement (more explicitness, less fear from abandonment), the degree to which allies' interests that are in conflict with adversary are shared, and the behavioral record of the past (Ibid, pp. 471–476). Against this backdrop, he concludes that the alliance dilemma is more ruthless in a multipolar than in a bipolar system. In a multipolar system, the high mutual dependence that coexists with realignment options and the alliance and adversary dilemmas, are of almost equal importance and intertwined, while in a bipolar system the adversary dilemma dominates the determinants of choice of the alliance dilemma, thus making it less severe, despite the existing fears of entrapment and the low risk of abandonment. (Ibid, pp. 494–495). In this regard, Snyder argues

that multipolarity “has been a structural norm during most of international history” and most likely will have the same structure in the future, while considering bipolar and unipolar periods as the deviations from this norm (Snyder. 1997, p. 3). Nevertheless, Snyder’s contribution faces a serious theoretical explanation limit, because he has not elaborated the “Alliance Security Dilemma” under the conditions of unipolarity, having in mind that, in military terms, for almost three decades, the world is continuing to be unipolar (USA), and will most probably endure longer than the bipolar structure that characterized the Cold War.

The fundamentals of Mearsheimer’s theoretical contribution – offensive realism – are based on the assumption that “the stronger a state is in comparison to its potential rivals, the less likely is that those rivals will attack or threaten its survival” (Mearsheimer. 2001, p. 33). In addition, he argues that, as the power gap between any two states grows, the possibility that the weaker state will attack the stronger one diminishes, and that this is the reason why the states are driven by offensive thinking and look for opportunities to maximize their power. Consequently, according to him “states are driven by the quest to change the prevailing balance of power at the expense of potential rivals, in despite of the fact that their ultimate motive is survival.” (Ibid)

Furthermore, Mearsheimer argues that international cooperation cannot remove the dominating security competition thinking (Ibid, p. 93). In this vein, he underlines that bipolar systems are inclined to be the most peaceful, whereas unbalanced multipolar systems are the most disposed to face large scale conflicts, while the balanced multipolar systems are situated somewhere in between (Ibid, p.335). Besides, he argues that individual great powers are motivated to think and act in an offensive and hegemonic manner, not because of their specific characteristics (political and economic systems), but due to the anarchic structure of the international system (Ibid, pp. 53–54).

Mearsheimer considers alliances solely as “temporary marriages of convenience,” by claiming that today's alliance partner might be tomorrow's enemy, and today's enemy might be tomorrow's alliance partner” (Ibid, p. 33). Furthermore, he asserts that in an anarchic system states are driven by their self-interest, and consequently they do not surrender their interests to

the interest of other states, including to the interest of the “so-called international community” (Ibid). In this vein, he argues that the threatened members of the alliance usually disagree over the burden-sharing among allies, due to the fact that states, as self-interested actors, want to minimize the costs that they have to pay in containing an aggressor. This ultimately strengthens their intentions to *buck-pass* with the members of the other alliance (Ibid. p.156). But, on the other hand, the hazard that buck-passing entails for breaking the alliance is a powerful countervailing force (Ibid, p. 159).

In general, the Mearsheimer's scholarly work is focused on great powers and their imperative to become revisionist states as a result of indefinite quest for power maximizing and not for security per se, which can be too costly and risky and cause the security dilemma in a world of balance of power. Controversially, he considers the security dilemma as a source of offensive realism, by concluding that it is hard to increase odds for existence without threatening the endurance of other states (Ibid, pp. 36–37), which did not become a reality in international politics over the last three decades.

Randall L Schweller has made a major theoretical contribution to the Alliances Theory by introducing the theoretical framework of underbalancing – the failure of the threatened countries to recognize a danger, their non-reaction to it, or worthless and imprudent responses to danger (Schweller. 2004, p.159). This conduct of the threatened states, according to him, is contrary to the “common wisdom” of structural realist theory, that envisages a different behavior of threatened states, namely balancing against dangerous accumulation of power by creating alliances, by arms buildup, or by both (Ibid, 160).

Schweller categorizes balancing and underbalancing into four distinctive types. First, “proper balancing” – when the object of balancing is a dangerous rising state that cannot be afforded to be appeased. The counterbalancing measures in this case may include military buildup and formation of alliances. Second, “overbalancing” – when the target is wrongly perceived as a state with aggressive aims, while in reality it is a defensive minded state whose aims are limited to

increasing its own security. Third, “nonbalancing” – that can be manifested in the forms of buck-passing, bandwagoning, appeasement, distancing or hiding (Schweller. 1998, pp. 54–60)

The nonbalancing behavior is considered as sensible under the conditions when avoiding the costs of an armed clash is accomplished by addressing directly or premiting the others to address the “legitimate” grievances of the revisionist state, letting others to defeat the aggressor – while safely sidelining itself, or bandwagoning with the revisionist state, by anticipating to benefit from its success. In the case of unipolarity, the non-balancing is a frequent feature of international politics, due to the harmony of interests of unipole, of other great powers, and other medium and small states, including the well-being of those states, which is perceived as undivided from that of the unipole. And, fourth, “underbalancing” – that occurs when the state fails to balance a potential dangerous aggressor, thus failing to avoid the war, or making it more costly than it could have been (Schweller. 2004, pp. 167–168).

Against this background, Schweller argues that the social fragmentation and lack of loyalty occurs as a result of perilous political divisions, in cases when groups within society do not give legitimacy to the institutions, and, in extreme cases, when a significant part of the population aims at overthrowing the state (Ibid. 172). According to him, in the case of multi-ethnic states, the issue of state loyalty becomes even more difficult, because social fragmentation and ethnic (in group) rigidity may weaken the political authority of the state, which, in turn, may bring the state's elites to adopt underbalancing or nonbalancing as policy options for dealing with external threats (Ibid, p. 179).

Furthermore, he argues that elite consensus is a necessary condition for employing balancing measures (through internal or external means) against a dangerous external threat, and that under other scenarios states might end-up in underbalancing or other non-balancing behavior. The Schweller's theoretical assumptions challenge both, balance of power, and balance of threat theory, because they ignore the trade-off between internal and external stability (ibid. 200-201). However, his theoretical assumptions are tested only for the case of Great Britain's pre-WWII underbalancing towards Hitler's Germany, and they do not cover the underbalancing with

asymmetric threats, like the conflicts and wars in Former Yugoslavia, and the unipol (USA) led alliance (NATO).

James J. Wirtz addresses the profound anomaly of the balance of power theory, which, while assuming that the balancing behavior can deter war, fails to explain the reasons for the outbreak of wars between great powers and very weak states. The occurrence of these asymmetric wars, according to him, is an expression of international politics that goes contrary to the basic rationale of the balance of power theory, which predicts that a preponderance of power deters military conflict between states with huge relative power disparities. Writz has labeled this incongruity of the balance of power theory as the “balance of power paradox” (James Fritz, in Paul et al. 2004, p. 127).

The argument behind the “balance of power paradox” is that the weak powers enter in military conflicts with superior states that own predominant relative power, because their leadership, on one hand, believes that the great power cannot deploy in the theatre of conflict its full military force, and on the other, their leadership also will simultaneously try to explore the constraints imposed by the balance of power, including the calculation that another great power will be dragged into the conflict by allying with them (Ibid, p. 128).

Contrary to these calculations, he argues that the leadership of the superior state focuses on the huge relative power imbalance with the weak state, by failing to recognize the incentives of the weak state to be engaged in a military conflict. Therefore, the strategic consequence of the “balance of power paradox” makes both, the superior and the weak power, extremely prone to the risk acceptance, thus making the war very likely, whereas, the “conventional wisdom” of the balance of power theory would suggest that hostilities will be resolved short of war – as a strategic consequence of overwhelming deterring capabilities of the superior state (Ibid, pp. 128–129).

Fritz has tested his theory with the cases of the Vietnam War, the First Iraqi War, and, to a lesser extent, with Kosovo war, in which, the deterrence and compelling actions of the superior power

(USA/NATO) failed to prevent the war with the weak power (Yugoslavia) (Ibid. 130–146), which gives this theory a strong explanatory power in analyzing asymmetric wars that have occurred in the last decades.

Thazha Varkley Paul's theoretical contribution addresses the contemporary phenomenon of the lack of hard balancing against the unipol (Paul et al., 2005), which challenges the classical assumptions of the balance of power theory that predict the creation of a system in the state of equilibrium, as a result of counterbalancing efforts by the lesser great powers.⁵

Majority of the debates about polarity and balancing in academic discourse revolve around the US. This is understandable, given that modern international system has never been unipolar. In this regard, Paul argues that the second tier great powers (like China, Russia, Japan, France, Great Britain, Germany and India) have abandoned the balance of power strategies, regardless of the trend of the increasing US capabilities in all terms of relative power. On the other hand, these lesser great powers view the US as a hyper power that is not challenging the sovereignty and existence of other states. (Ibid, p.53), and as a constrained hegemon, whose power is internally subject to institutional and political checks and balances, and externally to the possession of nuclear weapons by a number of lesser great powers.

Furthermore, with the aim of safeguarding their national security interests and influence under the conditions of unipolarity, the second tier great powers employ the strategies of bandwagoning, buck-passing and free riding. When these strategies prove to be insufficient in the pursuit of their national security interests in the face of unipol's unilateralism, they engage in the formation of ad-hoc informal and limited diplomatic coalitions – especially within UN and NATO – with the aim to implicitly threaten the unipol with the possibility of upgrading these counter-alignments if the US indulges in excessive unilateralism (Ibid, p. 47).

This behavior of constraining the US power by “other means” – “soft balancing”, according to Paul – is expressed under the following conditions: when the unipol's power and military

⁵ For further reading on the balance of power system and the state of equilibrium see for example (Gilpin, 1981).

behavior results into an amplified unease, but does not seriously challenge the sovereignty of the second tier great powers; the unipol is the main benefactor of public goods, being those of economic or security nature, and, as such, it cannot be replaced, and; the unipol is not prone to easy retaliation, or the second tier great powers cannot challenge the power of the unipol by military means. Under such conditions, the second tier great powers conduct the strategy of soft-balancing with the aim of engaging with the unipol, and building institutional links, in order to diminish the possibility of the unipol's retaliatory actions (Ibid, p. 59).

Another contributor to the "soft balancing" concept, Robert A. Page, argues that the lesser great powers employ soft balancing behavior through the use international institutions, economic measures, and diplomatic actions, not only to limit the maneuvering space of the unipol (USA), but also in order to obstruct and impede the Washington's war plans and reduce the number of countries that would fight side by side with the United States. (Page, 2005, p. 43). Nevertheless, according to Paul, in the cases of intense security competition, when the unipol becomes a threat to existential and vital national security interests of the second tier great powers, the soft balancing strategies can be converted into hard balancing ones (Paul et al. 2005, p. 3). Avoiding the possibility of the hard counter-balancing by the second-tier powers, according to Page, depends on the level of self-restraint by the US from the conducting 'preventive wars', or from pursuing other threatening unilateral policies (Page, 2005, p. 8). Nonetheless, the soft balancing concept has encountered a number of critical reviews, because it is focused only on the second tier great powers and has neglected the soft balancing behavior of the weak states, which is driven by global and regional balance of power and by domestic considerations (Whitaker, 2008).

Hans Mouritzen and Anders Wivel have made a significant theoretical contribution with the introduction of the concepts of pole and non-pole states. This includes power criteria for classifying states, reintroduction of geopolitics, and the past and present constellations of the states in explaining the heterogeneity of the behavior of the states, which constitutes the theoretical framework of the "constellation theory."

They rightly assert that the concepts of “pole”, “great power” and “small states,” are contested ones in the study of international politics. In making the distinction between pole and non-pole states, which, according to classical realists and neorealists, is a matter of their relative power possession, their approach is based on the power they exercise in a specific spatio-temporal context and relational terms, which they have labeled as the “relational polarity” – the capacity to exercise major positive and negative sanctions on a certain territory (Mouritzen and Wivel, 2005, p. 3).

Mouritzen & Wivel argue that for non-pole states the political project of the pole is of vital importance, and that three factors are of particular significance in this case, namely *compatibility* of the pole's values with the non-pole's values, *ideological substance* of the order promoted by the pole, and, *centralization* of the pole that according to their relational and environmental polarity concept needs not necessarily be a single state – it can also be a stable alliance of states (Ibid. p.19). In addition, they argue that the pole powers – in the case of Euro-Atlantic institutions, the United States, United Kingdom, Germany and France – form the pole basis, whereas the non-pole powers are linked to this base by an institutional infrastructure (Ibid, p.24). Non-pole powers, according to them, are distinguished between four constellations, namely, core insiders, near core insiders, would be insiders, and outsiders (Ibid.).

In the Euro-Atlantic context, as core insiders are considered the non-pole states that are EU and NATO members; the near core insiders are the states, where one, or more of these conditions (Full EU integration and NATO membership) are not met; the would be insiders are potential EU member states, which anticipate to accomplish accession in a near or mid-term future; and, outsiders are countries that have no interests in membership (voluntary outsiders) and countries which realize that the odds for membership in a near or foreseeable future are negligible (resigned outsiders) (Ibid, p. 27).

In this constellation of power positions and behavior, according to Mauritz and Viver, the ability of states to achieve their foreign policy goals depends on their exercise of offensive power – influence capability, and of defensive power – autonomy or ability to avoid being affected by the

actions of other states (Ibid, p. 29). In this vein, they argue that unipole can exercise less influence on outsiders than on would be insiders, given that outsiders have no incentives for goodwill considerations. This constellation increases their defensive power – autonomy, while limiting their ability for exercising offensive power – influence, but their possible dependency on the pole may face them with a dilemma between obsolescence and subjugation (Ibid, p. 30).

The would be insiders are doomed with the smallest ability to exercise influence and the most limited autonomy, with a mixture of identification with the poles values and appeasement vis-à-vis poles references - bandwagoning. Near core insiders enjoy higher autonomy at the expense of curtailed influence, whereas the core insiders enjoy high influence capability at the expense of curtailed autonomy (Ibid, pp. 31-33). Furthermore, Mourtizen and Wivel argue that the past constellation – the lessons of the past-influence the priority to national autonomy, and as such, they influence the current constellation and its foreign policy maneuvers, which is manifested with patterns of foreign policy behavior between dynamics and inertia. Here, the relationship between present and past geopolitics is seen as that between dynamics (responses to pressures for change), and inertia (sedimented impulses) (Ibid, p. 36).

Given that the constellation concept is tested solely in the European context, and uses a limited definition of power, which is curtailed solely in terms of influence (offensive power) and autonomy (defensive power), it has a limited explanatory power outside of the western hemisphere and in terms of other forms of power.

In his outstanding article, “Alliances in a Unipolar World” (2009), Stephen Walt made a significant contribution to further advancement of the alliance theory. According to him, the occurrence of unipolarity has not brought an end to the interstate security competition. This is due to the fact that US supremacy falls quite short of global hegemony, subsequently pushing major powers to continue – alone, or by allying with others – to take care about security issues, and to make efforts to guarantee it (Walt. 2009, p. 87).

Walt asserts that under the circumstances of unipolarity, weaker powers have three choices, to align with each other in order to mitigate the unipole's influence, to align with unipole with the aim of backing its actions or making use of its power for their own purposes, or to remain neutral. In this world, most of alliances will be a reaction to hyper power, either in trying to constrain its influence, or to exploit its power, whereas independent alliances will form to deal with local issues, and they will be less common and less important (Ibid, p. 94). On the other hand, Walt argues that the unipole will be more inclined to align with the likeminded ideological states, or with those that are firm in following its lead (Ibid, p. 95) However, due to the fact that a unipole has a smaller need for allies, its partners will consequently have a reason to be suspicious on the endurance of assurance it has made, while at the same time, it gives the unipole an opportunity to demand a higher price for the support provided (Ibid, p. 97).

Therefore, according to Walt, unipolarity fundamentally modifies the alliance's security dilemma, that is, the twin risks of abandonment and entrapment. Smaller allies will be more concerned about the possibilities of being abandoned by the unipole, due to the fact that they are needed less by it, whereas the unipole will be much less likely to be dragged into a conflict by a weaker ally prone to irresponsible actions. On the other hand, small powers are expected to be more vulnerable to entrapment, due to the pressure that unipole can exercise on them for joining the coalitions of the willing which serve its security interests (Ibid, pp. 98-99). Alliances strategies in a unipolar world, according to Walt, will vary from hard balancing to regional balancing, as a consequence of balancing efforts against the unipole, or attempts to accommodate it and make use of its power.

Nevertheless, he assumes that under the conditions of unipolarity, medium and small powers will be prone to free riding whenever possible, while at the same time persisting on alliance norms that ensure their voice in the alliance's decision making, in order to secure the maneuvering room for avoiding impositions of the unipole's preferences. On the other hand, the unipole is expected to avoid the norms of highly institutionalized alliances, and will prefer to operate with "coalitions of the willing," even in cases when these arrangements might require greater transaction costs (Ibid, pp. 117-8). Furthermore, Walt concludes that balancing of states

against the US will take place through internal balancing, or by using different forms of soft balancing, or by leash-leaping⁶ efforts, while the medium and small powers will struggle for influence in Washington in order to prevent the use of its power against them, or to be projected on their behalf (Ibid, p. 119).

Finally, in their *Foreign Affairs* article “The Case for Off-Shore Balancing⁷: A Superior U.S. Grand Strategy” (2016), Mearsheimer and Walt argue that the United States should adjust its overseas military presence according to the distribution of power in the three key regions of its special interest, namely Europe, Northeast Asia, and the Gulf, since there is no potential for the rise of a potential hegemon that can threaten its security interests. In this vein they argue that the U.S. has failed with its policy of liberal hegemony – which they have labeled as a democracy delusion⁸ – given that instead of promoting peace and implanting liberal democracy, it has ended up in fighting endless wars (Mearsheimer and Walt, 2016, p. 80).

Under such circumstances, they underline that the US has no need to deploy its military and air forces in these regions, and that it should turn the first line of defense to regional forces and let them ensure the balance of power in their neighborhood, by pledging them military assistance and onshore engagement in case of confronting danger of being conquered by any rising regional hegemon (Ibid, p. 73). Along these lines, Mearsheimer and Walt argue that NATO should be turned to Europe, which in essence means detaching it from the unipol's security guarantees (Ibid, p. 82). This strategy, according to them, will ensure the U.S. primacy in the future. However, in the long run, according to Lane, putting in life of the offshore balance strategy by the US, in

⁶ “Leash Slipping” - Reducing dependence on the unipole by pooling their capabilities by a number of smaller powers, such as ESDP.

⁷ The term “Offshore Balancing” has been coined by Christopher Layne in 1997. Layne argued that the US grand strategy can assume with confidence that other states would balance against a potential hegemon in Euro-Asia, while the dynamics of alliance relationships favor an offshore balancing strategy, in a situation of the reduced U.S. extended deterrence commitments (Layne, 1997)

⁸ The argument of the “democracy delusion” (Mearsheimer, 2018), claims that the trichotomy – relationship between liberalism, nationalism and realism, can explain the failure of the U.S. Post-Cold War Strategy of “Liberal Hegemony,” because it may lead the targeted countries at odds with nationalism and realism.

essence would mean shifting the unipolar world into an unipolar's multipolar world (Layne, 1997, 113).

This overview of the realist alliance formation theory does not include the statistically oriented scholarly contributions on alliances⁹ that are limited to testing in historical-empirical terms correlations between aggregates, (i.e. alliance commitment and war initiation (Singer and Small, 1972; Geller and Singer, 1998; Kimball, 2006; and Bensson, 2011), deterrence of aggression (Leeds, 2003) termination of alliances (Leeds, 2007), moral hazard and reliability (Bensson, 2012) type of regime (Lai and Reiter, 2000; Gibler and Welford, 2006; and Mattes, 2012), military conflict among member states (Bearce, Flanagan and Floros, 2006) etc.), and game and rationale choice theories (Smith, 1995; and Gratzke and Gleditsch, 2004) which are focused on relations between alliances and wars by using economic models, due to the fact that these theoretical contributions do not cover political processes of the alliance politics under the conditions of peace, which is the subject of this dissertation.

Nevertheless, taking into the consideration the above discussion of the evolution of the alliance, one can conclude that, even within the realm of realism, it is impossible to foresee any construction of anything similar to a single, consistent, and coherent "Theory of Alliances." However, these theoretical contributions have enhanced the understanding of alliance behavior as well as of polarities in the international system. Yet, with few exceptions, their scope is limited in viewing poles, non-poles, and alliances, through the lenses of hard power resources, by largely excluding the relationship between different forms and manifestation of power – hard, soft and smart power, and which is what this dissertation aims to explore.

⁹ These works are based on data generated from the Correlates of War (COW) Project, <http://www.correlatesofwar.org/data-sets>, which was founded by the Michigan University political scientist David J. Singer in 1963, and the Alliance Treaty Obligations and Provisions (ATOP) project <http://www.atopdata.org/> that provides data related to the content of military alliance agreements signed by all countries of the world between 1815 and 2018, which was founded in 2002 by Brett Ashley Leeds (Rice University), Jeffrey Ritter (Rutgers University), Sara Mitchell and Andrew Long (Florida State University).

I.2. Hard, Soft, and Smart Power, in International Relations Theory

Over the last seven decades, the attribution of power to polarity was one of the key features of the theoretical framework of the alliances used by the most prominent scholars of the realist realm. However, the definition of the very concept of power still remains one of the most controversial issues among international relations scholars. Although an agreement among international relations scholars on the concept of power in international politics is not on the horizon, the contemporary theoretical contributions have enlightened important dimensions of its nature and role (Baldwin, 2016, pp. 1-3).

In his recent book, *Power and International Relations*, the Princeton University prominent scholar David Baldwin, has summarized the two dominant traditions of power analysis, namely the national power realm that portrays power as resources, and the relational power that observes power as a current or possible relationship (Baldwin, 2016, pp. 53–54). On the other hand, contrary to these theoretical contemplations, in his latest book, *The End of Power: From Boardrooms to Battlefields and Churches to States, Why being in charge isn't what used to be?* (2013), Moises Naim argues that all forms of power are in decay, if not in disarray.

However, there is no doubt that the seminal contributions of Joseph Nye, and his coining of the concepts of 'soft power,' (Nye, 1990; and Nye, 2004) and 'smart power,' (Armitage and Nye, 2007; Nye, 2009; and Nye, 2011) are one from the most important contemporary theoretical explanatory achievements on the multiple dimensions of power. In despite of the fact that, together with Robert O. Keohane, he is known as the founder of neoliberalism,¹⁰ Nye regards himself as a "liberal realist."¹¹ The fusion of realism and liberalism in analyzing the forms of

¹⁰ The book of Joseph S. Nye and Robert O. Keohane (1977). *Power and Interdependence: World Politics in Transition*. is considered as the founding cornerstone of neoliberalism, due to their contribution to developing the concepts of asymmetrical and complex interdependence.

¹¹ Joseph S. Nye asserts that "Neorealism would be most appropriate at the structural level of systemic theory; neoliberalism would more often be fruitful at the process level" (Nye, 1998: 256), and in 2008 he argued that a Liberal Realist Foreign Policy should be conducted by the next US President. (Nye, 2008c).

power (hard, soft, and smart), has “crowned” Nye as one of the top leading scholars of international relations.

According to Nye, power depends from the context, and he considers the ability of leaders to comprehend the changing environment and capitalize on trends as a crucial skill for converting power resources into successful strategies – a skill that is coined as “*contextual intelligence*” by Anthony Mayo and Nitin Nohria (Mayo and Nohria, 2005).¹² Furthermore, while relating it to contextual intelligence, Nye defines two types of leadership in international politics, namely transformational (soft power) and transactional (hard power) leadership (Ibid, pp. 61).

He also argues that power has features of ‘a complex three-dimensional chess game’. On the top of the chess-board – military power– the world is principally unipolar, due to the unmatched military preponderance of the United States; on the middle of the chess board – economic power¹³ – the world is largely multipolar, with the United States, China, Japan, Germany, the United Kingdom, India and France; and on the bottom of the chess board is the arena of transnational relations that to a large extent interacts outside of the governmental control (Nye. 2011, p. XV.).

However, one should note that national power, especially in the realist realm, traditionally used to be measured by specific criteria, like population size and territory, natural resources, economic strength, military force, and social stability (Nye and Armitage, 2007, p. 6). In this regard, different analysts tried to invent formulas that would enable quantification of power in international affairs, but they proved to be unsuccessful and even misleading. According to a formula provided by a high ranking CIA official in 1977 [Perceived Power = (Population + Territory + Economy + Military) * (Strategy + Will)], the Soviet Union resulted to be two times more powerful than the United States, but, ironically, a decade later Soviet Empire collapsed, and the US remained the single world’s hyper power (Nye, 2011, p. 4). Contrary to this definitional approach, Nye fuses the resource and relationship definitions of power, and he defines it as “the capacity to do things

¹² Quoted from (Nye, 2008a: 87)

¹³ See for example: FocusEconomics. (2018, November 8).

and to affect others to get to the wanted outcomes" (Nye 2011, p. 6). He depicts these two types of power in the following figure:

Power Defined as Resources

context

skill

Power = resources → conversion strategy → preferred outcomes

Power Defined as Behavioral Outcomes

Power = affects others → re: something → means → to preferred outcomes

(domain) (scope) (coercion, reward, attraction)

Fig.1.1. Power as Resources and Power as Behavioral Outcome

Furthermore, Nye also "co-opts" the Robert Dahl's "restricted" relational definition of power (Dahl, 1957), as "the ability to get others to do what they otherwise would not do" (Nye and Welch, 2014, p. 5), that is also known as "the first face of power". The second face of power – "framing and agenda setting" – is introduced by Peter Bachrach and Morton in 1960, and the third face of power – the ideas and beliefs that shape other's initial preferences – is introduced by Steven Lukes in 1970, and these are further developments of the concepts of power that were missed in the initial definition of the relational power by Robert Dahl (Nye. 2011, pp. 11–14). However, Nye's explanation of the three faces of power in relation with hard and soft power, in terms of the power relationship, is limited in the two actors' theatre power interplay (Ibid: 14, and Ibid. p. 91):

First Face: *A uses threats or rewards to change B's behavior against B's initial preferences and strategies. B knows this and feels the effect of A's power.*

Dahl: Including others to do what they otherwise would not do.

Hard: A uses force/payments to change B's existing strategies.

Soft: A uses attraction/persuasion to change B's existing preferences.

Second Face: *A controls the agenda of actions in a way that limits B's choices of strategy. B may or may not know this and be aware of A's power.*

Bachrach and Baratz: Framing and setting agenda.

Hard: A uses force/pay to truncate B's agenda (whether B likes it or not).

Soft: A uses attraction or institutions so that B sees the agenda as legitimate.

Third Face: *A helps to create and shape B's basic beliefs, perceptions, and preferences. B is unlikely to be aware of this or to realize the effect of A's power.*

Luke: Shaping other's preferences.

Hard: A uses force/pay to shape B's preferences [Stockholm syndrome].

Soft: A uses attraction or institutions to shape B's initial preferences.

In operational terms of power, Nye argues that it cannot be said that an agent/actor has "power without specifying power to do what" (the power capacity), and asserts that it is necessary to specify actors in the power relationship (the scope of power), as well as topics involved in this relationship (the domain of power) (Nye, 2011, p. 6).

Nye further argues that the application of soft power is based on "the ability to shape the preferences of others," (Nye, 2004, p. 5) and that it is not simply identical with influence, due to the fact that influence can also be exercised by hard power in the form of threats and payments, but in behavioral terms it is attractive power (Ibid, p. 20). According to him, the "agenda-setting that is regarded as legitimate by the target, positive attraction, and persuasion," belongs to the spectrum of soft power, whereas the use of force and payment, and some agenda-setting generated by the influence of these sources of power, rest in the hard power domain (Ibid.).

Nye addresses the distinction between soft power (“the ability to affect others through co-optive means of framing the agenda, persuading, and eliciting positive attraction, in order to obtain positive outcomes”), and smart power (“the ability to combine hard and soft resources into effective strategies”), in terms of tangible resources, intangible factors, and conversion strategies. According to him, while the resources of soft power are intangible factors (institutions, ideas, values, culture, and the perceived legitimacy of policies), and the resources of hard power are tangible ones (force and money), by including here the intangible factor of the use of threat, on the other hand, the exercise of smart power is a matter of strategies for conversion of power resources into a specific context (Ibid, p. 23).

Against this backdrop, Nye argues that military resources can produce both, hard, and soft power, whereas military force arrange for conditions that help provide a minimal degree of order in world politics. In this vein, he agrees with the argument of Geraldo Zahran and Leonardo Ramos, that the command power (which is hard power), can create resources that can generate soft-power (the creation of institutions) at some later period, and vica-versa, the co-optive power can create hard power resources (military alliances) or economic aid (Nye, 2010, p. 216). However, a prosperous national economy is crucial factor for maintaining and developing military resources, and for enabling their conversion into a military power. It is not a historic anomaly that the United States, as the world's largest economy during the last 100 years, has an incomparable military preponderance in relation to other countries of the world.

On the other hand, Nye argues that external exercise of economic power in the form of economic sanctions, either negative or positive, is, in general, the most visible instrument of the exercise of this type of power. But, in order to assess any success of economic sanctions, there is a need for a clarity of their goals. In this line of argument, he stresses that positive economic sanctions (payments, aids and other forms), include both, hard and a soft power dimensions, and argues that the efficiency of economic sanctions depends on the asymmetries of vulnerability of each market, and on the level of unbalanced economic dependence between the exerciser of the economic power (sanctions) and the target country (Nye. 2011, pp. 51-80).

According to Nye, the magnitude of the soft power of a specific country depends on three basic resources, namely on its culture, political values and foreign policy – when others view them as legitimate and with moral authority (Ibid, p. 84). In this vein, he argues that attraction is more complex than it might look at the first sight, because if attraction is negative, it may lead to the hard power response, and, thus, may produce vulnerability. On the other hand, positive attraction, at the level of states, is dependent on perceived benignity, competence, and beauty (charisma – related ideas, values, and vision that engender inspiration and adherence), which are crucial for conversion of soft power resources into power behavior (Ibid, p. 92). Against this backdrop, Nye asserts that persuasion, namely, using arguments to influence the beliefs and actions of others, without using the hard power, is closely related to the attraction and trust, and, as such, they reinforce each other. (Ibid., p. 93).

In the last years, a number of efforts were undertaken to quantify the measurement of soft power. Some examples include the Elcano Royal Institute's "Global Presence Report (Elcano, 2018) and the Portland's Communication "Soft Power 30 Report," authored by Jonathan McClory, which Nye has described as "the clearest picture of global soft power to date." (McClory, 2015). In contrast to Nye, who has limited the resources of soft power in three pillars, namely, in culture, political values and foreign policies, McClory expands and reformulates the range of resources of soft power, and clusters them into six categories of objective data: government, culture, engagement, education, digital, and enterprise. He then uses opinion polls to measure the subjective nature of soft power on international perceptions, based on the most widespread mediums through which nationals interface with foreign countries (McClory. 2015, p. 22). In this regard, the *Soft Power 30 Report 2018* (McClory, 2018) indicates that Great Britain has the highest global soft power ranking, followed by France, Germany, United States and Japan, while China that has incorporated and hugely invested on soft power as an instrument of foreign policy (Albert, 2018), and the Russian Federation, have lower rankings than Czech Republic, regardless of their incomparably bigger hard power. The report concludes that Russia's disinformation efforts, and its sharp power strategies of deception and distortion, have turned it into a pariah state, whereas China's record in human rights, civil liberties, and the rule of law,

reflect poorly on its image at the global scale (McClory, 2018). These findings reinforce Nye's argument that soft power is not dependent on hard power (Nye, 2004, p. 9), because it is an independent form of power, and is not a replacement for other forms of power.

Nye also rightly argues that poor power resources predispose a lower probability of obtaining preferred outcomes, and that enormous resources of power may lead to overconfidence and inappropriate power conversion in a specific context (Nye, 2011, p. 207). This argument can be illustrated by the case of the initial phase of the Yugoslav conflicts, at the beginning of 90's, when due to the lack of involvement of international community, the security patterns among newly independent states were fitting to the description of the regional security complex.¹⁴ The overconfidence of Serbia to keep Yugoslav Federation under its tutelage, gained by practical inheritance of the Yugoslav military force, contrary to its goals, led to the disintegration of the state, and creation of seven new states within its territory.

In this respect, in the context of the twenty-first century, the smart power, according to Nye, is about designing successful strategies to combine power resources, rather than about maximizing power or preserving hegemony (Ibid, p. 208). Against this background and differently from the famous Machiavelli's maxim that "ends should justify means," Nye argues that a smart strategy should relate means to ends, and that it requires clarity about goals, resources and tactics for their use. While another Machiavelli's advice that "it is safer to be feared, than to be loved," reputes the bases of classical realist understanding of power, the Nye's "smart power" interpretation in these terms is: it is safer when you are feared and loved at the same time. (Ibid, p. 208).

Similarly to hard and soft power, that need a conversion strategy to transform resources into power, "smart power" as a different form of power, also needs a context-based strategy that

¹⁴ The Regional Security Complex Theory claims that each state in a geographically clustered region interacts with the security of the other region's states. These regions are considered as mini-systems, to which the IR theories of balance of power, polarity, alliances, and interdependence, can be applied. This theory belongs to the "Copenhagen School of Security," and was introduced by Barry Buzan and Ole Waever in their seminal book *Regions and Powers: The Structure of International Security*, published in 2003.

transforms available resources of the hard and soft power into this “integrated” type of power. In this context, Nye puts in plain words that a “smart strategy” gives answers to five questions: first – “what goals and outcomes are preferred?”; second – “what resources are available and in which context?”; third – what are the positions and preferences of the targets of influence attempts?”; fourth – “which forms of power are most likely to succeed?”; and fifth – “what is the probability of success?”. Furthermore, Nye argues that “smart power” is not an exclusive realm of great powers, and that it can be successfully employed by small states as well, which he illustrates by the successful cases of Singapore, Switzerland, Saudi Arabia and Norway (Ibid, pp. 208-210). Situating the “smart power” in the contemporary and changing international environment, which Nye illustrated through a three dimensional chessboard, requires an enhanced level of skills and knowledge in order to assess the distribution of resources within each dimension of power. Against this background, Nye argues that the world is neither unipolar, nor multipolar, nor chaotic, but it is all three at once. In this regard, he emphasizes that a smart grand strategy must be able to cope with very different distributions of power in different dimensions and that it should appropriately comprehend the trade-offs between them (Ibid, p. 213). From this point of view, Nye recognizes the importance of the Hegemonic Stability Theory¹⁵ in explaining the beneficial effects of hegemony on the provision of stability and global public goods.¹⁶ According to him, hegemonic states are essential for global governance, and should take the lead in supplying of global public goods, given that smaller states have no incentives and capacities to provide them, and when greater states fail to undertake this endeavor, the consequences for the international system can be devastating. (Ibid, pp. 214-217)

In the following chapters, we will further explore the transformative dynamics of hard, soft, and smart power, in the realm of power relations between hyper powerful political-military alliance and small states, illustrated by the case study of NATO and the Western Balkans states, which is the primary inquiry focus of this dissertation.

¹⁵ For further explanation of the Hegemonic Stability Theory, see for example (Keohane, 1980), in which he argues that hegemony offers an order similar to a central government in the international system.

¹⁶ For further explanation of Global Public Goods see for example (Kaul, I. et al., 2003)

I.3. Small States: Alliances and Neutrality, and Stability

Small states nowadays comprise the vast majority of the world's countries, and many of them are new states as well. According to historical evidence, the new states come into existence in five distinctive ways and as a result of: a) breakdown of multinational states or empires; b) two or more states joining into a single state; c) secession of individual parts of a state; d) independence of provinces, vassal states and colonies, and; e) as a result of international agreements (Jazbec, 2001, p. 46). Over the last seven decades, the vanishing of colonial empires, the disintegration of the Soviet Union and former Yugoslavia, and a variety of secessions all over the world, have led to the creation of numerous new sovereign countries. In 1945 there were only 74 independent countries, whereas today there are more than 195 of them (Alesina and Spolaore, 2003, p. 1), and most of them are populated by less than ten million inhabitants.¹⁷ On the other hand, among the most populated countries in the world (China, India, the United States, Indonesia, and Brazil), only the United States is a rich country, while the top ten richest countries per capita are small states.¹⁸

Nevertheless, this is not a new phenomenon in international relations. In the early XIVth century, Venice's budget was almost equal to that of the Kingdom of Spain, and just 20 percent smaller than that of the Kingdom of France (Alesina and Spolaore. 2003, pp. 176-177). However, in despite of its economic prosperity that lasted for several centuries, Venice was not able to ensure its independence, and, by the end of XVIII century, it fell into the hands of Napoleon Bonaparte.

This and other historical accounts, show that military capabilities in per capita terms are cheaper to "buy" defense in a larger than in a small country. Against this backdrop, Alesina and Spolaore argue that the relationship between defense spending and country size is complex, as a result of international alliances, as well as due to the fact that some large countries may provide defense for small countries that have much lower defense spending in per capita terms (Ibid, p. 97).

¹⁷ For further information on population size by country see: Worldometers.

¹⁸ For further information on country comparison on GDP per capita see: CIA. The World Fact Book.

However, the academic work pertaining to small states still remains an insufficiently explored field in the international relations, starting from their very definition, to their role in contemporary international politics. The classical definitions of small states are based on absolute measurements of their "small" resources, like small population, small economic activity, and/or small military. In this regard, it is worth mentioning that in despite of a lack of systemic academic research and normative agreement on this topic, this definition is also being used by the World Bank, which considers a small state to be the one with a population from one to 1.5 million (Jesse and Dreyer, 2016, p. 7). Ironically, according to this definition, with the exception of Montenegro, all countries of the Western Balkans do not fit into the category of small states. On the other hand, this definition does not take into the consideration the fact that a state of one million in the South Pacific or Caribbean, differs qualitatively with a state of one million in the middle of Europe, thus exposing the deficiencies of this criteria that excludes relative power of small states vis-a-vis their neighbors, and regional power constellations.

Against this background, Ingebritsen et al. argue that from the legal point of view, all states, regardless of their size and capabilities (superpower, great powers, middle powers, small powers and micro-states, as defined by Handel (1981, p.10)), are equal before the international law, but politically they are far from being equal, and this is a persisting pattern of international systems ever since the Congress of Vienna (1814-15), when a special position for Great Powers has been recognized (Ingebritsen et al., 2006). Special position of great powers "coexists uneasily with the international systems' basic principle of formal equality among sovereign states", which is framed to prevent great powers from translating their preponderance into a official status (Ibid.). On the other hand, Worsley and Kitromilides argue that in contemporary world, the powerful states are interdependent with the weak ones and this creates a room for the latter to exercise some leverage in defense of their interests and to "impose rules of conduct to those in need of their territory" (Worsley and Kitromilides, 1979, p. xi).

Nevertheless, theoretical discussions on small states date since the ancient times. Hence, the famous Thucydides' dictum, "the strong do what they can and the weak suffer what they must" still reverberates in the discourse of the classical realists. In the classical political thought, as

reflected by Jean-Jacques Rousseau or Charles de Montesquieu, small were considered those states which were not perceived as a danger to their neighbors, and whose survival was continuously threatened externally (cited in Goetschel, 1998, p. 13).

Within this realist theoretical milieu, Hans Morgenthau differentiates great powers and small states in terms of capabilities to impose their will – “A Great Power is a state which is able to have its will against a small state [...] which in turn is not able to have its will against a Great Power” (Morgenthau 1971, p. 129). In addition, he observes that “Small nations have always owed their independence either to the balance of power (Belgium and the Balkan countries until the Second World War), or to the preponderance of one protecting power (the small nations of Central and South America, and Portugal), or to their lack of attractiveness for imperialistic aspirations (Switzerland and Spain)” (Morgenthau 1948, p. 196).

Similarly, Annette Baker Fox makes the distinction between small states and great powers according to their intensity of focus on each other: “while the great power might be almost the whole concern of the small state, the latter is only a small part of concern of the great power”(Fox, 1959, p. 181), as well as according to the scope of the area where they can exercise their influence: “whereas great powers exercise their influence over wide areas, small powers are ‘local powers,’ whose demands are restricted to their own and immediately adjacent areas” (Ibid, p. 3).

On the other hand, Rothstein stresses that historically the small powers that are able to successfully cope with great power behavior are those that have both, a strong, and favorable, geographic position (Rothstein, 1968). He pinpoints three aspects of the small power's circumstances, namely, “a) ‘Outside help is required’, b) ‘the state has a narrow margin of safety, with little time to correct mistakes’, and, c) ‘the state's leaders see its weakness as essentially unalterable,” (IN, Keohane, 1969 p. 293) and frames them in both, psychological, and material dimension:

“A small power is a state which recognizes that it cannot obtain security primarily by use of its own capabilities, and that it must rely fundamentally on the aid of other states, institutions, processes, or developments to do so; the small power's belief in its inability to rely on its own means must also be recognized by the other states involved in international politics” (Rothstein, 1969, p. 29)

Robert Keohane has made a further contribution to the psychological dimension, in determining the difference among great, secondary, middle, and small powers:

“A Great Power is a state whose leaders consider that it can, alone, exercise a large, perhaps decisive, impact on the international system; a secondary power is a state whose leaders consider that alone it can exercise some impact, although never in itself decisive, on that system; a middle power is a state whose leaders consider that it cannot act alone effectively but may be able to have a systemic impact in a small group or through an international institution; a small power is a state whose leaders consider that it can never, acting alone or in a small group make a significant impact on a system” (Keohane, 1969, p. 293)

As elaborated in the first sub-chapter, Mouritzen and Wivel, in making the difference between pole and non-pole states, which according to classical realists and neorealists is a matter of their relative power possession, have introduced the distinction between super, great, medium, small and micro states. They do so by referring to the power that they exercise in a specific spatio-temporal context and relational terms, which they label as “relational polarity” – the capacity to exercise major positive and negative sanctions in a certain territory (Mouritzen & Wivel. 2005, 3).

Similarly, Jesse and Dreyer have introduced a concept of categorization between different types of states in the dyadic relationships. According to them, “A superpower is the state that is never weak interacting with any other state at the global, regional, or sub-regional level”; “a great state is the state that is weaker than a superpower at the global level but stronger than non-great

states at global level, regional level, or sub-regional level”; “a middle state is the state always weak at global level, weaker than great states at regional level, but stronger than other states at regional and sub-regional level”; “a small state is the state always weak at global and regional levels, but strong at sub-regional level; a microstate is the state always weak at all levels, unless dealing with other microstates” (Jesse and Dreyer, 2016, p. 10).

On the other hand, during the Second World War was largely assumed that the days of small states are over, as a consequence of the development of military technology. During this period, only five European small and medium powers, namely Ireland, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and Turkey achieved to maintain their neutrality and statehood (Fox, 1959). However, the empirical evidence shows that after the Second World War, with the exception of Tibet (1951) and Sikkim (1975), not a single state has disappeared from the political map of the world as a result of a foreign invasion or annexation. Instead, the vanishing of states in this era occurred as a result of ethnic nationalism, accompanied with internal disputes and subsequent armed conflicts. In the cases of foreign invasion during the Cold War, a number of small states, like Czechoslovakia, Hungary, or Afghanistan, have lost temporarily their sovereignty, due to the Great Power invasion (the Soviet one), or, in its last days, Kuwait, due to the invasion of regional bigger power (Iraq), but they have not lost their international legal personality.

Therefore, as Jazbec argues, the existence of small states is indivisibly interrelated to their (in)securities and security dilemmas, they depend from the changing security environment, perceptions of security threats, and security related international institutions, including the unresolved “division of responsibilities” among them, as well as from the creation of conflict (security) preventive mechanisms (Jazbec. 2001, pp. 59-66). In addition, the trends of armed conflicts that occurred in the last 70 years, show that by far the largest number of armed conflicts in the world belong to intrastate state nature (Kendra at all, 2017, p. 2).

Nevertheless, in the realist theoretical contemplations, international stability continues to be viewed through the systemic state-centric and balance of power lenses. Furthermore, “international stability” still suffers from the lack of a comprehensive definition by international

relations scholars, regardless of numerous attempts undertaken by them in this direction. In this regard, Karl Deutch and David J. Singer have given one of the earliest scholarly definitions of international stability from the systemic and state-centric point of view, though in probabilistic terms. According to them,

“From the broader, or systemic, point of view, we shall define stability as the probability that the system retains all of its essential characteristics; that no single nation becomes dominant; that most of its members continue to survive; and that large-scale war does not occur. And from the more limited perspective of the individual nations, stability would refer to the probability of their continued political independence and territorial integrity without any significant probability of becoming engaged in a "war for survival".”
(Deutch and Singer, 1964, pp. 390-391)

On the other hand, Robert Gilpin argues that “an international system is stable (i.e., in a state of equilibrium), if no state believes it profitable to attempt to change the system.” In a case when “benefits exceed the expected costs, a state will look for to change the international system through territorial, political, and economic expansion that will consequently lead to a disequilibrium.” (Gilpin, 1981, pp.10-11) In addition, embracing the Waltz’s structural realist logic, he goes further, by arguing that “if disequilibrium in the international system is not set on, then the system will be changed, and a new equilibrium reflecting the redistribution of power will be established.” (Ibid.).

According to realist theoretical contemplations, the redistribution of power may create different patterns of polarities in the international system. In this regard, Randall L. Schweller argues that the most stable is the uni-polar system, whereas the most unstable is an unbalanced three-polar system (Schweller, 1998). If we compare the data on the trends of armed conflicts, as provided by Kendra at all, in 2017, with Schweller’s theoretical assumptions, it is obvious that they support each other in terms of inter-state conflicts, but on the other hand, these trends show that intrastate armed conflicts have achieved their peak during the period of unipolarity.

Against this backdrop, John Ikenberry argues that stability of the international order depends on the will of the hyper-power (leading power) to maintain it, as well as on the willingness of the lesser powers to accept it as legitimate, which gives them an opportunity to influence the behavior of the preponderant power (Ikenberry. 2001), and, on the other hand, William C. Wohlforth argues that the current unipolarity is both, peaceful, and durable (Wohlforth, 1999).

In this aspect, according to Nye, the absence of interstate wars in the times of prevailing unipolarity is a reflection of the fact that risks of war dissuade investors who control the capital flows in a globalized economy. Furthermore, he embraces the argument of the two RAND analysts, John Arquilla and David Ronfeldt, who argue that "a century ago, it may have been easier to seize another state's territory by force than to develop the sophisticated economic and trading apparatus needed to derive benefit from commercial exchange with it", as well as that "in the information age, 'cooperative' advantages will become increasingly important. Moreover, societies that improve their abilities to cooperate with friends and allies may also gain competitive advantages against rivals" (Nye. 2004, p. 20).

On the other hand, Nye and Welch favor the interdependence paradigms in explaining international stability, though in systemic terms. According to them, international systems are considered as stable "if they are able to absorb shocks without breaking down," which occurs when they do not succeed to serve their anticipated purposes, whereas a major purpose of the international system is considered to be safeguarding the sovereignty and security of its members. However, according to them, minor wars are not inevitably evidence of system breakdown, given that occasionally it is necessary to wage war against others, in order to protect the sovereignty and security of certain states. But in cases when major wars endanger the sovereignty and security of majority, or of all states, it represents an evidence of system instability (Nye and Welch. 2014, pp. 55-56).

A major recent theoretical progress in this field is marked by Benjamin Miller's *Theory of Regional Peace and War* (Miller, 2007). His theoretical explanations are based on three concepts, namely state, nation, and international system, and he argues that specific balances between states and

nations in a given region determine the more intense, or hot war, or warm peace outcomes, whereas the international system – the type of engagement of great powers in a given region – affects the cold outcomes, namely, whether the states of a given region will face a cold war or a cold peace.

According to him, the 'state-to-nation balance', that is referred to level of congruence between the territories of the states and the national aspirations and political identifications of the people in a certain region, and the 'state-to-nation imbalance', that is related to incongruence between state and national identifications (Miller, 2007, p. 2), are the most important causes that affect the disposition for the war or peace in certain region. According to him, the state-to-nation balances are related to the existential interests of a state, such as preservation of the survival of a state and its independence and territorial integrity. (Ibid, p. 2-5).

Miller specifies "Hot War" as a situation of use of force aimed at neutralizing the military might of adversaries; "Cold War," as a condition of negative peace – whilst hostilities may break out at any time; "Cold Peace," as circumstances that entail formal agreements and the diplomatic relations among affected states, in which case, in a near future the war is not expected to happen ; and, "Warm Peace," in two categories, "Normal Peace," as an environment that makes the war highly unlikely, but not unimaginable, and "High Level Peace," as a circumstance that makes the war unthinkable (Ibid., p. 44).

Against this backdrop, Miller argues that strong and congruent states tend to be status quo oriented, and this is the case when a nation is content by the territorial identity of the state and does not have any nationalist claims over the territories of other states, and, concurrently, there are no national groups within the state that aim to secede, and the state is powerful enough to prevail over such challenges. On the other hand, according to him, strong and incongruent states are inclined to be irredentist states that have revisionist territorial claims vis-a-vis their neighbors, whereas the amalgamation of state weakness and national incongruence leads to incoherent, and in extreme cases, to "failed" states that tempt intervention of neighbors out of fear (status quo states) or nationalist-territorial greed (revisionist states). The amalgamation of state

weakness and national congruence leads to a “frontier state,” that is not fragmented on a national basis and does not fully control its territory, whereas its boundaries are not clearly defined and agreed upon by the neighbors (Ibid, pp. 58-59).

Furthermore, Miller asserts that the state-to-nation balance in a given region provides essential effects on the balance of power among the status quo states and revisionist states and non-state political movements (irredentist, pan-national, or secessionist), whereas the greater the state-to-nation imbalance, the more influential the nationalist-revisionist forces will be in relation to the status quo forces in the given region, and vice versa (Ibid, p. 60).

Furthermore, Miller argues that under conditions of liberal democracy as unifying ideology for a certain state, possible state to nation imbalances may be settled, and as such, provide a high degree of coherence and domestic legitimacy. According to him, a region “inhabited” by liberal democratic states provides “liberal compatibility” among those states that ultimately result in their status quo orientation. Nevertheless, Miller stresses that status quo orientation of states is not conditioned by their domestic system, since also non-democratic regimes, such as conservative monarchies may pursue status quo orientation (Ibid, p. 61).

According to Miller's theory, the great powers competition or disengagement in circumstances of a state-to-nation imbalance leads to a regional cold war that may have been disrupted by hot wars, and on the other hand, the great powers hegemony or cooperation in the case of regional state-to-nation imbalance mitigates or reduces regional conflicts and leads to cold peace among the states of a given region. A liberal democratic hegemon, or a concert of great powers, can provide the most effective mechanism for new liberal states to transform their relations from war (hot or cold) to warm peace. In addition, Miller argues that successful state-building and nation-building in a given region are advantageous to peaceful resolution of interstate conflicts, and that they consequently lead to normal regional peace, while liberal compatibility leads to the resolution, or transcendence, of state-to-nation imbalances, and is prone to bring into being a high-level peace. (Ibid, pp. 63-80).

For the case of the East European states, he concludes that nationalist conflicts that have resulted from state-to-nation imbalances were moderated by the stabilizing concerted efforts of NATO and EU, which also led to bandwagoning of these states with the West (Ibid, p. 301).

Against this backdrop, in their theoretical concept of constellation, Mouritzen and Wivel have discussed stability projection by the unipole (great powers) to non-pole powers (small states). According to them, a relation between two would-be insiders is expected to be most prone to stability projection by the unipole, a relation between a would-be insider and an outsider to some extent, whereas the relation between two outsiders is expected to be rather immune to such projection (Mouritzen and Wivel. 2005, p. 173), thus concluding that more than any other territory, a geographical belt of would-be insiders is expected to be the subject of the most successful stability projection (Ibid, p. 174).

In this vein, Wivel, Bailes and Archer argue that any small state situated in a regional surrounding composed by states that have similar or medium size, has different national policy security options, from those of another state whose regional surrounding is severely asymmetrical in terms of protectors (if any), or problematic bigger states. But, according to them, if a small state enjoys external and internal peace and prudent governance, this may become a factor that diminishes, rather than increases, the security uncertainties and entrapment into the security dilemma with its neighborhood, by getting rid of the presence for a self-sufficient defense (Wivel, Bailes and Archer, 2014, pp. 18-19).

Against this background, Robert Chamberlain has analyzed the reasons that push great powers to provide valuable security goods to a small state. Regardless of the fact that, at the first sight it might seem quite unlikely that a rational state would provide valuable resources without getting something in return, he argues that great powers evaluate small states based on their ability to contribute to their security agenda, that he has defined as the Perceived Strategic Value (PSV) – Perceptions of Capability + Resources + Relevance. In addition, according to Chamberlain, given that security exchanges carry with themselves costs for both parties, there are numerous cases

in which, either low level of PSV, or an incompatible strategic agenda of the small state, make the security exchange unlikely (Chamberlain, 2014).

This theory makes an important further step in explaining alliances between great powers and small states, by adding to aggregate capabilities and resources, the geopolitical importance of small states in providing them with security goods by great powers, which in the case of security exchange gain security benefits from a given small state. Nevertheless, the Security Exchange Theory has a limited explanatory power, given that it was tested only in the conditions of bipolarity, namely the fierce USA – USSR competition (1952-1979), and its testing geographical scope was limited solely to the Middle East.

On the other hand, Singer and Klaus observe that due to asymmetric capabilities, small states may have vital interests for joining the alliances led by great powers. They argue that these interests derive from the alliance commitments that will enhance not only the military security of the small states, but will also provide a spectrum of non-military benefits, such as greater trade, or support for domestic political regimes. However, according to them, the small states obtain these benefits at the expense of the reduction of their autonomy and of their diplomatic flexibility, as a result of the exercised influence of great power's allies over them (Reiter and Gartner, 2001, pp. 15-24).

Against this backdrop, Reiter questions the capabilities of small states to exercise autonomous foreign and security policy outside of alliances, due to the fact that their defense capabilities cannot follow the evolution of modern warfare (Ibid, p. 12), and, I would add, also due to the revolution in military affairs.¹⁹ He concludes that, in comparison to great powers, the small European states have no influence in creating a security architecture to influence their political environment, thus implying that they can either benefit or face challenges that derive from a given security architecture. He further asserts that in terms of the cost of military expenditures, all the European states feel that they are lower than they would have been, due to their membership in NATO (Ibid, pp. 12-13). This argument implies that small states join alliances in

¹⁹ For further inquiry on this topic see for example (Collins and Futter, 2015).

order to address their hard power deficiencies at a lower cost, and for gaining greater security through using the benefits and security guarantees that are available to be obtained by the alliances and great powers that create and shape a given security architecture.

Hence, Lassinantti argues that departing points of national security options for small states – joining an alliance, pursuing neutrality, or non-alignment – are shaped by the following specific circumstances: the geopolitical location, history, traditions, political and other domestic state of affairs, and the available alliances and their relation to different states. In the case of uneasy external environment, troubled by revisionist states and great power alliances, the neutrality of a small state in Europe, like that of Sweden during the Cold War, was based on the maintenance of a strong defense force (Ibid, pp. 101-103).

On the other hand, Annette Baker Fox gives a different perspective to the neutrality of small states. She concludes that the success of a small state in efforts to remain neutral and not to be pulled into a war, depends on its ability to convince the great power that is exercising a pressure over it, that its continued neutrality is advantageous for that great power as well. But, the leaders of small states have to clarify that the great power's major requirements can be addressed peacefully, or that the use of force would be asymmetrically expensive compared to benefits of maintained neutrality. However, this strategic and diplomatic maneuvering opportunity is not available to all small states that want to remain neutral in the case of major war, due to the geopolitics and the conflicting interests of the great powers involved (Fox. 1959, p. 180). This Fox's argument implies that in cases of a great war, many small states that aim to remain neutral, will most probably not be spared by the competition of the mutually hostile great powers' interests (Ibid. 181).

In a unipolar system, according to Walt, smaller states are expected to choose neutrality as the option of national security policy in cases when they might face multiple threats of similar level of danger, when they do not anticipate any imminent threat, or when they consider that remaining detached from the great power competition will be beneficial for their national interests (Walt. 2009, p. 115). In this vain, he argues that smaller powers may be prone to

bandwagoning behavior, if they are confident that aligning with hyper-power will remove, avert, or balance the regional threat, and, consequently advance their interests (Ibid, p. 111).

Nevertheless, according to Reiter, due to their limited resources, small states can hardly append any significant hard power capabilities to the Atlantic Alliance peace operations or to ad-hoc coalitions of the willing led by the U.S. However, through their participation in these operations, they often provide international legitimacy, and as such, smallness may develop into an asset and can become an essential component of small states' identity, especially if they are seen by bigger powers as smart states (Reiter and Gartner, 2001, p. 106).

In relation to this theoretical background, the following chapters of this dissertation will provide a theoretical and empirical contribution in explaining the role of NATO on the security and stability of the Western Balkans, interests of the Alliance that have driven the Alliance to make policy choices of partnership and membership in relation to the (non)aspirant countries of the Western Balkans, and will provide an explanation of the motives of these countries to join the Alliance or to remain "militarily neutral."

II. Explaining NATO's Cooperative and Enlargement Instruments

Introduction

The genesis of the creation of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) can be found in the situation that emerged in Europe in the early years after the Second World War. The demise of the European system of balance of power, the end of American isolationism, the emergence of American–Soviet rivalry, and the issue of Germany, have shaped foreign and defence policies of the Western Allies towards the creation of an entangling alliance. In order to reconstitute the balance of power against the Soviet Union, the United States took leadership to put in place an interacted balance of power designed both to contain the Soviet threat, and to end permanently the threat of German domination of Western Europe.²⁰ As a result of these efforts, NATO was formally established on April 4, 1949, with the signing of the North Atlantic Treaty in Washington by the foreign ministers of its original founders, namely the United States of America, United Kingdom, France, Belgium, the Netherlands, Luxembourg, Canada, Denmark, Iceland, Norway, Italy and Portugal.

The international circumstances caused by the intensification of American–Soviet rivalry in the immediate post WWII period, including the proxy war in Korea, coupled with the rationale of the US National Security Council Paper 68, authored by Paul Nitze in April 1950,²¹ that, among others, outlined the Soviet threat towards East Mediterranean, were key drivers for extending membership to Greece and Turkey in 1952, which marked the first enlargement of NATO (Smith, 2000, pp. 88-90). The same reasons prevailed for the decision on the membership of the West Germany into Alliance in 1955, including here the imperative of a German military contribution to NATO and its rehabilitation as a non-aggressive state (Ibid, p. 120).

²⁰ For further exploration on the origins of NATO see for example (McCloy, 1969; Kaplan, 1969; and Ireland 1981).

²¹ NSC – 68 among other recommends to strengthen pro American orientation of the non-Soviet states, and to those that have willingness to make a significant contribution to the U.S. security interests, to provide support to strengthen their political and economic stability and their military might (Nitze et al, 1950).

On the other hand, Spain's membership into the Alliance was a much longer process that was driven by different circumstances. Initially, Spain's loyalty to the US was arranged by the "Pact of Madrid," signed in September 1953, by the "Caudillo" of Spain, Francisco Franco, and the US President, Dwight Eisenhower, which also provided mutual defense between the two countries (Solsten and Meditz, 1988). For the United States, this agreement offered a plausible alternative to Spain's NATO membership, which at that time a number of European allies were not prepared to grant to the regime in Madrid (Chislett, 2005, pp. 18-21).

This "Pact," that ended international isolation of the anti-communist dictatorship regime in Madrid, was followed with significant US military and economic aid to Spain, while Washington secured several naval and air bases for its military forces in the territory of Spain, in the fierce geopolitical rivalry of this period of the Cold War (Smith, 2000, p. 131). Nevertheless, after the death of Franco in 1975, and the subsequent democratic transition, Spanish accession to NATO lasted from 1976 to 1986, when Spain eventually became a full-fledged member of the Alliance. This enlargement of NATO presented also an opportunity for the Alliance to claim itself as attractive for an emergent democracy to become its member (Ibid, p.156).

The end of the Cold War brought fundamental and non-anticipated geopolitical changes at the global level, and particularly in the Euro-Atlantic space. From 1989 into the early 1990s, the military balance in Europe underwent fundamental change, with the unification of Germany, on October 3, 1990, the signing of the Treaty on Conventional Forces in Europe (OSCE, 1990) on November 19, 1990, the disintegration of the Warsaw Pact, on March 31, 1991, and the disintegration of Soviet Union, on December 26, 1991.

Under these circumstances, the weakened Russia was no longer in a position to pose the conventional threat on Western Europe. Consequently, NATO made deep reduction of its conventional forces in Germany (Brown, 1999). In addition, the United States also made substantial reduction of its nuclear arsenal in Europe, assigning to it a new role in the war prevention, by considering it as "more fundamentally political," rather than targeted towards a specific threat. (NATO, 2009, p. 2).

These new circumstances moved the Alliance towards transformation, and adaptation to the new security environment, which was followed with the adoption of several strategic concepts, with building of new relations with former East European and neutral countries of the Western Europe, and with its enlargement.

The following sub-chapters will discuss the background of developments that have driven the NATO's Post-Cold War transformation from a classical balance of power alliance to a post-modern one, such as relations with Russia, intervention in the Former Yugoslavia and the decisions that led to its enlargement, as well as the development of its Partnership and Membership instruments from the Alliance's Rome Summit of 1999 to the Lisbon Summit of 2010, which will prepare the ground for contextualisation of the theoretical discussion of NATO's role on the security and stability of the Western Balkans.

II.1. NATO's Post-Cold War Transformation: From the Classical to a Post-Modern Alliance

Throughout history, military alliances have dissolved whenever the need for balance of power disappeared, either by new power constellations that emerged after wars and collapses or disproportional weakening of principal adversaries, or as a result of changes in the perceptions of threats among allies. Furthermore, with the use of diplomatic manoeuvring, a weakened adversary might explore opportunities to dissolve the stronger adversary's alliance, in order to ensure avoidance of an overbalancing in the newly emerged circumstances. Against this backdrop, it is not accidental that at the Malta's Summit of December 1989, as the Warsaw Pact ceased to exist, the Soviet leader Gorbachov asked for NATO's dissolution as well, but this was refused by the US President Bush (Tarpley & Chaitkin, 2004, p. 255).

Nonetheless, ever since the demise of the Soviet Union in 1991, the principal threat to NATO was weakened significantly, and, in traditional terms, the Alliance lost its "raison d'être." However, the new "raison d'être", under the circumstances of absence of a major threat, was allegorically put forward by British Prime-Minister, Margaret Thatcher: "You don't cancel your home insurance policy just because there have been fewer burglaries on your street in the last 12 months" (Toye, 2008).

In this context, the NATO's Rome Summit of November 1991 launched the new "Strategic Concept", by which the Alliance expanded its geographical concern, declaring that it would henceforward be worried about Europe as a whole, not just the NATO area, and tasked itself with a duty "to provide one of the indispensable foundations for a stable security environment in Europe ... in which no country would be able to intimidate or coerce any European nation," in addition to the commitment to the collective defence and security guarantees for its members (NATO, 1991, point 20. I.).

With respect to the perceived security threats, the Strategy marked a non-adversarial and cooperative relationship of Moscow, but it underlined that "Soviet military capability and build-up potential, including its nuclear dimension, still constitute the most significant factor of which

the Alliance has to take account in maintaining the strategic balance in Europe,” (Ibid, point 13) by not dismissing the probability of the revival of Moscow’s power, and of its imperial ambitions. Furthermore, while underling the end of the ideological confrontation in Europe, and the fact that this has “greatly reduced the risk of major conflict” in the continent, this Strategy expresses concerns over the potential of greater risks, though of lesser magnitude, which might arise as a consequence of multifaceted crises, which “could develop quickly and would require a rapid response.”(Ibid.)

On the other hand, the vast majority of former communist states were leaning towards NATO for different reasons. This orientation was driven by the new geopolitical circumstances caused by the security vacuum that occurred in the aftermath of the Cold War in historically rough neighbourhoods, by the fear of a possible revival of Russian imperial ambitions, the need for involvement of the United States in Central Europe, in order to balance other European powers (i.e., unified Germany), or by the potential for escalation of armed conflicts in the South East Europe (Asmus, 2002, p. 12).

Against this background, NATO introduced a new set of relations with the European emerging democracies, with the creation of the North Atlantic Cooperation Council (NACC) on December 20, 1991, which was initiated by the US Secretary of State, James Baker III, and German Foreign Minister, Hans Dietrich Genscher. The aim of NACC was to establish a framework for dialogue and cooperation with the former adversaries of the Central and Eastern Europe, as well as closer ties of their cooperation with the Alliance, though short of membership and security guarantees of collective defence.²²

In this regard, the newly released confidential and secret files of the Clinton Presidential Library²³ indicate allies’ views that the end of the Cold War did not resolve the European security issues,

²² For further details see: U.S. State Department. Bureau of European and Canadian Affairs, *Fact Sheet: The North Atlantic Cooperation Council*, May 9, 1997, https://1997-2001.state.gov/regions/eur/nato_fsnacc.html

²³ For deeper exploration of the confidential and secret files of the Clinton Presidency released in February 2020, see Clinton Presidential Library. <https://clinton.presidentiallibraries.us/collections/show/18>, retrieved on March 2, 2020.

and the accepted need that NATO had to remake itself politically and militarily in order to face the new security challenges (Kieninger, 2019). Furthermore, the circumstances related to the troubled transition of Russia were considered of a principal significance for the security interests of the Alliance. The political instability of this country, on the one hand, and its military and nuclear capability, on the other, were tangible indicators that Kremlin could impose a real and dangerous threat in less than 20 years (Gardner, 1999), regardless of the agreement on Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START) I, signed in Moscow by George H. W. Bush and Michael Gorbachev on July 31, 1991.²⁴

In addition, the presence of a powerful nuclear arsenal in the territory of four states that emerged out of the Former Soviet Union – nuclear weapons, in addition to Russia, were remaining also in the possession of Belarus, Kazakhstan, and Ukraine – raised alarms in the state capitals of NATO's member, that out of the Soviet Union have emerged four nuclear weapon successor states.

	Strategic Warheads	Tactical Warheads
Belarus	100	725
Kazakhstan	1,410	Uncertain
Ukraine	1,900	2,275

Table 2.1. : Estimated Warheads in Belarus, Kazakhstan, and Ukraine in 1991. (Source: Reif, 2017)

For finding a solution to this highly complex threat to international security, the United States and Russia, with the engagement of the Belarus, Kazakhstan and Ukraine, with the signing of Lisbon Protocol (U.S. State Department, 1992) on May 23, 1992, reached an agreement that

²⁴ For further inquiry, the full text of the START I Agreement, its annexes and respective protocols, can be found at FAS: <https://fas.org/nuke/control/start1/text/index.html>, retrieved on February 15, 2020.

obliged Minsk, Nur-Sultan and Kiev to give up their nuclear arsenal to Moscow, and join the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) (United Nations, 1968) as non-nuclear-weapon states.

Nevertheless, these developments did not alter the fundamental challenge, which two large strategic nuclear arsenals remained facing one another, ready to be launched within minutes of warning of an attack. (Bluth, 2005). Moreover, the problems of security and safety of Russia's nuclear arsenal, and of its early warning and nuclear response systems, were of major concern, and they became technically the principal threat to the United States and NATO (Ibid, pp. 524-528).

In addition, the Russian military troops were stationed in the former Soviet republic and satellite states until 1994. Regardless of the fact that the Russian military's withdrawal "was all but inevitable", the unpredictability regarding the security of this part of Europe remained complex (Brzezinski, 2009, p. 8). Confronted with this delicate situation, the United States initiated talks with Russia on the mutual de-targeting of the strategic nuclear missiles on each other, which were concluded with the agreement outlined in the Moscow Declaration by President Clinton and Russian President Yeltsin, of January 14, 1994. (FAS, 1994)

On the other hand, the war that erupted in Former Yugoslavia marked the beginning of the worst and the deadliest conflict on the European soil since the end of the Second World War. At the beginning of the crisis, in the summer of 1991, the European Union became enthusiastic, not to say narcissistic, that it can solve alone the crisis of the country that was facing an anarchic disintegration. In words of Jacques Poos, the chair of the European Community Foreign Affairs Council and the foreign minister of Luxembourg, "This is the hour of Europe – not the hour of the Americans... If one problem can be solved by the Europeans, it is the Yugoslav problem. This is a European country and it is not up to the Americans. It is not up to anyone else" (Glaurdic, 2011, p. 1).

Ironically, at that time, some important Western decision makers had an appalling tolerance, and even regard, for those (Milošević) who possessed and used brutally the physical force (Ibid, p.

303). In this vein, Ambassador Warren Zimmermann, argued that instead of paying bills for their actions, "the Serbs learned a different lesson [from the Dubrovnik episode] – that there was no Western resolve, and that they could push as far as their power could take them" (Zimmermann, 1996, p. 158), whereas Ambassador Richard Holbrooke labeled the inaction of the international community as "the greatest collective security failure of the West since the 1990's" (Holbrooke, 1995, p. 40). Moreover, according to Glaurdic, this failure of the Western policy has displayed the tragic consequences of practicing the Realpolitik without paying attention to the most fundamental historical lesson of political realism (Glaurdic, 2011, p. 309), which was lucidly elaborated by Henry Kissinger: "Whenever peace – conceived as the avoidance of war – has been the primary objective of a power or a group of powers, the international system has been at the mercy of the most ruthless member of the international community." (Kissinger, 1957, p. 1)

In this context, the beginning of the first Clinton's Presidency coincided with the beginning of the debate on the NATO Enlargement. According to the State Secretary Christopher, "Whither NATO?" was an issue of greatest interest in the State Department, while little disagreements have been aired within the administration, and the debate was just limited to the timing and pace of enlargement (Christopher, 2001, p. 275). The idea of NATO expansion has not found enthusiasm among top ranking officials of the Pentagon. The military considered expansion as an untimely one, given that the US and allies were not able to extend their security guarantees to emerging and unstable democracies, because of their lack of capability to assume the membership responsibilities, and due to negative implications that this might have had in relation to Russia (Asmus, 2001, p. 35).

On the other hand, a group of fast-trackers within the State Department, who were in favor of capitalizing on Russia's temporary weakness, led by Undersecretary Lynn Davis, argued for a prompt enlargement of the Alliance in Central East Europe. However, Strobe Talbott, the State Department's best expert on Russia, favored a gradual and open process of enlargement in conjunction with the creation of a new special relationship with Russia (Christopher, 2001, p. 275). Ultimately, Christopher aligned with Talbot's course, that is, with what is known as the "Russia First" policy. According to him, Russia's transition to democracy was the "greatest

security challenge of our time" (Asmus, 2002, p. 20), and this was obviously driven by the concerns that NATO enlargement would exacerbate Russian insecurities.

Against this background, it can be argued that this rationale was well founded. Russia's non-friendly attitude towards NATO and US became imminent risk since late 1993, when the control of Duma was taken by a coalition of communists and nationalists who were seeking the resurrection of the Soviet Union and the revival of the "spheres of interest," as a sine qua non of the Moscow's regional hegemony (Karatnycky, 1997, p. 6).

Under these complex circumstances, the public debate on the NATO Enlargement started among Trans-Atlantic Allies. The first high ranking Western official who went publicly in support of the NATO Enlargement was German Defense Minister Volke Ruhe (Ruhe, 1993). In the United States, the first public support initially came from the Co-Chairman of the US Senate Arms Control Observer Group, Richard Lugar. In his remarks delivered at the State Department's Open Forum, on August 3rd, 1993, he elaborated the quest for a new NATO's "raison d'être" with an emblematic sentence that became a mantra of the rationale of the Alliance's enlargement: "NATO will either develop a strategy and structure to go "out of area" or it will go "out of business," in order to stabilize the Post-Cold War Europe and become a backbone of the continent's security order (Lugar, 1993, p. 7).

In similar lines also came the support of NATO's Secretary General, Manfred Werner, in September 1993. In his words, the downfall of communism brought a security paradox, the Alliance facing less threats, but it has also less peace than during the Cold War. Furthermore, he presented his bold views on the growing disorder in Europe, and the imperative of the West to address it, or it will wither away, by stressing that NATO's primary role should be projection of the stability to the rest of the continent, and to open the doors to the Central and Eastern Europe countries that are aspiring membership into the Alliance (Asmus, 2001, p. 42).

The opponents of NATO enlargement were arguing that this was an untimely idea that will endanger relations with Russia and imperil progress on arms reduction talks, including the

nuclear balance, that new states will not bring any significant gain to the US strategic interest, that emerging democracies were not facing an imminent threat, and they were also mentioning the risks of extending security guarantees to the potential new members, as well as of creation of new dividing lines in Europe etc. In addition, the architect of the Strategy of Containment, George Kennan, labeled NATO Enlargement as the “most fateful error of American policy in the post–Cold War world” (Burton, 2018, pp. 22-27), whereas Benjamin Schwartz was arguing that NATO enlargement represented a clear case of “imperial overstretching” (Shwartz, 1997, p. 29)

On the other hand, the emblematic Foreign Affairs article of what is known as the RAND's Troika, Ronald Asmus, Richard Kugler, and Stephen Larrabee, "Building a New NATO" (September 1993), set a tune of the arguments in favor of the Alliance's enlargement. The basic arguments of this article were that since the instability in the East threatens security of the West, the interest of the West is the eastward extension of NATO, and that making its future a hostage of Russian politics is a prescription for a death of the Alliance (Asmus, Kugler and Larrabee, 1993, pp. 28-40). In similar lines, the NATO's spokesman, Jamie Shea, argued that Alliance's interests should not be limited to negative security developments that NATO could not deter, but also to forestall and reduce the very same threats. According to him, this policy direction gives NATO the choice, either to import instabilities of Central and East European countries by offering them membership into the Alliance, or to leave them out “with the risk that these instabilities will spread over the alliance in any case” (Solomon, 1998, p.22).

At around the same time, the National Security Advisor to President Clinton, Anthony Lake, highlighted the key components of what was known later as the Clintons' Doctrine of Democratic Enlargement, namely, strengthening the community of market democracies, consolidating new democracies, countering aggression against the states hostile to democracies and markets, and pursuing humanitarian agenda (Lake, 1993). Lake indicated the emergence of a new US foreign policy that would influence the transformation of NATO, and the future interventions in the years to come. Against this background, Sondergaard argues also that the linkage of democracy and security was outlined by the “Democratic Enlargement,” through which the US Administration

securitized democracy promotion and helped legitimizing, what appeared to be a more militaristic foreign policy during Clinton's presidency (Sondergaard, 2015).

On the other hand, the former National Security Adviser and influential strategist Zbigniew Brzezinski, was favoring a "two-track" tactic to enlargement that would embrace new members by providing a vital disincentive for any further Russian interventionism, but which, at the same time, would keep Russia onside. This strategy was later adopted by the U.S. Administration in pursuing the Alliance's enlargement and ensuring its ultimate success: enlarging NATO by engaging Russia in an institutionalized partnership with the Alliance (Burton, 2018, p. 29).

It is this backdrop, against which the policy of an evolutionary enlargement of NATO started to be put in place. As a result of intensive discussions within the U.S. Administration, especially within Pentagon, the idea of the Partnership for Peace (PfP) was introduced. The Pentagon effectively shaped roadmaps for addressing the Yugoslav crisis and NATO expansion, namely the alliance enlargement in a functional sense, including "Out of Area" operations and the peacekeeping ones, as well as in a geographic sense – neutral countries of Western Europe and former communist countries, thus avoiding a new frontline in Europe (Sarrote, 2019, p. 7).

The reaction to the PfP in Moscow was unexpectedly a positive one, whereas in Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland it has been received with uneasiness, due to the fears that it would be a replacement for a full-fledged membership into the Alliance. These fears were, however, managed by the US Administration, after the explanations were given that the PfP will not replace NATO's enlargement, but it will also be a stepping towards the membership (Asmus, 2001).

Furthermore, the evidence provided by the newly opened Clinton Archives proves that the aim of PfP was also to intertwine containment and engagement, as argued in January 1994 by the Secretary Christopher and Ambassador Talbott: "one of the best things about PfP was that it could go in either direction: it could lean forward to accept Russia if the 'good bear' emerges, but could also lead to a post-Cold War variant of containment to confront a post-Cold War variant of Russian expansionism" (Kieninger, 2020). Eventually, the PfP was launched at the January 1994

Brussels Summit (NATO, 1994), and marked the main NATO initiative at that time in shaping the Post-Cold War security architecture of Europe.

Under these circumstances, for the first time ever since the North Atlantic Treaty was negotiated back in 1948–1949, the Allies were in a privileged position of being able to specify the requirements of membership based on the criteria other than those of strategic containment alone (Barret, 1996, p. 93). In this regard, an internal Alliance's study on enlargement was initiated in December 1994, and has been completed in September 1995. The "Study on NATO Enlargement" addressed the following issues: the purposes and principles of enlargement, the contribution of enlargement to the stability and security of the entire Euro-Atlantic area, the contribution of the North Atlantic Cooperation Council (NACC) and of the PfP to the enlargement process, the effectiveness and the cohesion of the Alliance in the light of enlargement process, the implications of membership for new members, including their right and obligations, as well as the preparations they must make to qualify for membership (NATO, 1995).

However, according to Bebler, these conditions, spelled out in the Study on Enlargement, fell short of the explicit membership criteria, but they could be treated as informal considerations or expectations. Nevertheless, given that the Study was an official document of NATO, regardless of its ambivalent title, it was perceived – although incorrectly – by not few in the aspirant countries, as the complete list of official criteria for membership (Bebler, 1999, p. 50). What is important here is that regardless of these ambiguities, the Study has clarified the issue of security guarantees, putting out of consideration any possible “associate” memberships or “second tier” security guaranties (Barret 1996, p. 96), leaving no doubts whatsoever that the new members of the Alliance will enjoy all the rights and assume all the obligations of membership under the Washington Treaty.

The Study has also underlined the key pattern of the Alliance's intentions in relation to enlargement, namely, that acquiring the NATO's security guarantees by the aspirants is dependent on their capacity to project stability, internally and externally, in order to avoid importing potential instabilities into the Alliance. In this regard, the Study had specified a set of

obligations that aspirant countries should fulfil prior to the invitation for membership, the most important of which were to settle ethnic, external territorial, or internal jurisdictional disputes by peaceful means, in accordance with OSCE principles. The resolution of such disputes and the promotion of stability, were specified as key factors in determining whether to invite an aspirant state to join the Alliance (NATO, 1995).

Against this background, driven by the superior interests to acquire the Alliance's security guarantees, the former communist countries of Central and East Europe concluded a number of treaties, by which they solved long term bilateral disputes that were dating ever since the end of the First and Second World Wars, in addition to those that occurred in the Post-Cold War period. In this vein, it is worth highlighting the Hungarian–Romanian Treaty of Understanding, Cooperation and Good Neighbourliness (September 16, 1996), which hardly could have been imagined in the absence of a membership perspective for both countries. The Treaty confirmed the inviolability of the Hungarian–Romanian border, put in place as a result of the defeat of the Austro-Hungarian Empire in the First World War, which had left over two million Hungarians with minority status in Romania (Nagy, 1997, p. 340).

Nevertheless, the enlargement debate was not focused only on the prevailing geopolitical situation in the Central and Eastern Europe. The inability of the West to halt the bloody war in Bosnia and Herzegovina had put at the edge the credibility of the U.S. and the Alliance. Furthermore, according to Holbrooke, the bloody disintegration of Yugoslavia was the worst possible area for the "first test" of the U.S. to "make the Europeans step up to the plate" (Holbrooke, 1999, p. 28). Ultimately, the U.S. led NATO's limited air intervention over the Bosnian Serb targets and subsequent successful concluding of the Dayton Agreement on November 22 1995, restored the credibility of the Alliance, but it also reassured the Allies that the security guarantees can be extended credibly to the membership aspirants of the Central and Eastern Europe. According to Asmus, enlargement would not have become ever a reality, absent of the U.S. and NATO successful effort to stop the war in Bosnia, given the NATO's claim that an enlarged alliance "... was not credible as long as the most powerful Alliance in the world was unable to halt the bloodiest war in Europe in 50 years" (Asmus, 2001, p. 124).

For implementing the “Dayton Accords,” authorized by the UN Security Council (United Nations, 1995) the 60,000 troops NATO led strong peace-keeping operation “Implementation Force” (NATO, 2019) gathered its military personnel from the NATO and the non-member partner countries from Central and East Europe, including those from Russia that were serving under the U.S. Command. This partnership endeavour between the West and Russia, paved the way for intensification of the efforts on the NATO enlargement and “grand bargaining” with the rival, but still cooperative power, Russia. The utility for NATO in having partnerships proved to be beneficial for the Alliance’s strategic interests, because partner countries proved to provide’ more security than they consume (Edstrom at all, 2011, p. 12).

However, dealing with Russia, even in the period that followed the establishing of Partnership for Peace was not an easy task for the Allies. In order to secure a kind of veto power to Russia over the future enlargement of NATO, Yeltsin was not hesitant to criticise Clinton for trading “Cold War” with “Cold Peace,” and moving forward with the NATO enlargement. However, President Clinton was determined not to let Russia to keep NATO’s door closed indefinitely. (Clinton, 2004, p. 603). On the other hand, in the early spring of 1996, the Russian Foreign Minister Primakov, introduced three conditions that, if accepted by NATO, could make the enlargement dependent on Moscow’s will, namely, the prohibition of posting nuclear weapons on the territory of new members, the co-decision of NATO and Russia on any issue related to the European security – especially when the use of force is concerned, and the codification of these and other limitations to NATO in a legally binding treaty (Talbot, 2007, p. 249).

The Russia’s strategy was to push far, in order to get concessions that would give it an effective veto to NATO’s policies on the enlargement and European security affairs. But, on the other hand, the Russia’s devastated Post–Cold War economy was still heavily dependent on the capital flight coming from Europe and the United States. From 1991 to 1998 Russia had borrowed \$99 billion and it had received \$103 billion in capital flight from Western countries (Odom, 1998, pp. 813-815). Under these circumstances, the NATO enlargement policy dilemma in regard to Russia was quite difficult to be fixed, since it encountered two components of conflicting directions,

namely the credibility of the "open door" policy, and simultaneously keeping Moscow on the "board," in a struggle to ensure the Post-Cold War European stability and security. (Ibid.)

Ultimately, the US Administration crystalized the policy on NATO Enlargement in relation to Russia, by defining five red lines that it would not cross: giving Kremlin any direct or implicit veto over Alliance's decision-making, subordinating NATO to another institution, slow-downing enlargement process, creating second-class membership, and closing NATO's door for future enlargement (Asmus, 2001, p. 191). With this policy framework in place, Clinton's Administration moved forward the process of enlargement and negotiations with Russia. In addition to the U.S. Administration, the NATO's Secretary General, Javier Solana, played a very important role in charting Alliance's enlargement policy towards Russia. As an alternative of "co-decision mechanisms," that were being pushed by Russia, Solana developed the idea of NATO–Russia "consultative mechanism" to be based in Brussels, which would give "a voice, but not a veto" to Moscow, formalized by a charter and not a legally binding treaty (Talbot, 2007, p. 250). However, as a response, in the beginning of January 1997, Yeltsin gathered his foreign policy and military advisers, and worked out retaliatory measures against NATO enlargement plans (Black, 2000, p. 23).

Nevertheless, the major differences between Washington/Brussels and Russia on this issue have been resolved to a certain extent at the Helsinki Clinton–Yeltsin Summit, of March 1997. In fact, Yeltsin in Helsinki accepted as unavoidable the fact that the Alliance will extend membership to Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic, with or without his complaints. Yet, he continued to spell out his objections on the NATO's enlargement, but at the same time, with the goal of minimizing negative effects on Russia, he decided to work with the Alliance and sign a cooperative agreement with it (Lippman, 1997, p. A01). These efforts were concluded with the signing of NATO–Russia Founding Act, on May 14, 1997 in Paris. The Act, on one hand, assured Russia that NATO has "no intention, no plan and no reason" to deploy nuclear weapons on the territories of its new members, and that in the "current and foreseeable security environment," there would be no additional posting of "substantial" combat troops, while, on the other, it

secured NATO from any possibility of the Russian veto on the Alliance's decision-making and actions (IISS, 1998, p. 30).

In addition to dealing with Russia, the Alliance's preparation for the first round of Post-Cold War Enlargement was accompanied with the intensification of efforts to further enhance the relations with non-member partners and strengthen peace and stability in Europe. In this vein, at Sintra (Portugal), NATO's Foreign Ministers Meeting and participating members of the Partnership for Peace of May 30, 1997 established the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC) that replaced the North Atlantic Cooperation Council, with the aim to enhance efforts in political dimension of partnership and practical cooperation under PfP (Bilinski, 1997, p. 50).

Finally, the NATO's Madrid Summit (July 8, 1997) agreed to extend the official invitations to the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland to join the alliance, and it confirmed "open door" policy to the prospective aspirants when they fulfil the necessary political and military requirements (NATO, 1997.c). Nonetheless, Moscow did not receive this decision with serenity. The Russian Foreign Minister, Yevgeny Primakov, labelled it as "the worst mistake" since the World War II (RFERL, 1997). The Post-Madrid relations between the NATO and Russia continued to be strained, and they were further worsened with the increasing of tensions in Kosovo (Tsygankov, 2016, p. 112). Ultimately, the enlargement strategy of the Alliance proved to be successful, since it managed to keep at bay a "friendly enemy," as coined by Granville (1999).

One month before the Washington Summit, on March 24, 1999, NATO started the first war in its history against a sovereign state, with the air and missile strikes against Yugoslavia. The reaction of Russia to the NATO intervention was immediate, by condemning the Alliance's strikes, claiming that those who were in charge for the intervention should be tried for "war crimes," and that relations with NATO should abruptly, though not completely, terminated. Furthermore, Russian Duma increased pressure to withdraw Russian forces from the peace-keeping operation in Bosnia, and to provide military assistance to Belgrade (John Norris, 2005). However, actions of the official Kremlin were carefully adjusted and were not accompanied with drastic measures. Kremlin did not surrender in front of Duma's pressure, but it withdrew its mission to NATO and

suspended the cooperation with Permanent Joint Council (PJC). Moscow also made clear that 'Russia does not intend to take any [military] countermeasures with respect to NATO' (Smith, 2006, p. 80). According to Smith, there were three reasons that pushed Russia to undertake this policy of limited disruption of relations: the first was based on the assumption that Moscow could not risk the financial aid it was getting from the West through international financial organizations, the second was the fear from being self-isolated from the European mainstream, and the third was the fear the powerlessness of its own in doing anything to stop the intervention (Ibid).

In the midst of the Alliance's intervention over Yugoslavia, on 23–25 April, 1999, the Summit of NATO member state leaders was held in Washington. As former NATO's Secretary General, Javier Solana, pointed out, the Washington Summit and the Kosovo Crisis, at the time when NATO was conducting the largest military operation in its history, became a defining moment for the Alliance (Solana, 1999, p.3). In this summit that coincided with the 50th anniversary of the Alliance, NATO leaders reaffirmed the intensification of air strikes against Yugoslavia until Milošević meets the demands of the international community, formalized the first Post–Cold War enlargement of the Alliance by formally admitting Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland as its full members, adopted the New Strategic Concept that, among other things, with an official language sanctioned "out of area" interventions, confirmed open doors policy, and introduced the Membership Action Plan dedicated to aspiring countries (NATO, 1999.a).

Regardless of fierce opposition and condemnation of NATO's intervention, Russia joined the West in efforts for a diplomatic solution that would make Milošević surrender to the terms of Alliance, in order to have a voice and a fingerprint on any peace-deal that might end the war. Subsequently, in a joint meeting that took place in Bonn, on 2-3 June, 1999, the US Deputy Secretary of State, Strobe Talbott, Russia's Balkans envoy, Viktor Chernomyrdin, and Finnish President Martti Ahtisaari in the capacity of the EU Envoy, agreed on a joint plan that met all NATO terms. The plan was accepted by President Milošević on June 3, 1999 (Drodziak, 1999).

The war ended with the signing of Technical-Military Agreement between NATO and the Yugoslav Armed Forces, on June 9, 1999, that provided full withdrawal of security forces and administration of Belgrade from Kosovo, and with adoption of the UNSC Resolution 1244 (United Nations, 1999.b) that established the UN Administration in Kosovo, and authorized with a peace enforcement mandate the NATO led operation Kosovo Force (KFOR). According to a RAND study of 2001, Milošević accepted the US–EU–Russia sponsored plan, because he was expecting unconstrained bombing if NATO terms were rejected, and was risking a land invasion, and, on the other hand, those terms were the best that he could get in the circumstances in which he was (Hosmer, 2001). In addition, with the ending of war, on July 23, 1999, Russia resumed its relations with NATO, by participating in the meeting of the NATO–Russia Permanent Joint Council that took place in Brussels (Smith, 2006, p. 90).

The NATO's Post Cold War transformation achieved its peak with the first round of enlargement and the first "out of area" war against Yugoslavia in 1999. In this regard, the above analysis shows that the Alliance's transformation and enlargement strategies were driven by the two opposite directions aims, namely to contain the intentions of Russia to halt enlargement and limit the independence of the Alliance's actions, and to integrate it within the new security architecture of Europe, by offering Moscow a voice, while refusing to give it any possibilities for exercising any veto.

Against this backdrop, the interests of the US, as the preponderant power of the Alliance, were boldly articulated by President Clinton, State Secretary Albright, and Defence Secretary Perry (Bee, 2001, pp. 150 – 169). In the words of President Clinton, "NATO can do for Europe's East what it did for Europe's West: prevent a return to local rivalries, strengthen democracy against future threats, and create the conditions for prosperity to flourish" (Ibid, p. 162), which, as defined, in theoretical terms, by Benjamin Miller (2007), would mean that the aim of the enlargement is to move former communist countries of Europe from the condition of cold peace to those of high level peace, when the war among them would be unthinkable, and the nation–state divergences will be overcome through liberal democracy.

On the other hand, in their statements delivered in 1997 and 1998 respectively, the Defence Secretary William Perry (Raucchhaus, 2000, p. 150) and State Secretary Albright (Bee, 2000, p. 156) considered enlargement as critical for protecting vital national security interests of the U.S. in Europe, and common interest in trans-Atlantic security, through providing stability in Central and East Europe in pursuing these interests.

Furthermore, the air strikes against Yugoslavia were justified by President Clinton, as an “act to prevent a wider war, to defuse a powder keg at the heart of Europe that has exploded twice before in this century with catastrophic results” ... that was “also important to America’s national interests,” (The New York Times, 1999) which made clear that preventing instability and imposing stability were the interests that have driven the military intervention of the Alliance over Yugoslavia. NATO’s intervention was justified with words similar to those of President Clinton, by the Alliance’s Secretary General, Javier Solana (NATO, 1999.e).

A careful analysis of the wording used in unfolding the interests for the enlargement of the Alliance (‘vital’), as well as of the interests that had driven the first “out of area” war (“important”), shows that the ultimate interest of the Alliance’s leadership was the enlargement that provides conditions for high level peace among its members and increases the long term security of NATO, and subsequently of Europe, whereas the military intervention that provides conditions for putting in place a cold peace instead of hot war, has a secondary ranking in terms of their interests. These interests were pursued regardless of a risk of getting into a deep cold peace mode in relations with the major rival power in Europe – Russia, which was trying to get a veto over the Alliance’s decisions and actions in Europe. In this vein, Cristopher Cooker argues that the key stones in the Alliance’s path towards a post-modern Alliance were marked by Partnership for Peace, NATO–Russia Founding Act and enlargement in 1999 (Cooke, 2009).

This behaviour of NATO gives a hint that a hyper-powerful alliance, whose major aim is enhancing its own security and spreading stability, by moving the countries in its neighbourhood from the conditions of the cold peace to those of a high level peace, as a logic for increasing its security and diminishing possible security threats, will not subordinate its interests to the requirements

of a major rival power. However, both, the hyper-powerful alliance and its major rival power, have proved that they were not willing to wage a war against each other, in a case when their existential interests are not threatened. Instead, their choice was a troubling relationship or working in partnership, though, in a rival, rather than in a cooperative manner.

The subsequent NATO's evolution to a Post-Atlantic alliance was largely driven by the asymmetric and unconventional threats, caused by the international terrorism, technology, instabilities caused by toppling of dictatorial regimes in the Middle East, cyber-attacks, and proxy wars. In this regard, Latifi observes that the war on terrorism is complex and encompasses multiple forms and fronts. (Latifi, 2012, p. 18). In the meantime, as a response to these developments, a Group of Experts, convened by NATO's Secretary General Rasmussen, and chaired by the former U.S. State Secretary Albright, prepared the Report "NATO 2020: Assured Security; Dynamic Engagement" (NATO, 2010.a.) with the aim to lay the groundwork for a new Strategic Concept titled "Active Engagement, Modern Defense," that was adopted at the Lisbon Summit on November 19, 2010 (NATO, 2010.b).

After the terrorist attacks of Al-Qaeda, of September 11, 2001, on the United States, NATO for the first time in history invoked the "Article V" of the Washington Treaty, not due to a conventional attack, for what the Alliance was created in April 1949, but as a reaction to a deadly terrorist attack that has been conducted by using civilian airplanes. The U.S. military forces subsequently attacked Afghanistan, starting from October 2001, and toppled the Taleban regime that was serving as a base of Al-Qaeda leadership. On the other hand, from August 2003 to December 2014, NATO led the largest "out of area" mission in its history, the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan, that assembled 130,000 force of 50 NATO and partner countries (NATO, 2020). In addition, the Libya intervention (2011), with European Allies in the lead, and U.S. as a supporter in the mission "Operation Unified Protector" (OUP), turned NATO into a military player in North Africa, a region that has been largely considered as being off limits for the Alliance's military interventions (Hallams et al., 2013). The ISAF and OUP missions marked the expansion of NATO's intervention focus from the Euro-Atlantic sphere to a global reach, and marked the Alliance's ultimate Post-cold War transformation.

II.2. The Development of the Partnership and Membership Instruments

As argued in the last section, the development of the Alliance's Partnership and Membership instruments in the 25 years (1990–2015) that followed the end of the Cold-War, were a result of NATO's security responses to the fundamental geopolitical changes that occurred in Europe, the changed nature of security threats, and the lessons learned in regard to the relations with partners worldwide and enlargement in Central and Eastern Europe.

The first NATO's partnership instrument, the North Atlantic Cooperation Council (NACC), as a forum for consultations and cooperation with former ideological adversaries of Central and East Europe, was created immediately after the end of the Cold War (December 20, 1991). The consultations and cooperation were focused on 'security and related issues,' such as defence planning, arms control, democratic governance of civilian-military relations, air traffic management, civil-military coordination, military-civilian production conversion, and enhanced participation in NATO's scientific and environmental programmes, as well as in disseminating information about NATO in Central and Eastern European countries. In operational terms, the NACC envisaged Annual meetings at Ministerial level, Bimonthly meetings of the North Atlantic Council (NAC) with liaison partners at the Ambassadorial level, Additional meetings of the NACC at Ministerial level, or of the NAC with Ambassadors of liaison partners, and meetings at regular intervals of NATO subordinate committees with representatives of liaison partners. (Gerosa, 1992, pp. 277 – 278).

Against this background, Stephan Kieninger argues that NACC was intended to provide the Central and East European countries a perspective for closer association with NATO, and to include Russia in the evolving European security architecture (Kieninger, 2019, p. 58). In this regard, the NACC consultations were dealing mainly with the remaining Cold War security apprehensions, including the full withdrawal of Russian troops from the former Soviet Bloc, and political cooperation on a number of security and defence-related issues that helped build confidence between former adversaries in the beginning of 1990's (NATO, 2018, p. 250). But, the

NACC's *modus operandi* was very limited, given that it possessed no powers to undertake any action on the raised issues. (Ulrich, 2003, p. 21)

Yet, this framework of consultation provided a limited venue for the needs of more pro-Western countries of the former communist bloc, both, in terms of content,²⁵ and of the format,²⁶ mainly because it was lacking possibilities to develop bilateral cooperative relations of each partner with NATO. (Kieninger, 2019, p. 58), In addition, NACC was suffering a contradiction in terms regarding the larger picture, and the way how it envisaged the participation of states within this new mechanism of the evolving security architecture of Post-Cold Europe. While it excluded the West European neutral states, NACC included former Soviet states that were literally situated in Asia, like Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Kirgizstan. Besides, the NACC's work was limited to consultations and seminars, and it had no operational connection to the Alliance (Wheatley, 2001, p. 6).

In contrast to NACC, the Partnership for Peace Program (PfP), launched at the January 1994 Brussels Summit, was opened to all the NACC and OSCE members (including neutral states), offered its partners the opportunity to engage and advance the practical bilateral cooperation with NATO, related to their own priorities for cooperation with the Alliance based on their ambitions and capabilities, offered permanent facilities at NATO and SHAPE Headquarters for partners in order to facilitate closer cooperation, and confirmed the Alliance's open door policy for membership of other European countries (NATO, 1994.a).

The PfP proved to be a double track initiative, aiming at preparing the aspirants for membership, and it also provided a setting for other countries to "develop a relationship with NATO to the extent and at the speed they wished" (Boland, 2017, p. 202). Through its political mechanisms of

²⁵ For example, the Foreign Minister of Hungary, Geza Jeszenszky, raised further expectations on the NATO's role in this period of uncertainty, which has had a serious impact on their security, by asking the Alliance to provide projection of stabilizing influence on inter-state relations among the European former communist countries, including assisting to resolve potential crisis or conflicts among them and for a strong political commitment to transition and defence reform (Gerosa, 1992: 279).

²⁶ Estonian Foreign Minister Lennart Meri, while praising NACC for its 'essential role in the protection of peace and stability,' raised a question on the appropriateness of its format – "but how - through meetings alone?" Another problem, according to the high officials of Hungary, Poland, and Czechoslovakia, was the large composition of NACC (37 members), that made of little use large and diverse groups in working on defence issues (Ibid: 279 – 280).

consultations, PfP also proved to be the "preventive defence" program, aiming at the creation of conditions for peace and stability, thereby minimising likelihood of war (Perry, 1999, p. 3), since both, PfP and NATO, envisage consultations under the Article IV of the Washington Treaty (Blank, 1998, p. 17). Furthermore, in military terms, PfP brought closer the military forces of partner states, including the opportunities for participation in NATO led peace operations. The non-NATO states, including neutral states as well, could participate in those missions and co-operate with NATO, while retaining their defence profile (Blank, 1998, p. 17).

Regarding enlargement and inter-operability, of special interest is the Planning and Review Process of the Partnership (PARP). As specified in the PfP framework document, the role of PARP is to identify and evaluate forces and capabilities of the partner countries for multilateral training, exercises and operations, together with the forces of the Alliance. (NATO, 2018, p. 433). The PARP focuses on issues related to interoperability, including operational skills and procedures, communications and equipment standards, collective defence planning based on NATO practices. The PARP also pays a particular focus to the democratic governance of the armed forces in partner countries (Ibid.). The documents that direct PARP include the PARP Ministerial Guidance approved by the NATO and partner defence minister, the Partnership Goals approved by the Allies' Ambassadors and the partner country, the Consolidated Report that provides an overview of partners' progress, and the Partnership Goals Summary Report (NATO, 2018, p. 433).

However, since Alliance's defence plans and needs are classified, and as such cannot be shared with candidate states before they become signatories of the Washington Treaty, PARP can provide indications of NATO's expectations in relation to potential new members, given that PARP designates steps that countries should take to improve their interoperability. (Gallis, 1997, p. 15). Most importantly, in terms of reformation of strategic cultures (Biehl, Giegerich, and Jonas, 2013, p. 12) and foreign policies of the aspirant countries, PfP ended hopes for bilateral or regional defence alignments, thus rendering the defence collaboration solely via Brussels, into a price that aspirants should pay for membership in the Alliance. (Gallis 1997, p. 12).

On the other hand, the NATO-led peacekeeping operation in Bosnia-Herzegovina, with meaningful participation of non-NATO countries, including Russia, brought into the surface the necessity for full and close high-level political involvement and synchronization among all participating nations. These new circumstances triggered the creation of the Euro–Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC), that was established in 1997, and as such succeeded the North Atlantic Cooperation Council (NACC) (Dardel, 2008, p. 6), as well as the introduction of the Enhanced Partnership for Peace.

The evolution from the NACC to the EAPC was accompanied with parallel steps that were aiming to enhance the role of PFP by increasing the participation of partners in decision-making and operational planning across the entire scope of partnership activities and areas of consultation and cooperation (NATO, 2008).²⁷ While PFP is a bilateral program between NATO and each individual partner, the EAPC, on the other hand, is a collective organization – a political roof – of all members and partners, and it meets at the levels of ambassadors, foreign ministers, defense ministers, and heads of states. Furthermore, the opening of partners' diplomatic missions to NATO under EAPC, has provided partners with a political say into the NATO's decision-making process. Nevertheless, the EAPC is not an organization of equals, given that North-Atlantic Council holds its primacy, whereas for non-NATO members this organization provides an opportunity to engage politically with NATO. The Alliance's aim was, obviously, to extend its political influence beyond its members short of being dependent on other European security organizations (Ulrich, 2003, p. 25).

Against this background, according to Borawski, the practise of EAPC has been that policy issues are “consulted” with partners, but only after the Allies have reached a consensus on these issues, thus leaving to partners a room for contributions related to the decisions on matters discussed at committee level, such as setting the agenda for meetings on issues of civilian–military

²⁷ The areas include crisis management and peace-support operations; regional issues; arms control and issues related to the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction; the fight against terrorism; defence issues such as planning, budgeting, policy and strategy; civil emergency planning and disaster preparedness; armaments cooperation; nuclear safety; air traffic management; and scientific cooperation (NATO, 2008)

relations, democratic control of the armed forces, and defense policy and strategy (Borawski, 1999, p. 326).

Nonetheless, in operational terms, the Enhanced Partnership for Peace raised the cooperation between allies and partners to a higher level, and it touched almost all areas of NATO's activity (Wheatley, 2001, p. 10). It established Partnership for Peace Staff Elements (PSE), cells of officers from NATO and partner countries within the International Military Staff (IMS) at NATO headquarters and the Partnership Coordination Cell (PCC). In this regard, the Combined Joint Task Forces Concept,²⁸ and NATO's new command structure, enables the participation of PfP Staff Elements in CJTF exercise, planning, concept and the doctrine development and operations, as well as participation of the military officers of the partner countries in CJTF headquarters. The scope of operational cooperation between NATO and partner countries incorporated all NATO operations, including the peace support ones, short of Article V operations. (Ulrich, 2003, p. 25).

The Kosovo War has displayed the utility of the PfP and EAPC in peace enforcement operations. The newly established Euro-Atlantic Disaster Response Center under the auspices of EAPC had a significant role in coping with the Kosovo refugee crisis, whereas Albania and North Macedonia, by directly responding to the refugee crisis, played critical roles in the overall success of the NATO war against Yugoslavia and on the rapid deployment of the Alliance's troops in Kosovo.

In the process of the first enlargement round (1997–1999), NATO was mainly focused on arranging the military and financial matters with the incoming allies (Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland). The arranged matters dealt with the integration of new allies into NATO's command structure, cost-sharing arrangements for the NATO's strategic investment program,²⁹ the civil budget,³⁰ and the military budget,³¹ determined based on their gross domestic product and other

²⁸ Command-and-control concept, known as the Combined Joint Task Forces (CJTF), was used initially very successfully in the 1991 Gulf War. The Alliance's leaders adopted this concept at the Brussels Summit in January 1994, in order to reform NATO's military structure for addressing new security challenges (Barry, 1996).

²⁹ Expenses on fixed installations, such as airfields, fuel pipelines, and telecommunications installations used in common by all members in the deployment and operation of forces.

³⁰ Payment for the NATO's international civilian staff.

³¹ Payment for the international military staff at NATO headquarters and the alliance's major commands.

economic factors (Gallis, 1997, p. 8). However, the first round of enlargement provided Allies with lessons learned, that made as an imperative the introduction of the new “assessment mechanism” in order to make the assessment process of candidate countries more structured and rigorous.

Against this background, the Membership Action Plan (MAP) was introduced at the 1999 Washington Summit. The MAP required all aspirant countries to draft and submit an Annual National Programme specifying their preparations for NATO membership in the five key areas: political and economic, defence/military, resources (to meet membership commitments), security (to protect NATO information), and legal (legal arrangements to govern cooperation with NATO) (NATO, 1999.a). The MAP also offered extra resources to candidate countries that had made clear their willingness for a more substantive collaboration with NATO than that provided by PfP membership, by introducing a practical, individualized, NATO membership-oriented action program (NATO, 1999.a). However, it has to be clarified that MAP does not replace the PfP Programme. In fact, participation in PfP for aspiring countries remains essential. The enhanced PfP and Defence Capabilities Initiative (DCI), apply PARP procedures to all MAP partners' armed forces (NATO. 1999.b).

Another important step in enhancing Alliance's partnership instruments was undertaken at the November 2002 NATO Prague Summit, with the introduction of a new practical mechanism, the Individual Partnership Action Plans (IPAP) (NATO, 2002a, point 7.), with the aim to ensure bringing together different cooperation mechanisms between a partner country and the Alliance, in order to improve the focus of activities in support of partner's domestic reform efforts. The IPAP's objectives are related to the following categories related to the political and security issues: defence, security and military issues; public information; science and environment; civil emergency planning; and administrative, protective security and resource issues (NATO, 2017).

In addition, the NATO Istanbul Summit (June 2004), introduced the Partnership Action Plan (PAP) on Defence Institution Building (DIB) (NATO, 2018). The Defence Institution Building covers Democratic Control of Defence Activities, Civilian Participation in Developing and Implementing

Defence Policy, Legislative and Judicial Oversight of Defence, Assessment of Security Risks and National Defence Requirements, Defence Management, International Norms in Defence Governance, Personnel Management in Defence, Financial Planning within Defence, and International Defence Cooperation (Marcu, 2009). Nevertheless, both, IPAPs and the PAP-DIB, are not conducted in isolation from the PARP, since it plays a major role in collecting and analysing information about practices and progress in reforms, by using the Partnership Goals, as a means to hold countries accountable on accomplishing their declared reform objectives, and in order to ensure the progress that needs to infuse all areas of government (Boland, 2017, p. 210).

Against this backdrop, Ulrich argues that PfP has a dual strategic purpose for NATO. Firstly, PfP establishes a process of membership that is the aim for a number of partners, and enables their self-differentiation, although without extending guarantees. Secondly, it is one of the means to “export stability” through democratic consolidation and defence reforms of the former communist states (Ulrich, 2003, pp. 23-24). In this vein, Kerr argues that it is a vital U.S. interest to develop a network of competent partners that are able to share the burdens and responsibilities of global security, through enfolding strategies of coalition and cooperation (Kerr, 2017, p. ix), and that, as a preponderant power of the Alliance, the U.S. has a major role in building such networks through NATO's partnership instruments. In addition, she argues that the establishment of functioning defence institutions reduces state instability and fragility that may lead to regional instability that threatens the US national interests and security, and, as such, ultimately increases stability. (Kerr, 2017, p. xx) The Kerr's argument is based on a RAND report that assessed the utility of the U.S. security cooperation as a preventive tool for reducing instability and preventing conflicts, and concluded that this cooperation was more effective in countries that have strong institutions (including defence ones) and capacity to ensure governance functions throughout their territories (McNerney, et al. 2014).

Yet, as it is broadly assumed, in spite of many achievements made within the scope of the Partnership for Peace, the Article V remains the ultimate guarantee of stability and security. This is what PfP, regardless how it is operationalized or institutionalized, failed to provide (Hunter

1997, p. 118), whose vulnerabilities have been displayed when parts of territories of Georgia (2008) and Ukraine (2014) were forcefully occupied and annexed by Russia. The resurgent Russia considers the West as the principal enemy, the states of the former Soviet bloc, defined by Kremlin as “near abroad” as its central sphere of influence, and NATO as its primary security threat (Fryc, 2016, p. 46).

On the other hand, alike to the Study on NATO Enlargement, MAP does not provide a list of specified criteria for membership to aspiring countries. Besides, even a successful achievements in the programme doesn't envisage any decision by the Alliance on issuing an invitation to start membership talks. The North Atlantic Council's decisions on possible invitation for joining NATO are solely taken on case-by-case basis, in the light of political, security and military considerations (Klaiber, 1999, p. 25). The fulfilment of qualifications for membership is considered by NATO as a necessary condition, not as a sufficient one – which is going to be determined by the Alliance, (Peci, 2014, p. 53), since it has to "serve the overall political and strategic interests of the Alliance, strengthen its effectiveness and enhance the overall European security and stability" (NATO, 1999.c., point 39).

Against this background, Ulrich argues that all the way through the Post-Cold War NATO transformation the aspirant states have not given up their ambition to join the Alliance, because they want the security guarantees that membership in NATO provides, due to the argument that their security interests would be protected in the best manner within the Alliance's framework. But, issuing the invitations to join the Alliance proved to depend on political factors that were beyond the control of individual aspirants (Ulrich, 2003, p. 37), such as the consensus among the allies³² and their security interest related to the geopolitical circumstances in the aspirants' neighbourhood. This means that there are no guarantees for the accession of the aspirant countries, even in if they fulfil the membership requirements (Peci, 2014, p.53).

³² For example the vetoed membership of (North) Macedonia by Greece from 2008 to 2019.

III. The Projection of NATO's Hard Power

Introduction

The Former Yugoslavia was the single state in Europe that after the end of the Cold War, instead of taking the path of transition to democracy or of a peaceful dissolution, run into bloody wars caused by the state-to-nation imbalances and illiberal internal politics, and this ultimately led to the emergence of seven new small states, namely, Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, North Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Kosovo. In the context of the Western Balkans, Serbia and Croatia are bigger states, whereas other states of the region are smaller and, more or less, equal to each other; meanwhile, in comparison to NATO, all of them are small, if not micro-states.

The literature produced on the dissolution of Yugoslavia is vast and multifaceted. In this regard, it has to be noted that a single book authored by Sabrina P. Ramet in 2005 reviewed more than 130 books written on this subject (Ramet, 2005). Against this background, Serwer argues that there were three factors that led to wars in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo, namely the breakup of Yugoslavia, Slobodan Milošević's political ambitions and military capability, and territorial ethnic nationalism, whereas the factors that led to the conflict in Macedonia were the breakup of Yugoslavia and ethnic nationalism, simultaneously accompanied with the mitigation of Milošević's political ambitions and military capabilities (Serwer, 2019).

On the other hand, according to the last President of Tito's Yugoslavia, Stipe Mesić, during his last days in the office, practically, the Yugoslav Army "lost its state," because it lost the confidence of majority of the federation's republics. But, at that time the West was not understanding that non-Serbian commanders were removed, and consequently Slovenians, Croats, Albanians, Bosnian Muslims, and almost all Macedonians, left the military corps, in which way the Yugoslav Army effectively and profoundly became Serbian (Mesić, 2004). Furthermore, according to a recently declassified CIA document of 1993, at that time the Yugoslav Army was by far the largest military force in the disintegrated Yugoslavia, and it was stronger even than those of Hungary and Bulgaria (CIA, 1993, p. 12).

Under these circumstances, Slovenia and Croatia were the first republics of Yugoslavia that declared independence, on June 25, 1991, and they were followed by Macedonia, on September 25, 1991, and Bosnia and Herzegovina, on March 3, 1992. On the other hand, Kosovo was virtually under the Serbian occupation ever since the stripping of its federal status and autonomy in 1989/1990, while Montenegro chose to remain with Serbia in a joint state that “baptised” itself as Yugoslavia. Confronted with these unexpected developments, the European Community, on August 27, 1991, created the Arbitration Committee led by Robert Badinter, in order to give a legal advice to the parties in relation to the crisis in Yugoslavia. By the end of 1991, the Committee concluded that the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (SFRY) is in the process of dissolution, and that all the republics are equal successors, and, in defining the borders of the newly created states, it employed the concept of *uti possidetis juris* of the International Law (Hasani, 2001, p. 224 – 233) by clarifying that the boundaries between the republics that have declared independence, and Serbia, and other possible adjunct independent states, will become international frontiers, and that they cannot be altered except by agreement (Pellet, 1992).

On the other hand, driven by the ethnic-nationalist idea of “Greater Serbia,” with an ambition for all the Serbs to live in a single state, the Serbian President, Milošević, decided not to respect the advises of the Arbitration Committee, in despite of the fact that he publicly kept a “neutral” position. He was also not enthusiastic to keep the Serbian controlled Yugoslav Army in the republics that had a tiny Serbian community, such as Slovenia and Macedonia. But, this was not the case with Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina, where a sizable Serbian communities were living. Consequently, with the support of the Yugoslav Army, by the end of 1991, ethnic Serbian armed forces took under their control one third of Croatia, and few weeks before the referendum on the independence of Bosnia and Herzegovina, ethnic Serbs declared “the Republika Srpska.” In an act of support, preceding the illegal creation of this political entity, Milošević encouraged the Bosnian Serb leader Karadžić to move in this direction, by ensuring him that nobody can do anything to them as long as they have an army. Furthermore, Croatia, Macedonia, and Bosnian non-Serbs, remained largely unarmed, relying on the light weaponry of the republican territorial defence corps, and police forces, and on a very limited heavy weaponry captured from the

Yugoslav Army (Kollander, 2004, pp. 12-14). This in summary was the military power constellation, under which started the wars in Croatia and in Bosnia and Herzegovina, which marked the beginning of the deadliest conflict in Europe ever since the end of the Second World War.

For further theoretical contemplations, I will introduce here the notion of pole, sub-pole and composite pole, in order to get a better view on the analyses of balance of power context among the warring parties in the Western Balkans. As all the theoretical concepts, these notions simplify the features of the framework of analyses, but, on the other hand, they also enable explanation of complex issues related to a specific phenomenon. Against this background, I define a pole as an entity that is politically independent, and possesses military capability, a sub-pole as an entity which is politically subordinated and militarily dependent to its "patron pole," whereas a "composite pole" presents the merging of poles and/or sub-poles into a single pole. The ultimate ambition of poles, as the following analyses will show, is the absorption of their respective sub-poles altogether, with the territories controlled by them. But this behaviour of pole and sub-pole configuration is not limited only to this feature. Similarly to alliances, as it will be evidenced by further analyses, these alignments are subject to the alliance security dilemma (Snyder 1997) of abandonment by the pole, or of being entrapped by the sub-pole. However, in this case, the security dilemma is largely in the hands of the pole, rather than of its sub-poles, and is more ruthless than in the case of classical alliances. This is a consequence of the fact that security dilemmas are determined by the strategic interests of the pole, which depending from the situation, may vary from the absorption of the sub-pole, to ensuring sub-poles existence and security, and, in extreme cases, to the total abandonment of a sub-pole, if patron's pole existential interests are threatened.

The aim of this chapter is to explore the role of NATO's projection of hard power on the security and stability of the Western Balkans, and to test the first research hypotheses of this dissertation, namely, "the projection of hard power has ensured stability through deterrence of possible aggressive intentions within the Western Balkans, the re-balancing of power, and has prevented possibilities for the escalation of inter-ethnic conflicts in the region".

I.1. NATO's Intervention in Bosnia and Herzegovina

The roots of the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina dated from the initial stages of the dissolution of Yugoslavia, driven by the Serbian President Milošević's attempts to redraw borders of the emerging states along ethnic lines. Almost half a year prior to the declaration of country's independence, in September 1991, Bosnian Serbs declared Serbian Autonomous Region (SAR), and asked for the protection of the Yugoslav Army, which was already smuggling arms to them since mid-1991. On January 9, 1992, the SAR renamed itself into the Serbian Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina, later to be known as the Republika Srpska. Similarly, in November 1991, the Bosnian Croats established the region of Herzegovina and Posavina, which, in April 1992, were united and established a new entity known as the Croatian Republic of Herceg-Bosnia. The remaining parts of Bosnia and Herzegovina, namely the central part of the country and the enclaves of Sarajevo, Srebrenica, Žepa and Goražde, remained under the control of the Bosnian Muslims, representing formally the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina (Thomas and Mikulan, 2006, pp. 3-4).

Bosnia and Herzegovina declared independence on March 3, 1992. However, the early recognition of the country by the U.S. and the E.U., on April 7, 1992, could not prevent the eruption of the war. On the other hand, with the adoption of the UNSC Resolution 713, on 25 September 1991, under the provisions of the Chapter VII of the UN Charter, the armed embargo was imposed on the entire territory of the Socialist Yugoslavia (United Nations, 1991), thus practically denying to Croats and Bosnian Muslims any opportunities to counterbalance through armament the preponderant Serbian/Yugoslav military power, which was providing infantry and artillery weapons, and technical assistance to the military forces of Republika Srpska and "Republic of Srpska Krajina" (Owen, 2013, p. 440).

On the other hand, with the Resolution 743 of 21 February 1992, the UNSC authorized the peacekeeping mission (UNPROFOR) that was deployed in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, and Macedonia, which was not authorized with the peace-enforcement provisions of the Chapter VII of the UN Charter (United Nations, 1992.a.). Being denied to use force with exception in cases of

self-defence, UNPROFOR, which by the end of 1994 reached the number of 38,810 military personnel, could not meet, either in Croatia, or in Bosnia, the international objectives in halting the war between the warring parties. Even if it had decided to coerce by force, most of the peacekeeping units would have been outgunned by the ethnic military forces (Baumann et al, 2004, p. 40). Due to these limitations, in the further theoretical analyses, the UNPROFOR mission will not be considered as a military factor in the war of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Furthermore, it should be noted that by the United Nations was imposed a “No-Fly Zone” in October 1992 (United Nations, 1992.b.) on all the military flights over Bosnia and Herzegovina, thus effectively limiting the armed conflict between the entities into a ground forces war.

Under such conditions, the conflict theatre in the Former Socialist Yugoslavia got characteristics of an “*anarchic regional security structure*,” similar to an “anarchic international security structure,” as put forward in terms of Kenneth Waltz (Waltz, 1979, p. 99), but in this case composed by states and statelet entities that would quest their security, based solely on the self-help and “ethnic military alignments.” Viewed through the lenses of polarity, measured in terms of military aggregate power, this “anarchic regional security structure” consisted of three independent poles, namely Yugoslavia (preponderant power), Croatia (middle power), and Bosnian Muslims (small power), and three sub-poles, namely Republika Srpska (middle power), Croatian Republic of Herceg-Bosnia (small power) and Republika Srpska Krajina (small power).

In this case, the balance of power/threat logic would suggest that, in the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bosnian Croats and Bosnian Muslims would ally with each other in order to counterbalance the power and the fear from the military intentions and capabilities of the Republika Srpska. Against this backdrop, in the beginning of the war that erupted soon after the declaration of independence, in April 1992, Bosnian Muslims and Bosnian Croats were fighting side by side against Belgrade backed Bosnian Serbs, as classical balance of power/threat theory prescribes. The military balance of forces involved in the war theatre of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia is presented in the following table.

Armed Forces	Armed Personnel	Tanks	Artillery Pieces	Armoured Vehicles	Air Forces	Air Defence Forces	Naval Forces
Bosnian Muslim Forces	100 - 120,00	25	200				
Bosnian Croat Forces	40-50,000	56	256	84			
Bosnian Serb Forces	60-80,000 regulars and 30,000 irregulars	400-750	700-800	200	21 fixed wing combat aircraft and 30 helicopters	10 FROG Surface to air launchers	
Croatian Forces	60-80,000	250	200-300	150-200	2-5 MIG 21, 17 Mi8 Helicopters	100 SA-7 and 15-21 SA-9 air defence system	4-6 combatants
Krajina Serb Forces	40,000	300	430	80		3 FROG Surface to air launchers	
Yugoslav Forces	127,000	1300 - 1800	1200 - 2000	700 - 1000	12 MIG 29, 111 MIG 21, Galeb- Jastreb 167, Orao 45, Super Galeb 53, 51-52 Mi8 and 76 Gazzele Helicopters	30 SA-2, 68 SA- 3, 120 SA-6 surface to air launchers	4 Frigates, 13- 14 missile boats, 10-11 torpedo boats, 5 submarines

Table 3.1. The Military Balance of Forces in the War Theatre in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia.
(Source: CIA, 1993)

Nevertheless, in the early summer of 1993, the Bosnian Croats started fighting against Bosnian Muslims by having Bosnian Serbs de facto on their side. In the words of General Wesley Clark, the war theatre in Bosnia and Herzegovina at that time became a “three sided fight, with cross border assistance to two sides” (Clark, 2001, p. 32), namely to Bosnian Croats and Bosnian Serbs.

Obviously, the Croatian President Tudjman changed his political course and was aligned towards the option of creating a “Grater Croatia” through division of Bosnia and Herzegovina with Serbia, by leaving a tiny part of it in the hands of Bosnian Muslims. (Jeffries, 2002, p. 5). Consequently, the Bosnian Croats subordinated themselves to the larger war objectives of their patron pole – Croatia. This de-facto alignment of Bosnian Croats with Bosnian Serbs, against Bosnian Muslims, went contrary to the basic assumptions of the classical balance of power/threat theory that suggest allying against a greater power/threat, or bandwagoning with it.

However, none of these options did occur in this case. The sub-poles, Bosnian Croats and Bosnian Serbs, did not get aligned with each other to balance the Bosnian Muslim power/threat, nor did Bosnian Croats bandwagon with Bosnian Serbs. Indeed, this behaviour of the warring parties in

Bosnia and Herzegovina could have hardly occurred in the absence of two antagonist poles (Croatia and Yugoslavia) located outside of the country having their respective sub-poles (Bosnian Croats and Bosnian Serbs) operating in its territory. In this regard, it is worth mentioning that until mid-September 1995, around 70% of the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina got under the control of Bosnian Serbs, which used this fight largely to its own benefit (Jeffries, 2002, p. 5), whereas the Bosnian Croats hardly achieved any significant gain in the war against Bosnian-Muslims, in a situation in which both weakened in the face of Bosnian-Serb threat (Thomas & Mikulan, 2006, pp. 25-26). This behaviour of the Bosnian-Serb and Bosnian-Croat sub-poles has been induced by their respective poles, in order to destroy the weaker pole, or to leave to it that small and un-harmful entity, as long as it was fulfilling the "greater states" territorial and strategic ambitions of their "patron" poles, namely Serbia and Croatia.

Nevertheless, it should be stressed that the war theatre in Bosnia and Herzegovina did not develop in absence of international diplomatic initiatives, but, until the autumn 1995, none of those initiatives entailed features of any coercive diplomacy. Initially, as early as March 1992, a peace plan mediated by Lord Carrington and Ambassador Cutileiro was presented to the warring parties. The plan envisaged allocation of each of 109 municipalities to one or another of three communities organized around territorial divisions of Bosnian Muslim (44%), Bosnian Croat (12%), and Bosnian Serb (44%) cantons, with national governments with weak competencies. This plan was initially signed by the three Bosnian leaders, but later the signature was withdrawn from the agreement by the Bosnian Muslim leader Alija Izetbegović. As war escalated, in April 1993, the former US Secretary of State, Cyrus Vance, on behalf of the UN, and the former British Foreign Secretary, Lord David Owen, on behalf of the EU, presented a peace plan that entailed a territorial arrangement for dividing the country into ten cantons, each of them dominated by one or another of the three communities, but with power sharing that reflected the pre-war composition of the population. This agreement was refused by Bosnian Serbs through a referendum, although it was initially signed by their leader Radovan Karadžić. In August 1993, another plan was presented by the former Minister of Foreign affairs of Norway, Thorvald Stoltenberg and Lord David Owen, which, instead of dividing the country into cantons, provided

for the creation of the union of three republics (Bosnian Serbs 49%, Bosnian Muslims 33%, and Bosnian Croats 18% of the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina), which was not based on the pre-war ethnic composition of the territories, but rather on the reality on the battlefield, that was created through severe ethnic cleansing and atrocities that were unseen ever since the end of the Second World War. This plan was initially accepted by all parties, but it was later rejected by the Bosnian Muslims. In July 1994, the Contact Group (France, Germany, Great Britain, Italy, Russia and the United states) presented the plan for dividing the country in two parts, the Bosnian Muslim and Croat Federation, and Republika Srpska, holding 51%, and 49%, of the country's territory respectively. Bosnian Serbs rejected the plan because they felt little pressure to make any concessions. Indeed, since the eruption of the war, it was clear that Bosnian-Serbs have read correctly the reluctance of the West (the US and NATO) to intervene militarily, and, consequently, they were pushing further with territorial gains and ethnic cleansing, in order to get eventually a settlement in favour of their terms (Harland 2017).

Against this background, the attempts of Serbia and Croatia to divide Bosnia between them were not allowed to become a reality on the ground by the United States. The U.S. diplomacy convinced the Croatian President Tudjman that chasing Bosnian Muslims from the Bosnian Croat dominated territories would create a non-viable, rump Islamic republic that may become a platform for Iranian-sponsored terrorism in Europe" (Serwer, 2019, p. 33). Furthermore, at the beginning of 1994, the Clinton Administration offered aid to Tudjman in return for pulling out from Bosnia, while simultaneously threatening him with UN sanctions. Confronted with these consequences, that might have had a grave impact on Croatia's efforts in regaining control over "Srpska Krajina" and Eastern Slavonia, Tudjman eventually gave up from his "Greater Croatia" ambitions. On the other hand, the Bosnian Croats, faced with the risk of losing the support and assistance from Croatia, were forced to achieve agreement with Bosnian Muslims (Ashbrook and Bakich, 2010, p. 542).

Subsequently, an agreement on a ceasefire and creation of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (from now on, the Federation), out of combined territories controlled by Bosnian Muslims and Bosnian Croats, was signed on March 18, 1994 in Washington, and, among others,

it provided, the recognition by all parties of the territorial integrity of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the establishment of a unified command of the Federation's military forces, and a preliminary agreement on the confederation between the Federation and Croatia (USIP, 1994).

This agreement paved the way for the rebalancing of power in Bosnia and Herzegovina by uniting the military forces of the Bosnian Muslim pole with those of Bosnian-Croatian sub-pole, and for the military assistance provided by Croatia, which, in addition, included joint military operations. In this case the Bosnian-Muslim pole and Bosnian Croat sub-pole, de facto "merged" into a "composite pole," and got associated with the Croatian pole in a larger war theatre, against the Bosnian-Serb and Krajina Serb sub-poles. Furthermore, when the Bosnian Muslims understood that the Western military intervention was merely an illusion, with the backing provided by the US and a number of Muslim countries, they gradually built the largest military force on the ground in terms of military personnel, and, with Bosnian-Croats on their side, they were ready to exploit the Bosnian-Serb territorial overstretch (Harland, 2017, p. 19).

Nevertheless, this reconfiguration of military forces did not provide the Federation with the sufficient aggregated power resources to counter successfully the Bosnian-Serb forces that had a vast competitive advantage in heavy weaponry (Thomas and Mikulan, 2006). This was achieved only after NATO's air strikes against the Bosnian Serb (and Srpska Krajina) military forces, that started in January 1994, and which were initially limited to the protection of the "safe zones" populated mainly with the Bosnian Muslims.

But the major breakthrough on reconfiguration of the military balance of power occurred as a result of NATO's operation "Deliberate Force,"³³ which got a dimension of a "wide theatre use of air power" during the August 1995 against the Bosnian Serbs (Burg and Shoup, 1999, pp. 322-327). Most importantly, the NATO intervention in the summer of 1995 ultimately ended the period of the "anarchic regional security structure" in the war theatre of Bosnia and Herzegovina

³³ For further exploration on the NATO's "Deliberate Force" operation see: (Brookings Institute, 2017) and (Ripley, 1999).

and Croatia, and created conditions for halting the war and moving towards achieving a political settlement of the crisis.

The NATO's air power projection enabled a rebalance of power in favour of the Federation's military forces, which were also assisted by those of Croatia. In the summer of 1995 they regained hundreds of square miles of territory that had been taken by the Serbs in the first months of the war (Campbell, 2015, p. 126). Faced with these losses, Republika Srpska accepted the so-called pre-Dayton Cease Fire Agreement of October 1995, but, initially, the Federation was reluctant to sign it. Ultimately, the Federation accepted the cease-fire, because they knew that without the support provided by the NATO airstrikes, and the support of Croatian forces, they could hardly succeed (Oberschall, 2007, p. 123).

It is important, from the theoretical perspective, to analyse briefly the behaviour and security dilemma of the pole and sub-pole alignments in the case of Yugoslavia in relation to Bosnian Serbs and Srpska Krajina. Nina Caspersen, one of the best scholars in this subject, which she tackles through the theoretical lenses of unrecognized states, argues that close ties between patron states [poles] and statelet entities [sub-poles], come at a price. It might help the statelet entities to strengthen themselves, but it also undermines their autonomy or ambitions for political independence (Caspersen, 2012, p. 57). Against this background, Kolsto and Paukovic argue that if the state [pole], from which the statelet entity [sub-pole] is trying to secede, is weak, than sub-pole would need less resources to defend itself (Kolsto & Paukovic 2013, p. 312), thus gaining a manoeuvring room for higher autonomy in relation to its patron [pole] state.

In this vein, Caspersen argues that the situation when a statelet [sub-pole] entity is largely weak in relation to the state [pole] where it is located, and faces the lack of international support, makes it totally dependent on its patron state [pole], which, on the other hand, will always put its own interests over its statelet client ones. In this regard, whenever Yugoslavia was disconsolate with Srpska Krajina, Milošević always threatened it with withdrawal of support, in which case it would have collapsed in a short time. (Caspersen, 2012, p. 57)

This security dilemma, for the Srpska Republika, and especially for Republika Srpska Krajina, got another dimension, when by the end of 1993, Milošević changed strategy by starting to give up from the political project of having “all the Serbs in a single state.” This change was a result of growing pressure, and of the consequences of international sanctions and increasing number of states that had recognized Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina, including murky possibilities to absorb these statelet entities [sub-poles] within Yugoslavia. (Ibid). When Milošević abandoned the idea of “Greater Serbia,” he temporarily gave up from Republika Srpska, and permanently from the Srpska Krajina. Due to the fact that Serbia abandoned the provision of assistance to these statelet entities, Srpska Krajina fell in the hands of Croatia, and Republika Srpska lost a significant portion of territories gained at the beginning of the war (Ashbrook and Bakic, 2010, p. 544).

Ironically, although in the period that followed the failure of Vance-Owen plan these sub-poles were trying to become more autonomous and independent from Belgrade, both sub-poles were believing on the unconditional support of Belgrade, regardless of numerous clashes that they had with Milošević (Caspersen, 2010). Milošević supported the Z-4 Plan (Ahrens, 2007, pp. 160-173) for the Serbs in Croatia and the Vance–Owen Plan, but both were rejected by its sub-poles. Obviously, they refused to become puppets of Belgrade, and undertook some steps in the direction of unification with each other. But, at the end of the day, when Srpska Krajina confronted the Croatian “Operation Storm,” it met with silent denial of any Yugoslav or Bosnian Serbs assistance (Kolsto & Paukovic, p. 2013).

These developments show the ruthlessness of security dilemma in the case of the pole and sub-pole alignment, which, on one hand, may lead to temporary or permanent abandonment of a sub-pole by its patron pole, and ,on the other, may lead to the creation of sub-pole's illusion that they will get unconditional assistance by their patron pole due to their common ethnicity, regardless of divergences of interests between pole and sub-pole, and the struggle of the sub-pole for autonomy and independence from the pole.

Furthermore, a similar dilemma may occur between two sub-poles of the same ethnic alignment, when the more powerful sub-pole abandons the weaker sub-pole, in a case of endangered existential interests. As this case shows, the room for sub-pole's bandwagoning with a pole other than patron pole, almost does not exist at all in this kind of alignments, thus making these security dilemmas much fiercer than those suggested by Snyder's Alliance's Security Dilemma concept.

On the other hand, regarding the role of international community during the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina, James Grow argues that the most critical moment was the failure of the Vance–Owen Plan of 1993, which could have provided the international community with a significant opportunity to preserve the principles of resisting ethnic purification and opposing the holding of the territories taken by force. The Dayton Agreement that has been achieved one and a half year later, under the credible military threat provided by the US and NATO, ironically abandoned these principles. In this vein, Grow argues that the twinned failures, of the political will to act militarily, and the abandonment of these principles, lay at the heart of international engagement in this war (Grow, 1997).

Against this backdrop, according to Lund, in the first phase of the war, the National Security Advisor to the President George W. H. Bush, Brent Scowcroft, presented the “burnout theory,” which would give United States a space to tolerate the Bosnian War until warring sides exhausted themselves, but, at the same time, he voiced the necessity to draw some “line in the sand,” in order to contain possibilities for occurrence of any new war in the East or the South (Lund, 2000, p. 189). Obviously, geopolitics was one of the key enemies that determined the initial “containment strategy” of the U.S. and NATO on the war in Bosnia that was pursued until 1995, which was also a consequence of the underbalancing behaviour, as defined by Schweller (2004), of the Alliance towards the Yugoslav/Serb threat.

Nevertheless, as early as the beginning of 1993, the National Security Advisor to President Clinton, Anthony Lake, was arguing that Bosnia's War got another dimension, because it was becoming dangerous both, in regional terms, and internationally, due to its Christians vs. Muslims connotations. During his trip to Europe, in May 1993, the State Secretary Warren Christopher

introduced the US strategy of “lift and strike” to the key European allies that was aiming to bring the end of the war by lifting aid to Bosnian Muslims and striking Bosnian Serbs (Ibid, p. 92). Yet, the allies showed a profound reluctance towards this initiative (Ibid.), which, if implemented, would have changed fundamentally the balance of power on the ground, and subsequently could have brought the end of the war much earlier. Until the pressure grew, as a result of Serbian authored Srebrenica Genocide, and Sarajevo Shelling in summer 1995, the war in Bosnia was practically contained, and accompanied with a lack of serious NATO military involvement against Bosnian Serb forces. The NATO's involvement in the area started in the summer 1992, with the UNSC mandated monitoring operations “Maritime Monitor”³⁴ and “Sky Monitor,”³⁵ but they hardly had any significant impact on the ground, until the launching of the Operation “Deliberate Force”, in the summer 1995, which targeted artillery and missile weaponry of the Bosnian Serb Forces, by changing significantly the balance of power on the ground.

In terms of human losses and ethnic cleansing, the consequences of the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina were devastating for the country. In total, around 100,000 people were killed, majority of whom were Bosnian Muslims, while Bosnian Serbs had around 24,000 victims, 4,000 out of which were civilians (Sucic and Robinson, 2013) and brought about horrific changes of ethnic structure in the territory controlled by Republika Srpska and the Federation (Tabeau, 2009).

However, the US led initiative for achieving peace and a political settlement in Bosnia and Herzegovina, which started in August 1995 under the leadership of the U.S. Assistant Secretary of State, Richard Holbrooke, ended up successfully, with the achievement of the “Dayton Accords,” on November 21, 1995, which was a result of the U.S. coercive diplomacy, accompanied by the Alliance's airstrikes (Holbrooke, 1998). The agreement, among others, ensured the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Bosnia and Herzegovina, formalized and defined the borders of its entities, including respective territorial divisions (Federation 51% and

³⁴ Mandated to monitor the compliance by the warring parties in Former Yugoslavia of the UNSC embargo on weapons in the Adriatic Sea.

³⁵ Mandated to monitor the UNSC declared “No Fly zone” over Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Republika Srpska 49%), the new Constitution of the country, and, most importantly, it provided the establishment of the NATO led peace-enforcing mission, IFOR (Implementation Force), with “strong and biting tooth,” if any of yesterday’s warring parties would try to renew hostilities or create obstacles to the mission (United Nations, 1995). The establishment of NATO’s first peace-enforcement mission, the “Implementation Force – IFOR,”³⁶ at the end of 1995, marked the first Alliance’s “out of area” peace enforcement mission in its history. In this operation initially participated 60,000 troops, from 16 NATO members, and 17 non-NATO countries. A year later, the mission was renamed into “Stabilization Force – SFOR.” Both operations were carried out under peace enforcement rules of engagement (United Nations, 1996).

However, in despite of the fact that the Dayton Agreement, among others, envisaged large demobilization, disarmament, and the removal of heavy weaponry into the barracks of the military forces of the Federation and of Republika Srpska (United Nations, 2005), it did not envisage the disbanding or the operation under a single command of these military forces, which, at that time, amounted to a total of 250,000 military personnel (IISS, 1996). This “vacuum” of the Dayton Agreement created a situation that paved the way to entities to claim their authority over defense and military matters, and to maintain the military forces that they created during the war. Furthermore, both entities were viewing each other as a threat, and they kept their armed forces for quite a long time at a high level of alert (Vetschera and Damian, 2007, pp. 16-17).

Hence, in the aftermath of the Dayton Agreement, the U.S. has pursued the policy of building a strong balance between the military forces of the Federation and of Republika Srpska. In words of Richard Holbrooke, the challenge that the US faced during the negotiation process in Dayton “was whether we should train and arm the Federation, or try to reduce the overall level of armaments in Bosnia. This was one of our greatest dilemmas” (Holbrook, 1998, p. 297). The US final choice was for the first option, thus entailing to the peace-enforcement, the hard military balance component between the yesterday’s warring parties. Subsequently, right after the signing of the Dayton Accords, Washington launched, with the Army of the Bosnian Federation,

³⁶ IFOR was transformed into Stabilization Force – SFOR in December 1996.

the “train and equip” program, led by Ambassador James Pardew. According to Lamb et al, this program was a crucial component of the U.S. peace-making strategy in Bosnia, because, through its implementation, a parity between warring parties was achieved within less than two years, thus rectifying the imbalance between Bosnian Serb and Bosnian Federation forces. But the program was not aiming to provide the Federation military with significant advantages over the Bosnian Serb military; instead it was limited to deterring any intention for aggression by Bosnian Serbs (Lamb et al., 2014, pp. 1–3).

In terms of the polarity interplay, the NATO's projection of hard power in Bosnia and Herzegovina played a threefold role. Firstly, in military terms, it transformed temporarily the Bosnian Serb sub-pole into an independent pole, by disabling any further military assistance from Yugoslavia. Secondly, the logic of peace enforcement of the US, as the Alliance's preponderant power, was to build initially a military balance between former warring parties, in order to ensure a mutual conventional deterrence.³⁷ And, thirdly, the alliance became a retaliatory pole and deterrent force with sufficient power to prevent defection from the peace agreement by the parties on the ground (Last, 2000, p. 81).

However, these arrangements ensured peace, but not the long term stability of the country within Bosnia and Herzegovina. In this regard, a numerous efforts were undertaken by the international community to ensure the joint national military and defense planning in the country. As a result of these persistent efforts, in 2004, the Ministry of Defense of Bosnia and Herzegovina was founded, and in 2005 the Armed Forces of Bosnia and Herzegovina were formed, with the merger of the military forces of the Bosnian Federation and Republika Srpska into one force, which today is largely multi-ethnic. Thus, the two antagonistic poles were merged

³⁷ Mearsheimer defines conventional deterrence as “A potential attacker's fear of the consequences of military action lies at the heart of deterrence. Specifically, deterrence – a function of the costs and risks associated with military action – is most likely to obtain when an attacker believes that his probability of success is low and that the attendant costs will be high” (Marsheimer, 1983: 23), and as such, it ensures the maintenance of peace between the hostile parties.

into a single pole, which ultimately provided the bases for a long term stability of the country (Vetschera and Damian, 2007).

Ultimately, the NATO's military intervention in Bosnia and Herzegovina was completed by the end of 2004, when the European Union Peace Mission (EUFOR) legally succeed the Alliance's peace-making operation, which coincided with the creation of the country's Ministry of Defense and the merger of the military forces of its entities, and subsequent country's membership into the NATO's Partnership for Peace Program in 2006.

III.2. NATO's Intervention in Kosovo

The last Constitution, of 1974, of the Yugoslav Socialist Federation (SFRY) (Delo, 1974), upgraded the status of autonomous provinces of Kosovo and of Vojvodina, into a virtually equal one to that of the republics, in despite of the fact that, by name, these autonomous provinces remained part of Serbia. In the words of Lenard J. Cohen, the provisions of the 1974 Constitution, granted extensive powers to the republics and provinces as the 'sovereign units' of the highly decentralized Yugoslav Federation (Cohen, 1992, p. 304).

Against this background, Kosovo's consent, as that of the other constituent units, was required for all executive and legislative decisions at the federal level, and it had the power to veto decisions in the republican and federal parliaments, while Serbia could not veto the decisions of the Assembly of Kosovo. Kosovo was entitled to its own Constitution, Assembly, Presidency, Government (Executive Council), including the capacities to enter in international legal arrangements (Reka, 2003, p. 50).

In addition, as the other constitutive units of the SFRY, Kosovo was entitled to the Secretariat of Defense (Ministry of Defense) and the Territorial Defense Corps that was under commanding authority of the Provincial Main Staff of Territorial Defense. The Main Staff of the Kosovo's Territorial Defense was directly subordinated to the General Staff of the Yugoslav People's Army (JNA), without any command chain connected to Serbia. Nevertheless, the first major act in seizing Kosovo's autonomy, after Milošević came to power in 1986, was undertaken by the Yugoslav Army, which, under the supervision of the General Staff, relocated the weaponry of the Territorial Defense of Kosovo into the Army's barracks.

After the (un)constitutional changes of 1989, and ultimate abolishment of its autonomy, in 1990, Kosovo remained without any defense and security competencies, a condition that was followed with mass expulsion of Kosovar Albanians from the Territorial Defense and Police forces, as well as from the entire public sector. (Dugolli and Peci, 2005, pp. 7-8). Thus, Kosovo Albanians, that constituted almost 90% of the province's population, remained undefended in the face of the

danger posed by Yugoslav and Serbian security and military forces. Furthermore, the abolishment of Kosovo's autonomy was followed with a rapid increase of violations of human rights, and with discriminatory policies of Belgrade that were designed to Serbianize Kosovo (IICK, 2000, p. 41).

On the other hand, with the introduction of political pluralism in the Federal Yugoslavia, the Democratic League of Kosovo (LDK) was formed in December 1989, under the leadership of Ibrahim Rugova, who was trying to resolve the issue of Kosovo based on the principle of self-determination and through internationalization. Against this background, majority of the remained Kosovo Albanian members of the Communist League joined this cause, and on July 2nd, 1990, the Assembly of Kosovo issued the Constitutional Declaration, which stated that Kosovo had acquired the status of a republic within the Yugoslav federation. Three days later, Serbia forcefully abolished the Kosovo Assembly and basically imposed a Marshall Law (Peci and Demjaha, 2020). In addition, after two months, on September 7, 1990, a new Constitution of Kosovo was adopted in a secret meeting of the Kosovo Assembly that took place in the small town of Kaçanik, close to the Kosovo-Macedonian border (Judah, 2008, p. 70). Soon after the meeting, the Albanian members of the Kosovo Assembly and of Kosovo's Government moved out of the country, and started to operate in the city of Stuttgart in Germany as an unrecognized government in exile (Phillips, 2012, p. 16).

Following the declarations of independence by Slovenia and Croatia, on 26 September 1991, an internationally unrecognized referendum on the Kosovo's independence took place, in which almost 100% of the Albanian population declared themselves in favor of this option (Calic, 2000, p. 22). One month after the referendum, a pluralist "Government in Exile," led by Bujar Bukoshi (LDK), which succeeded the previous government, was established in Germany (Phillips, 2012, p. 16), and this Government had within its composition the Ministry of Defense as well.

In order to analyze the nature of Kosovo's polarity, it is necessary to discuss briefly the state of affairs of the post-communist transition of Albania, as a potential patron pole of Kosovo. During these dramatic developments in Kosovo, Albania was undertaking initial steps in a difficult transition from a totalitarian to a democratic state. The pluralism in Albania was allowed in

December 1990, and the first multi-party elections that took place in March 1991 kept the Labor (Communist) Party in power. The leftist government composed by former communists could shortly resist social and political pressure in the country. However, in March 1992 the new general elections took place that brought to power the political parties of the right, led by Democratic Party of Albania, and its leader, Sali Berisha, was elected as the first non-communist President of Albania a month later.

On the other hand, the long term isolation of Albania³⁸ left its military forces with grave consequences. According to an estimation of the Albanian military forces, conducted by CIA in 1994, the country had 58,000 ground force that was armed with the weaponry largely dating from 1940s and 50s, lacking for more than 20 years the spare parts for the Chinese produced copies of the soviet weapons, and its air and naval forces were practically dysfunctional (CIA 1994a, pp. 2-3). Furthermore, another CIA report estimated that the Yugoslav Army had capabilities to invade Albania, but noted that it could encounter serious obstacles due to the difficult terrain on the both sides of the border (CIA, 1993, p. 12). Yet, another report of 1994, assessed that if an armed conflict starts in Kosovo, Albania will most likely allow the Kosovar guerillas to use its territory as a “sanctuary” and as a channel for weapons to be provided by the third countries (CIA, 1994b, p. 2), which, in fact, became a reality, with the eruption of the armed conflict in Kosovo in 1998-1999.³⁹

In theoretical terms, the question that has to be explored here is the nature of Kosovo's polarity, namely, whether it was an independent pole, or a sub-pole of Albania, during the dissolution of the Socialist Yugoslavia. I will argue that there were four drivers that defined the nature of Kosovo's polarity as an independent pole.

Firstly, it should be noted that until the transition began in Albania, the contacts between the political leaderships of Tirana and Prishtina were almost inexistent. President Rugova paid the first visit to Tirana in February 1992 (Aliu, 2014), when Kosovo's non-violent movement for

³⁸ On the isolation of Albania during the Cold War see for example (Sejdiu and Peci, 2018).

³⁹ See for example (Fevziu B. 2013, March 26).

independence was already politically articulated and backed with structures that operated both, in Kosovo, and abroad. On the other hand, the delayed transition of Albania had a direct impact on political independence of Kosovo from Tirana, as its possible sub-pole, due to the fact that Albania, neither perpetuated, nor influenced, the project of Kosovo's independence.

Secondly, according to the first deputy Prime-Minister and Defense Minister of Kosovo's Government in Exile, Mr. Ramush Tahiri, in the beginning of 1992, the Albanian Government offered to Kosovo large amounts of light armaments that were stockpiled in a specially designated military depots, planned for this purpose during the time of Enver Hoxha's regime. Nevertheless, this offer has not been accepted by the Kosovo's leader, Ibrahim Rugova, after consultations with the U.S. authorities, which, according to Tahiri, made it clear to Kosovar leaders that if they start the war, they should take solely the full responsibility for its consequences (Kelmendi, 2019). It is important to stress here, that this refusal, at the same time when it left Kosovo unarmed, it also made it militarily independent from Albania. As a non-pole in military terms, Kosovo continued its struggle for the independence by peaceful means.

The third driver was the independent financing of Kosovo's parallel institutions, at home, and in exile, and of the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA). This independent financing was organized around the "3% Fund," of the LDK dominated Government in Exile, amounting to 260 million USD, and around "Homeland Calls," and the donations of the local businessmen in Kosovo, as vehicles for KLA funding, amounting to around 100 million USD (Perritt, 2008, pp. 89-92).

The fourth driver was determined by the military and overall weakness of Albania to provide meaningful military assistance to Kosovar Albanians, or to conduct military operations against the preponderant military power of Yugoslavia, which, obviously, limited the possibilities for the occurrence of the security dilemma of abandonment of Prishtina by Tirana. This weakness had a significant impact on the political positioning of Albania towards Kosovo's independence during the 90's. Initially, the first plural Parliament of Albania, on October 21, 1991, supported Kosovo's independence. Nevertheless, at the height of the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia, in 1994, the Democratic Party (PD) led Government of Albania declared that Kosovo was an internal

matter of Yugoslavia, and similar was also the position of the socialist Prime-Minister of Albania, Fatos Nano, who after the Crete meeting with Milošević, in 1997, declared that Kosovo was an internal issue of human rights of Serbia (Kalemaj, 2014, p. 14).

Most importantly, these changes of Albania's political course have not resulted into a security dilemma for Kosovo, given that the virtual "abandonment" by Tirana had an insignificant impact on Prishtina's quest for an independent state. Furthermore, the changes of Tirana's positions have not caused isolation of Kosovo by the international community, regardless of the fact that, at that time, there was no noted enthusiasm for the option of independence in the key Western capitals. Contrary to expectations, Kosovo's political leadership continued to pursue the project of independence, by seeking the support of Washington, and the key Western European powers.⁴⁰

On the other hand, the escalation of the war in Croatia and Bosnia, in 1992, opened the eyes of the US establishment on the possibility of the "Domino Theory," in the case of eruption of an armed conflict, either in Kosovo, or in Macedonia, which, apart of Albania and Bulgaria, could have risked the Greek involvement that would consequently compel its rival, Turkey, bound to get involved as well. This nightmare scenario,⁴¹ based on the estimations of the US National Security establishment, would have divided NATO, at the time when the Alliance was striving to find a new "raison detre" in the very aftermath of the end of the Cold War. Furthermore, within

⁴⁰ For example, according to Skender Hyseni, Political Adviser to President Rugova, in a meeting with the US State Secretary, Warren Christopher, at the end of 1995, Rugova insisted that the only viable solution for Kosovo is full independence, and asked for a temporary international protectorate as an intermediary phase. (Haxhiu, 2020).

⁴¹ In 1992 the following rationale was prevailing within the U.S. Administration regarding a possible nightmare scenario for the Southern Balkans, in case of eruption of an armed conflict in Kosovo: "Intensified repression by Belgrade in Kosovo or a Kosovar uprising could incite further Serbian repression and counter agitation and cause massive outflow of refugees. This could force next-door Albania and Albanians in western Macedonia to come to the aid of their Kosovar brothers. A Serbian counter response would make western Macedonia into a battlefield. These developments would destabilize Macedonia's shaky interethnic coalition government and tenuous ethnic relations, which might themselves worsen the trouble in Kosovo and/or invite Macedonia's neighbors – Serbia, Greece, or Bulgaria – to take advantage. Incursions into Serbia or troubles in Macedonia might provoke Serbia's ally Greece to attack, especially now with its dispute with Macedonia. A direct Serbian attack on Macedonia was also thought possible, with the desire to reverse Macedonia's break from the Yugoslav federation and/or to assist Macedonia's Serb minority. External and internal threats to Macedonia in turn could provoke Bulgaria, either on behalf of Macedonia against Greece, or to benefit from its dissolution by recovering parts for Bulgaria." (Lund, 2000: 385).

National Security Council prevailed the argument that in terms of U.S. vital interests, the Bosnian theatre was less important than the South of Balkans (Lund, 2000, p. 189).

The geopolitics in this case proved to become a key factor in favor of Kosovo and Macedonia. In December 1992, President George H. W. Bush, in a letter addressed to Milošević, known as Christmas Warning, threatened him that “in the event of conflict in Kosovo caused by Serbian action, the United States will be prepared to employ military force against the Serbians in Kosovo and in Serbia proper.” This warning was repeated by President Clinton in March 1993, and the State Secretary Christopher, in October of the same year (Ibid., p. 192). According to Carpenter, who was against this U.S. political course, the policy of Washington's establishment was to turn the Kosovo Albanians into a *de facto* clients of the United States (Carpenter, 1994, p. 4), which, in essence, proved to be right, and contributed in delaying the eruption of the conflict in Kosovo.

Nonetheless, the Dayton Agreement of 1995 was read by many in Kosovo to have rewarded the military gains of the Bosnian Serbs, and consequently the hopes for gaining independence by peaceful means stared to fade rapidly (Demjaha and Peci, 2015, p. 146). The unfavorable circumstances for a peaceful solution worsened further due to the Western reliance on Milošević for securing the implementation of the Dayton Agreement, thus largely losing any leverage over him on issues that were not related to Bosnia and Herzegovina (Daalder and O'Hanlon, 2000, pp. 185-186). Consequently, the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA), which was created in 1993, since the end of 1995 until the eruption of the war, in the beginning of 1998, launched more than 60 attacks against Belgrade's security forces. However, until March of 1998, the overall number of KLA fighters was symbolic, and it reached around 200 lightly armed men (Demjaha and Peci, 2015, p. 147).

On the other hand, in February 1998, Milošević's response to this guerrilla attacks, and hit-and-run tactics, took another dimension. He increased the manpower of the Prishtina Yugoslav Army Corps from 10,000 to 30,000 military personnel, and the manpower of the Serbian Police in Kosovo from 6,500 to 19,500 police officers (Thomas and Mikulan, 2006, p. 46). The dislocation of this overwhelming armed force was obviously aiming at pacification of Kosovar Albanians,

through destroying the KLA and terrorizing the local population that was supporting it. Consequently, at the end of February 1998, Belgrade's security forces started a strong assault on the KLA guerrilla stronghold, in the region of Drenica, by using heavy police forces, including 20 helicopter gunships. The operation started with the killing of 24 civilians in the villages of Likoshan and Qirez, on February 28, and ended up on March 7, 1998, after a 3 days armed struggle with the celebrated KLA Commander, Adem Jashari, which resulted with the killing of 59 members of his family and co-fighters, among them 12 women and 11 children (Kubo, 2010, p. 1146).

Contrary to the expectations of Milošević, this operation did not result into a pacification, but proved to be a turning point in the Kosovo War. In the following months, the number of KLA fighters grew from few hundreds to more than 15,000, which enabled the establishment of the control over several rural areas in Kosovo that were declared "liberated zones." Furthermore, in early summer of 1998, the KLA started to approach even the Kosovo's capital, Prishtina, and made an attempt to enter the small towns of Rahovec and Deçan (Demjaha and Peci, 2015). This rapid enlargement of the KLA in terms of armed personnel, which was accompanied with the territories that the KLA managed to put under its control, enabled Kosovo to acquire, at least temporarily, the military dimension of an independent pole, in additional to the political one.

As a response, Belgrade undertook the "Summer Offensive," by employing the combined police and military retaliatory operations that resulted in the breakdown of KLA and severe reduction of its "liberated zones." Out of these developments, the KLA understood that, due to the imbalance of forces in comparison to those of Yugoslavia, it was almost impossible to get engaged into a frontal war, but it also drew a lesson that the principal objective of the armed struggle should be the creation of circumstances on the ground for a possible intervention and the deployment of NATO troops on Kosovo's territory (Demjaha and Peci, 2015).

On the other hand, the lessons learned from atrocities committed in Bosnia, made clear to the key powers of the Alliance, the need for a robust and timely intervention in the region. The international reaction on solving the crisis in Kosovo started with the Contact Group⁴² meeting

⁴² Foreign Ministers of France, Germany, Italy, Russia, United Kingdom and the United States.

of March 10th, 1998, which decided to impose limited diplomatic and economic sanctions on Yugoslavia (Erlanger, 1998). After NATO's threat with air-strikes over Yugoslavia, in October 1998, the agreement between the U.S. Envoy, Richard Holbrooke and President Milošević was concluded on the establishment of the OSCE led Kosovo Verification Mission (KVM) that incorporated unarmed diplomatic observer mission, NATO air verification mission and a responsibility to report to the United Nations (Bellamy and Griffin, 2000).

However, this mission proved to be incapable of halting the conflict and Belgrade's atrocities in Kosovo. After a massive summary execution of 45 Kosovo Albanians, committed in the village of Reçak, on January 15th, 1999, which was declared by the Head of the KVM, Ambassador William Walker, as a "crime against humanity," NATO issued a warning to Serbia that the Alliance is ready to take the necessary military action to stop the violence (Whitney, 1999). Faced with this threat, Milošević agreed on peace talks with Kosovo Albanians under the auspices of the Contact Group, which were held in Rambouillet (France). Ultimately, the Kosovo Albanians agreed with the accords drafted by the Contact Group representatives, and signed them in Paris, on March 15, 1999 (United Nations.a, 1999), whereas Belgrade refused them. Consequently, NATO decided to wage a war against Yugoslavia in order to impose the peace in Kosovo, and to prevent the spill over of the conflicts in the region (The New York Times, 1999).

Contrary to the expectations that Milošević would "surrender" within few days (Clark, 2001, p. 108), the NATO airstrikes that started on March 24th, 1999, did not bring immediate results. According to Posen, the Yugoslav army in Kosovo was pursuing three missions, namely, deterring a ground attack by NATO, attacking and destroying KLA, and the expulsion of a large number of Kosovo Albanians out of the country (Posen, 2000, p. 62). Milošević's strategy has achieved an initial success in deterring the Alliance's ground invasion (Clark, 2001, p. 136), a temporary success in attacking KLA (Posen, 2000, p. 62), and it achieved a full success in massive expulsion of Kosovo Albanians that was accompanied with large scale terror. Within weeks, the Serbian armed forces killed more than 9,000, and drove out around 860,000 Kosovo Albanians to Macedonia and Albania (Whiteman, 2000, p. 171), in an effort to ethnically clean Kosovo, and to subsequently instil a regional conflict. This situation pressed the Allies to modify the objectives

of the war against Yugoslavia. The formula proposed by the German Foreign Minister Joschka Fischer, "Serbs out, NATO in, the refugees allowed to return," was embraced by the Allies, and became the core of the intervention objective (Norris, 2005, p. 23).

Ultimately, the Alliance managed to achieve all three aims of this formula. The increased intensity of NATO bombing, the enlargement of the list of targets, including vital air defense, economic, and telecommunication infrastructure, the inclusion of the option of ground forces invasion (Clark 2001), and the erosion of Milošević's support base, by the beginning of June 1999, forced him to accept NATO's terms, negotiated by the US Envoy, Strobe Talbot, President Ahtisaari, and the Russian Deputy Prime-Minister, Victor Chernomyrdin (Norris, 2005, pp. 181- 267). The Military Technical Agreement between NATO and the Yugoslav Army, that envisaged the full withdrawal of Belgrade's military and security forces from Kosovo, and the entrance of the 48,000 military corps strong NATO led peace-enforcement mission, the Kosovo Force (KFOR), was signed on June 9th, 1999. The next day, the Resolution 1244 (1999) was adopted by the U.N. Security Council, which, among others, envisaged the installment of the United Nations Administration in Kosovo (UNMIK), and the demilitarization of the Kosovo Liberation Army, but left open the issue of the future political status of Kosovo (United Nations, 1999).

The KFOR Mission and UNMIK Administration also redefined the Kosovo pole. Politically, until the declaration of independence, on February 17th, 2008, Kosovo *de facto* remained independent, but was virtually subordinated to the UN Administration. In military terms, due to the peace-enforcement mandate of the Alliance's led mission (KFOR), although without possession of national military forces, Kosovo externally became a pole protected by NATO. The KFOR Mission acquired a role of retaliatory power in case of defection from the peace terms as envisaged by the UNSC Resolution 1244 (1999).

The KFOR Mission proved to be, not only a retaliatory force in Kosovo and towards Yugoslavia, but is also considered as the most trusted security institution by all Kosovo ethnicities (Bislimi, 2013, pp. 11-12). The preponderant NATO's force that was dislocated in Kosovo, accompanied with its projection of hard power capabilities, for the first time since the beginning of war in 1991,

generated a balance of power and deterrence towards Yugoslavia that resulted with the ending of the Belgrade's military superiority in the region.

Nevertheless, the eruption of war in Kosovo cannot be explained by the classical features of the balance of power theory, which envisages the deterrence of a small power by a bigger one. Instead, this conflict can be explained by the theoretical concept of the "Balance of Power Paradox" (Writz, 2004). In this case, Kosovo, as a small power, entered into an armed conflict with the militarily superior Yugoslavia, by using largely the tactics of the guerrilla warfare, while calculating the dragging of the Alliance into the conflict against Belgrade. On the other hand, Yugoslavia, a small military power compared to NATO, entered into the war with Alliance by calculating simultaneous destruction of the KLA, and the opening of a wider regional conflict that would erode NATO's cohesion, and get a support from Russia.

Ultimately, all strategic calculations of Yugoslavia failed, although KLA ceased to exist, as a result of the disarmament of its 20,000 strong armed force and of its transformation, in September 1999, into a civilian formation with a military structure, the Kosovo Protection Corps (Bekaj, 2009, pp. 27-30). Yet, the Kosovo's political and military leadership still managed to achieve their strategic goals, namely, the removal of Belgrade's police and military forces from Kosovo, and ensuring the *de facto* independence from Serbia through the Alliance's military protection.

III.3. NATO's Involvement in Macedonia

Macedonia was the single state that achieved to become independent out of the dissolution of the SFRY, by managing to avoid a secessionist war with hegemonic Yugoslavia. The country declared independence on September 8, 1991, and, on February 6, 1992, President Gligorov negotiated an agreement for the withdrawal of the Yugoslav military forces amounting to 60,000 in total, which also foresaw leaving behind the equipment and territorial defense weapons. But, the country virtually remained defenseless, given that the Yugoslav Army took the equipment and supplies that were of vital importance for an armed military force (Ackermann, 2000, p. 83).

Nevertheless, according to Lund, two factors were decisive for the peaceful secession of Macedonia. Firstly, Milošević could not afford to keep the Yugoslav Army troops there, while simultaneously waging wars in Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina, and, secondly, because he thought that he could withdraw militarily from Macedonia, without giving up from the option that it will later become a part of "Greater Serbia," based on the assumption that a lonely Macedonia, exposed to "three wolves" (Albania, Bulgaria and Greece), would turn and come back, by asking for Belgrade's protection (Lund, 2000, pp. 177-178).

Faced with this situation and other regional volatilities, as early as December 1991, Gligorov already appealed for the deployment of UN troops in the Macedonia. (Ackermann, 2000, pp. 83). A year later, the UN Security Council approved the dislocation of a 700 blue helmets strong battalion in a preventive mission on Macedonia's borders with Albania and Yugoslavia. In order to strengthen the conflict prevention efforts in the Southern Balkans theatre, in June 1993, the Clinton Administration decided to provide 300 U.S. troops to the UNPROFOR Mission in Macedonia (United Nations, 1996), which had a major impact on deterring eruption of interstate conflicts in this part of the region. After the Dayton Agreement, the UNPROFOR Mission in Macedonia became the UN Preventive Deployment Force (UNPREDEP), which finished its mandate in February 1999, after China vetoed the mission as a retaliatory act towards Macedonia's recognition of Taiwan.

At the outset of Macedonia's independence, the inter-ethnic relations between the Macedonian majority (around 65%), and the Albanian large minority (around 25%), were far from being settled. Albanians in Macedonia experienced large discrimination, dating from Tito's time, including the deprivation from the official use of the Albanian language and national symbols, from higher education, as well as from proportional representation in the state and public institutions. Karajkov, 2009).

On the other hand, since the political pluralism was introduced in Macedonia, Albanians have established their political parties, and they participated in the political life of the newly independent state. At this period of the early days of the Macedonian statehood, the problem that set the tone of inter-ethnic relations during the 90's, was the adoption of the new Constitution of Macedonia of 1991. Contrary to the 1974 Constitution that defined Macedonia as "the state of the Macedonian People and Albanian and Turkish Nationalities," the new Constitution redefined it as "the national state of the Macedonian people, in which full equality as citizens, and permanent co-existence with the Macedonian people, is provided to Albanians, Turks, Vlachs, Romanies and other nationalities living in the Republic of Macedonia." (Bugajski, 1994, p. 104) This Constitution was rejected by Albanian political leaders in Macedonia, because they viewed it as a negation of their national rights, which could lead to a larger discrimination (Ibid.). Consequently, Albanians did not participate in Macedonia's independence referendum of 1991, including the census that took place that year, and their political representatives did not vote the new Constitution (Koinova, 2013, p. 45).

Nevertheless, the Albanian parties participated in the elections of the newly established state. In the Government of the Prime-Minister Branko Crvenkovski, established in September 1992, the largest Albanian political party at that time, the Party for Democratic Progress (PDP) was leading with five ministries, including the post of the deputy Prime-Minister (Bugajski, 1994, p. 117). According to Koinova, since the very outset of the independent Macedonia, Albanians adopted a two-pronged strategy towards the new state, namely by accepting it through participation in government, and by officially boycotting its policies, sometimes even by clandestine activities (Koinova, 2013, p. 55). In the following years, the Macedonian and Albanian political parties

managed to create multi-ethnic governments that became a customary feature of the Macedonian political system. Nevertheless, this governmental setup was used skillfully by Macedonian politicians to cover up the national character of Macedonia, by portraying it to international community as a multi-ethnic state (Rakipi, 2008, pp. 156).

A major crisis in Macedonia, which entailed a military dimension, emerged in November 1993, when the Albanian Deputy Minister of Defense, Hisen Haskaj, and the Deputy Minister of Health, Imer Imeri, were accused for conspiring for the creation of an "All-Albanian Army," where the alleged 300 weapons and the recruiting list of 20,000 Albanians were found. However, when the revealed facts have shown that the aim of this would-be paramilitary force was of defensive nature, in a case of a Serbian attack of Macedonia, the tensions have been diffused. Subsequently, the members of the group of Albanian "conspirators" were granted amnesty or were released on probation, by August 1995 (Ackermann, 2000, p. 85). Nevertheless, in despite of the tensions and of a very slow progress in meeting the requirements of Albanians for enhancing their collective rights, an armed conflict did not occur in Macedonia until the beginning of 2001, which lifted the constructed curtain of a multi-ethnic state (Rakipi, 2008, p. 156), and displayed the reality of the state of affairs between Slavic Macedonian majority and Albanian substantial minority.

Yet, the outbreak of the conflict was foreseen, among others, by the celebrated scholars, John Mearsheimer and Stephen Van Vera, at the height of NATO's intervention in Kosovo, when, ironically, they were both advocating the change of borders along ethnic lines in former Yugoslavia. In their words,

"Still, it may be that peace cannot be maintained in Macedonia. Macedonia's Slavic majority discriminates against the large Albanian minority, which makes up 30 percent of the population. If the Slavs refuse to share more equally with the Albanians, violence is inevitable. To forestall this, NATO should consider calling for a plebiscite to determine whether the Albanians want to remain in Macedonia. If not, Macedonia should also be

partitioned. This is feasible because the Albanians of Macedonia are concentrated in western Macedonia, next to Kosovo and Albania.” (Mearsheimer and Vera, 1999)

Mearsheimer and Vera proved to be right about the causes, and the inevitability, of an armed conflict in Macedonia, but they were wrong about partition of the country. NATO took the control over Kosovo borders, but it also deterred any possibility for the territorial integrity of Macedonia to be threatened from the Kosovar direction. On the other hand, the threatening of the territorial integrity of Macedonia, as a member of the Partnership for Peace, by Albania, that was enjoying the same status and aspiring the membership into the Alliance, was out of table.

All the same, it was under these circumstances that the armed conflict in Macedonia started in January 2001. From January to mid-March 2001, the armed conflict between the newly created Albanian insurgent movement, the National Liberation Army (NLA), and the Macedonian security forces was rather sporadic. The conflict escalated on March 14, 2001, when NLA started shooting from the hills surrounding Tetovo, the second largest city in Macedonia. The Macedonian governmental forces started an offensive against NLA, and after few days of heavy fighting they declared a “historic victory” (Demjaha and Peci, 2015, p. 164).

But, this declaration proved to be an overestimation of the Macedonian government security forces. The NLA regrouped its forces and in a matter of weeks took the control of over 17 per cent of the territory of Macedonia, although that control was limited to rural areas of the country (Phillips, 2004, 196). A considerable number of the NLA leadership, including the political leader, Ali Ahmeti, who was also a KLA founder, and the chief military commander, Gezim Ostreni, had combating experience in the Kosovo War, while, on the other hand, the Macedonian security and military forces lacked the basic warfare experience (Ibid., pp. 80 – 90). In similar vein, the UN Special Envoy for the Balkans, Carl Bildt, argued that “Macedonia’s security forces were proving no match for the self-styled National Liberation Army,” by considering it as a “competent military organization” (Carroll, 2001). Furthermore, the purchase of military helicopters and airplanes from Ukraine, and their engagement in the armed conflict by the Government in Skopje, in

despite of the Western complains, did not bring any significant results in combating the NLA (Phillips, 2004, pp. 90 - 143).

The key momentum that had set the tune of the “political content” of the armed conflict in Macedonia, was the proclamation, in early March, 2001, of the NLA's political aims. The statement delivered by NLA's Communique No. 6, of March 10, 2001, among others, called for international mediation, for changing the Macedonian Constitution by defining the country as a state of Macedonians and Albanians, for ending of the discrimination of Albanians, and, most importantly, it stated that it does not aim to damage the territorial integrity or to partition Macedonia. (Demjaha and Peci, 2015, p. 165). It was obvious that the NLA was aware that international support and mediation was an irreplaceable factor for achieving its aims, and in order to get it, they projected their armed struggle as a war for human and collective rights of Albanians, not for territorial gains or changing the borders. Thus, the armed struggle of NLA became the first former Yugoslavia that had not the component of ethnic territorial nationalism.

In the meantime, the NLA and the Albanian political parties that were part of the Macedonian Parliament and Government, built a common political platform, for enhancing the rights of Albanians and ending the armed conflict. With the facilitation of Kosovo's civic leader, Ylber Hysa, on May 22, 2001, the leader of NLA, Ali Ahmeti, the President of Democratic Party of Albanians (PDSH), Arben xhaferi, and the President of Democratic Party for Progress (PDP), Imer Imeri, met in the Kosovar town of Prizren, and signed the declaration “concerning peace and the reform process in the Republic of Macedonia,” which, basically, became a joint political-military platform of Albanians for ending the conflict in Macedonia. The declaration included issues pertaining to constitutional status of Albanians in Macedonia, to census under international monitoring, higher education in Albanian language, and to proportional employment in the public and state sector of the country. Regardless of the fact that this meeting was heavily criticized by Macedonian Government, and caused a collapse of the joint OSCE and US mediation initiative, led by Ambassador Robert Frowik, due to his presence in Prizren at the very same day when the declaration was signed (Bellamy, 2007, pp. 106-107), it created conditions for a political settlement of the conflict in Macedonia, due to the unification of political positions between

political and military arm of Albanians in the country, which were not threatening the territorial integrity of Macedonia.

From a theoretical point of view, regarding polarity, the case of Albanians in Macedonia is rather complex to be analyzed and defined, given that neither the political, nor the military leadership of this ethnicity, had ever made any attempt for creating a separate state structure over a certain territory in Macedonia, and that the Albanian political parties were participating in the political institutions of the country.

On the other hand, any public records, on any kind of intervention of Albania or Kosovo on the political objectives and organization of the Albanians in Macedonia were rather scarce. The most blatant case of intervention is recoded in September 1993, when the President of Albania, Sali Berisha, supported the wing of PDP that had confronted the party leader Nevzat Halili, by accusing him for the failure in achieving the aim of the status of the constitutional people for Albanians, as well as for the failure in achieving autonomy. This wing later separated and created the Democratic Party of Albanians, led by Arben Xhaferi (Phillips, 2004, p. 68). Besides, from the Kosovar side, there were no attempts recorded, to subordinate the Albanian political parties in Macedonia. Moreover, during 90's, both, Tirana and Prishtina were too weak to be able to provide any financial or other support to Albanians in Macedonia. In essence, the weakness of Tirana and Prishtina destined the Albanians in Macedonia to become an independent pole in relation to Albania and Kosovo. However, this fact did not make them viable to fit, either the description of a pole, or that of a sub-pole, given that the Albanians were part of the political institutions of the unitary state of Macedonia, and never became, nor they aspired to become, a statelet entity.

Furthermore, when the conflict erupted in Macedonia, neither the political leadership in Albania, nor the one in Kosovo, have shown any enthusiasm about the armed struggle of the NLA. The leadership in Prishtina, including the former KLA leaders, feared that the international hostility towards the armed struggle of NLA will threaten the prospects of Kosovo to become an independent state, and they agreed with Ambassador Frowick on the necessity to persuade NLA

in stopping the armed struggle (Philips, 2004, p. 119). On the other hand, the Prime-Minister of Albania, Ilir Meta cooperated fully with NATO in ending the conflict in Macedonia. This was one of the reasons that NLA was cautious for not opening a conflict in the southern part of Macedonia that borders with Albania (Ibid, p. 181). Regardless of the fact that Albanians in Macedonia were neither sub-pole of Albania, nor of Kosovo, it is hard to give a qualified opinion on a possible security dilemma that might have caused the lack of support to NLA by Albania, which was aspiring NATO membership, and by Kosovo, which was under the UNMIK Administration and aspiring independence. Nevertheless, there is no doubt that this lack of support by Albania and Kosovo had limited the NLA's modus operandi.

On the other hand, in terms of balance of power, at the time of the height of the conflict, the Macedonian government had at its disposal 20,000 active military forces and 100,000 in reserve, as well as 7,000 police forces, whereas the number of NLA fighters grew from few hundreds, in January 2001, to around 4,000 by the end of the conflict (Thomas and Mikulan, 2006, pp. 52-54). The conflict brought to surface the failure of Macedonian Government security and defense forces in dealing with an asymmetric warfare imposed by the Albanian insurgent armed fighters, and on the other hand, it shed light to a limited success of the NLA fighters in getting massive mobilization of Albanian population. Obviously, both parties failed in their calculations that led them to the entrapment of the balance of power paradox. The balance of military aggregate power that was favorable to Macedonian Government, proved to be an insufficient element of power to crash and eliminate NLA, whereas, the NLA was not successful in getting the desired international support and in becoming a de-facto ally of NATO.

Nevertheless, the key factor that brought the end of the conflict in Macedonia, which resulted with the deaths of 90 Albanians and NLA fighters, and 60 members of the armed forces of Macedonia, as well as with 150,000 internally displaced persons, was the heavy involvement by Western actors that was marked by joint efforts of the NATO Secretary General, Lord Robertson, the EU Commissioners, Javier Solana and Chris Patten, and the US and EU envoys, James Pardew and Francois Leotard, that led to the signing of the Ohrid Framework Agreement on August 13, 2001 (Bellamy, 2007, pp. 136-139). The agreement signed by the President of Macedonia, Boris

Trajkovski, and the leaders of major Slavic Macedonian and Albanian parties represented in the Parliament of Macedonia, envisaged 17 amendments to the Constitution of Macedonia, and more than ten legislative changes, that envisaged granting to the Albanians a substantial enhancement of their collective and individual rights at national and municipal level, as well as voluntarily disarmament of the NLA by surrendering the weapons to NATO, with the amnesty for its members (OSCE, 2001).

The NATO's operation "Essential Harvest," which had as its mission the disarmament of ethnic "Albanian groups and destroying their weapons," was adopted by the NATO Council on June 29th, 2001, was officially launched on August 22, 2001, and lasted until September 27, 2001 (NATO, 2002.b). During this period, that ended with the announcement of NLA's dissolution, by its leader, Ali Ahmeti, the Alliance's force of around 4,000 military personnel collected and destroyed 3,300 weapons of different calibers (Demjaha and Peci, 2015, p. 180). Furthermore, on September 26, 2001, NATO authorized the 1,000 military personnel strong operation "Amber Fox," that succeeded the previous operation, with the mandate to provide protection to the EU and OSCE monitors that were overseeing the implementation of the Ohrid Agreement, and which ended by the end of December 2002 (NATO, 2003).

The dissolution and disarmament of NLA, and the implementation of the Ohrid Framework Agreement, paved the way to the integration of Albanians within the security and defense institutions of the country, which was made possible due to the instrumental role played by NATO. The Alliance, as a third party, enjoyed credibility and trust of NLA fighters, to surrender their weapons, and of the Macedonian government, to collect those weapons. In contrast to the cases of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo, the NATO's involvement in Macedonia had not a balance of power character, but was rather a military arm of the overall oversight of the implementation of the Ohrid Agreement, that ended the ethnic armed conflict, and created the foundations for a long term stability and security in Macedonia.

III.4. The Effects on the Regional Security and Stability

The research findings of this chapter provide evidence that the bloody disintegration of the Yugoslav Socialist Federation led to the creation of state and statelet entities, which, with the exception of the conflict in Macedonia, were a result of ethnic territorial nationalism that prevailed in the region after the end of the Cold War. These state and statelet entities, created a very specific structure of regional security that was composed by poles, patron poles and their sub-poles, which were a subject to balance of power and the balance of power paradox in the war theatre of the former Yugoslavia. The projection of NATO's hard power was driven by the amplitude of threats to Alliance's security interests and credibility, imposed by specific geopolitical and conflict contexts and humanitarian concerns.

The armed conflicts in Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina, in which was involved Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) as well, as a patron and sponsor of Serbian statelet entities in these two countries, was effectively contained by the West until the summer of 1995, due to a low level of extrinsic interest of NATO in this part of the region. On the other hand, due to the high level of threats that the spillover of the conflict in Kosovo could have imposed to vital security interests of the US in the region, including the possibility of an intra-alliance conflict, the Alliance's intervention was quicker and more robust than in the case of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The Alliance's involvement in Macedonia had a character of a conflict eruption prevention, and was instrumental in ending the ethnic armed clashes, as well as in the implementation of the peace agreement.

NATO's intervention also changed in a fundamental manner the balance of forces in the Western Balkans. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Alliance's preponderant power, the United States, initially strengthened the military capabilities of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina up to the level of being able to provide a mutual deterrence in relation to those of Republika Srpska, which ultimately led to their merging into a single military force, thus effectively ending the existence of the phenomenon of sub-poles, that proved to be the main source of instability in the region. On the other hand, the Alliance's intervention in Kosovo, ultimately balanced and

deterred the Yugoslav's preponderant military power in the wider region, which, until the fall of Milošević, in fall of 2000, used to be the single revisionist and rogue state in Europe. In theoretical terms, in relation to regional security, as defined by Benjamin Miller (2007), the immediate effects of NATO's projection of hard power in different parts of the region were displayed with the shift from the condition of a hot war, to that of a cold war, between Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia and Yugoslavia, from a hot war, to a cold war, between Kosovo (protected by KFOR) and Yugoslavia, and from a hot war to normal peace, in the case of Macedonia.

The effects of NATO's intervention on the security and stability in the Western Balkans are viewed through different lenses by international scholars and practitioners. Shea and Zore view critically the late intervention of NATO in Bosnia and Herzegovina, but on the other hand, similarly with Serwer (2019.b), and Bugajski (2019), they consider the role of NATO as the most crucial in moving the region from war to peace and transforming the individual countries of the region to become fully fledged members of the Euro-Atlantic community (Shea, 2019). On the other hand, Phillips asserts that NATO's interventions demonstrated the utility of backing diplomacy with a credible threat of force (Phillips, 2019), whereas Wahlas states that Alliance's involvement had a major effect in prevention of new conflicts and of recurrence of the finished ones (Wahlas, 2019), and, according to Joseph, it proved to be an unquestioned success in military terms, in Bosnia, Kosovo and Macedonia. Furthermore, Pantev argues that by projecting the stability in the region of the Western Balkans, the Alliance has improved the security of the broader Euro-Atlantic region (Pantev 2019). In this vain, Schmunk observes that NATO's airstrikes have had as an outcome to bring the region irrevocably, with the exception of Serbia, to embrace the Alliance (Schmunk, 2019). Zore argues that the main message of the Alliance's military interventions was that it will not tolerate irresponsible behavior that threatens the stability and security in a region of strategic importance for NATO (Zore, 2019).

Regional scholars and practitioners share similar views on the effects of the projection of NATO's hard power in the Western Balkans. According to Knezović and Cikotić, the Alliance's military involvement in the Western Balkans was of a paramount importance for the long term regional consolidation and for the creation of basic conditions for accession of individual countries of the

region into NATO and EU (Knezovic, 2019 and Cikotic, 2019). In this vein, Ejodus argues that effect of NATO's military interventions was not only to end the war and to create preconditions for a security regime, but to also lay the ground for a nascent security community. Furthermore, he argues that, from the Serbian "nationalist" point of view, at least, they undermine Serbia's security, but from a "liberal" point of view, they curb the Serbian aggressive policies, and prepare the ground for a democratic transition in the country (Ejodus, 2019). On the other hand, Biserko asserts that NATO's involvement in Bosnia came with great delay, which in fact challenged the moral credibility of the Western community. But, according to her, NATO strikes in Bosnia, and indirect involvement in Croatia, changed the balance of power in the region and enabled the peace negotiations in Dayton, whereas NATO involvements in Kosovo and Macedonia were truly successful interventions that prevented the spillover and larger conflict which would have implied many more actors, including probably Russia and Turkey (Biserko, 1999).

In this vein, Demjaha argues that through the projection of hard power in the region, especially after the intervention in Kosovo, the Alliance transformed 'the balance of power' into the 'balance of threat,' in terms of political military constellations, and deterred the eventual territorial claims by neighboring countries (Demjaha, 2019). Also, according to Ružin, with military interventions and crisis management, the alliance created a balance of power in the region, which, in despite of the fact that it may sound paradoxical, contributed to the development of democracy, and avoided the occurrence of further conflicts. Hasani observes that NATO has managed to shift the balance of power in the region to the detriment of Serbia's hegemonic project and military dominance (Hasani, 2019). Against this backdrop, Sejdiu argues that NATO's interventions had a threefold effect pertaining to the balance of power. First, they were a clear manifestation that, with the conclusion of the Cold War, the international system reflects clear unipolar traits, particularly in military terms. Second, Serbia's ambitions to redraw the political boundaries and ethnic balances in the region were defeated, and third, they altered the political and military balance in the Balkans, by not leaving room for any country to have a regional hegemonic posture, thus firmly anchoring the region on the Euro-Atlantic harbor (Sejdiu, 2019). Hamidević argues that, the fact that the first combat operations of NATO in Bosnia and

Herzegovina took place in February 1994, shows that, rather than being the first response to the war, the direct military involvement was used as a means of the last resort. The presence of NATO missions on the ground, and the capability to activate and deploy a higher number of military personnel and equipment in the region if necessary, had a stabilizing effect on the populations, amidst statements from local leaders that may be perceived as threats (Hamidevic, 2019).

Rakipi observes that the intervention of the Alliance avoided the sinking of the entire region into the war, including Albania, which, in absence of NATO's intervention in Kosovo, might have been forced to enter the war, but, in such a case, it could have also involved at least two NATO members, namely Greece and Turkey. Furthermore, the Alliance's interventions in the Western Balkans proved the accuracy of the formula "out of area, or out of business," with a slight difference that, technically, the region was out of area, but de-facto, and especially regarding the security of the Alliance, this was not the case (Rakipi, 2019). Starova, also argues that after NATO's interventions, Albania, like the other countries, was feeling more stable and secure, if not for anything else, at least for a simple reason of the non-existing possibilities to be randomly involved to some unexpected military conflict (Starova, 2019), whereas Mehdiu asserts that, a part of stopping the armed conflicts in the region, and, hence, ending the cruel regime of Milošević, the interventions gave chance to multi-ethnic and multi-religious coexistence in the Western Balkans, and opened doors to individual countries in the region for joining the Alliance (Mehdiu, 2019).

The research findings and evidence provided in this chapter tested successfully to the first hypotheses of this theses, that the projection of hard power has ensured stability through deterrence of possible aggressive intentions within the Western Balkans through the re-balancing of power, and that it has prevented possibilities for escalation of inter-ethnic conflicts in the region. Against this backdrop, the introduction of the notions of poles, patron poles and sub-poles, provided a new and original theoretical contribution in explaining the balance of power interplay of the armed conflicts in former Yugoslavia, including their security dilemmas and balance of power paradox effects and outcomes.

IV. The Projection of NATO's Soft Power

Introduction:

The partnership and membership instruments, introduced by the Alliance to the former communist and neutral countries of Europe in the context of the Post-Cold War, and a “unipolar momentum” era, were a result of a conversion of the unmatched power resources into successful strategies that fundamentally changed the geopolitical landscape and security architecture of the continent. This “contextual intelligence” of the Alliance, was based on the projection of soft power that had transformational character for these countries, rather than on the projection of hard power of transactional character, given that the usage of these partnership and membership instruments was largely depending on the willingness and commitment of partner countries.

Obviously, these NATO's transformational instruments and policies, whose ultimate goals were interlinked with the projection of stability and the increase of European and global security, were displayed by the second and third face of power⁴³ of the Alliance, namely, by controlling the agendas of actions in a way that would limit the strategic choices of former communist states, by using NATO's power of attraction in a manner in which its partnership and membership instruments and policies would be embraced by these states as legitimate, and by helping them to create and shape basic beliefs, perceptions, and preferences. This led to the changing of their strategic cultures, including reforms of defense and security policies, and of their national strategic choices of joining the alliance, or of remaining neutral. Therefore, NATO's partnership and membership instruments fully fit to the description of the soft power, as defined by Nye.

In this regard, Albania was the first country of the Western Balkans to establish formal relations with NATO, by joining the NACC in 1992, and PfP in 1994, followed by Macedonia, that joined PfP in 1995. Croatia joined PfP in 2000, while Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Serbia joined in 2006. Albania and Macedonia received MAP in 1999, Croatia in 2002, and Montenegro in 2010, while Bosnia and Herzegovina was invited to join MAP in the same year, but its decision remained

⁴³ As discussed in the sub-chapter: Hard, Soft and Smart Power in International Relations.

pending until 2018. Albania and Croatia were the first countries of the region to join the Alliance in 2009, Montenegro joined it in 2016, and Macedonia's membership to NATO, in despite of its fulfillment of membership requirements in 2008, remained pending until 2019, due to the unresolved issue of its name with Greece. Due to the non-recognition by four NATO members (Greece, Romania, Slovakia and Spain), Kosovo has formally remained outside of Alliance's partnership and membership process. However, due to the time frame of this thesis that is limited to the end of 2015, the development of relations between NATO and the countries of the Western after this year will not be discussed in this chapter.

The aim of this chapter is to explore the role that NATO's projection of soft power had on the security and stability of the Western Balkans, and to test the second research hypotheses of this theses, namely, that, "the projection of soft power through partnership and membership instruments has achieved doctrinal transformation of security and defense policies of the Western Balkans countries." In this regard, this chapter will discuss the transformation of defense and security policies of the Western Balkans countries, their national security choices, for joining the Alliance, or remaining neutral, and the impact of the projection of the NATO's soft power on the regional security and stability.

IV.1. Transformation of Security and Defense Policies of the Western Balkans Countries

It is an interesting fact that in despite of being more than 70 years old, the NATO Alliance still doesn't have an accepted definition of defense reform, given that its meaning is considered differently by the allies. The most important actors in defense reform are nation-states, because national authorities are in charge for addressing the defense reform in their respective states. In this regard, the conceptual orientation of the defense reform is of crucial importance and provides a strategic guidance to national authorities and security institutions. The conceptual orientation is provided by different strategic and defense related documents, such as national security and defense policies, military doctrines etc., which usually entail definition of defense and security objectives that are result of deliberation and taking into account the threat perceptions, national interests, international relations, etc. (Katsirdakis, 2002, p. 189).

On the other hand, the states that emerged from the former socialist Yugoslavia and Albania, inherited the military doctrines of territorial defense and conscription that were prevailing in Europe during the Cold War. Furthermore, due to the bloody dissolution of Tito's Yugoslavia, the need for man power was reinforced among entities of the region.

The chart below shows that the number of total armed forces in the countries of the region, in general, dropped significantly after the end of the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia (1995), and in Kosovo (1999), with the exception of the Yugoslav Federation that had a significant increase in 2001(from 137,500 in 2000, to 198,500 in 2001), due to the hesitation of the then President Koštunica to introduce a democratic civilian control over the country's defense, and to get rid of the top generals of Serbian military that served Milošević (Gow and Zverzhanovski, 2013, pp. 38-55).

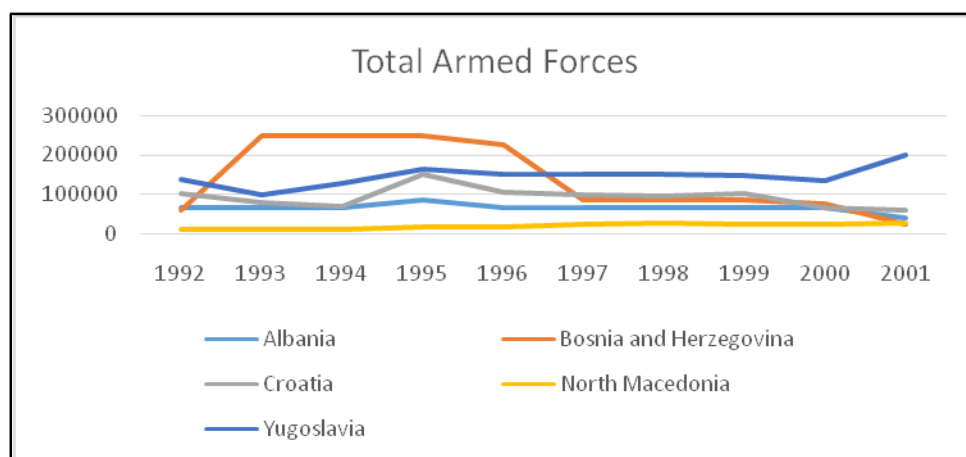


Chart 4.1. Total Armed Personnel of the Western Balkans Countries (1992 – 2001). Source: The World Bank Data. Armed forces personnel, total – Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, North Macedonia and Yugoslavia, and (CIA, 2003).

The changes of the nature of security threats that occurred after the Cold War faded the threats of massive conventional wars in Europe, but increased the non-conventional threats related to regional and civil wars, humanitarian emergencies, and international terrorism, that had to be addressed with peace-enforcement and peace-keeping operations. These changes required that the armed forces had to be flexible, more mobile and more able to rapidly deploy into the crisis areas (Robertson, 2002). Nevertheless, due to the bloody wars of Former Yugoslavia, the permissible conditions for conceptual orientation of defense reform in the countries of the region, occurred only after NATO intervention in Kosovo, democratic changes in Croatia and Serbia, and the independence of Montenegro (2006) and Kosovo (2008), which consolidated the geopolitics of the Western Balkans.

Against this background, Albania initially adopted the National Security Strategy and the Defense Policy only in February 2000, and the Military Strategy in August 2002. The next National Security of Albania was adopted in 2004, whereas, the Strategic Defense Review in 2013, and the Defense Directive in 2014. Bosnia and Herzegovina adopted the Defense White Paper in 2005, Security Policy in 2006, and another document of the Ministry of Security, the “Strategic Action Plan of the State Investigation and Investigation Agency” in 2012. Croatia adopted the first National Security and Defense strategy in 2002, the Strategic Defense Review in 2005, and the Armed

Forces Long-Term Development Plan 2006-2015 in 2006, and 2015 – 2024 in 2015.⁴⁴ Macedonia adopted the National Security and Defense Concept in 2003, the Strategic Defense Review in 2004, and the Defense White Paper in 2012. Immediately after its independence, Montenegro adopted the first National Security Strategy in June 2006, and the next one in September 2008. Serbia, as an independent state, adopted the National Security Strategy in 2009, and the White Paper on Defense in 2016 (Pietz, 2006; and Peci, 2014).

The perceived conventional threats that are related to regional security, as specified by these national security and defense documents of the Western Balkans countries, are “viewed with the same glasses, but with different lenses.” (Peci, 2014, p.10). In this regard, armed conflicts threats are considered as almost inexistent by Bosnia and Herzegovina and the North Macedonia, Albania and Kosovo anticipate their significant decline and as not probable to emerge in a near and short future, Croatia and Montenegro perceive them as greatly/significantly reduced, whereas Serbia considers them as reduced. Nevertheless, none of the countries has excluded the probability of armed conflicts that may be caused as consequence of attempts for violent change of borders. Moreover, the Western Balkans countries, with the exception of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, and Serbia, do not address explicitly any country of the region with uneasiness or as a direct threat (Ibid.). In this regard, Bosnia and Herzegovina considered Kosovo as a neuralgic point of instability for the Balkans (PBH, 2006, p. 5), Montenegro considers future developments concerning Kosovo as crucial for security and stability of the region, whereas Serbia targets Kosovo and its Security Force (KSF) as a direct threat “to the existing mode of regional arms control and threatens the balance in the region.”(Ibid.)

Regarding non-conventional and transnational threats, the countries of Western Balkans recognize more or less the same threats, such as terrorism, organized crime, extremist movements, illegal trafficking and cyber-crimes, including proliferation of the weapons of mass

⁴⁴ This document was not analyzed in the works of Pietz's (2006) and Peci, (2014), Ministry of Defense of Croatia. (2015). Armed Forces Long-Term Development Plan 2015 – 2024., https://www.morh.hr/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/ltdp_en_2015.pdf, retrieved on July 10, 2020.

destruction, in addition to internal threats, such corruption, organized crime, socio-economic problems, weak institutions and unemployment (Ibid.).

The countries of the region consider their national security as indispensable from regional security and stability, and, in principle, they are committed to good neighborhood relations and to contribution to regional stability and security, regardless of considerable degree of anxiety that is still prevalent among them (Ibid, p. 18). Albania acknowledges regional cooperation and good neighborhood relations as a priority, Croatia considers that the “optimal degree of national security cannot be achieved without peace and security within the immediate surroundings,” Macedonia attributes good neighborhood relations as a “vital national interest,” Montenegro aims to create and strengthen adequate mechanisms of security at regional level, while Serbia aims to improve cooperation and build “joint capacities and mechanisms for resolving contradictions, disputes and all kinds of challenges, risks and threats at regional level,” whereas Kosovo admits reality of its current institutional incapability, by aiming to “develop capabilities to enhance regional cooperation and partnerships,” and still remains largely non-integrated in the regional mechanisms of security and defense cooperation (Ibid, pp. 18-27).

Furthermore, Albania and Croatia, as NATO members, have aimed at developing capacities for collective defense, under the framework of the Alliance's defense planning. North Macedonia, and Montenegro, as countries that enjoyed the benefits of the Membership Action Plan, as well as Bosnia and Herzegovina with pending MAP, were aiming to achieve the full interoperability of their armed forces with the Alliance. On the other hand, Serbia, as a country that claims military neutrality, has aimed interoperability with NATO's Partnership for Peace member countries, which in essence does not exclude interoperability with NATO forces. Kosovo, as a state aspiring NATO membership, has underlined its ambition to transform the Kosovo Security Force into an armed force with the mandate to protect the country's sovereignty and territorial integrity (Ibid, 27).

These national security and defense policies, framed and supported by the NATO partnership and membership instruments, led to the abolishment of compulsory military service and the

introduction of professional military forces. Albania ended conscription in 2010 and Croatia in 2008 (War Resisters International, 2008; and Pavlic, 2017), Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, and North Macedonia, introduced professional armies in 2006, Kosovo established a professional Kosovo Security Force in 2008, and Serbia ended conscription in 2011 (Rękawek, 2013, p. 4).

The PfP has also helped the Western Balkans countries to become security providers as well, through their contribution in the NATO, as well as in the UN and EU led, peace-keeping missions. In this vein, a Congressional Research Service (CRS) Report, emphasizes that Alliance has also encouraged the NATO candidate countries, to develop “niche” capabilities to assist NATO missions (Morelli et al, 2008).

Against this backdrop, Croatia is the largest contributor in the region to international peace-keeping missions, including in those led by NATO, UN and EU. Nevertheless, Croatia has not participated in the US led operation Iraqi Freedom. On the other hand, Albania and Macedonia contributed to all the NATO led missions, including to the US led mission in Iraq, as well as to a number of UN and EU led missions. Bosnia and Herzegovina contributed to the NATO led ISAF mission in Afghanistan, and to one UN led mission. The contributions of Montenegro and Serbia were limited to the UN and EU led peace-keeping missions, while to Kosovo was not given any opportunity to participate in the NATO or UN and EU peace-keeping mission, due to international political obstacles caused first and foremost by the lack of membership in the United Nations and non-recognition by four NATO countries, namely Greece, Romania, Slovakia and Spain (Peci, 2014, p. 27).

This fundamental transformation of security and defense policies in the countries of the Western Balkans, were also put in practice by substantial reduction of the number of the armed forces personnel, especially in the case of countries that possessed large armies during the 90', such as Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and former Yugoslavia. In this regard, it should be noted that a substantial reduction of the armed forces personnel of Croatia took place in 2003, when the country acquired the Membership Action Plan, in Bosnia and Herzegovina in 2005 and 2006, when the country established a unified army and got the PfP, and in Serbia in 2006, when it

became part of PfP. Also, as a result of improved security environment, the KFOR presence was gradually reduced, from its height in 1999 that amounted 50,000 troops, to 4,651 in 2015 (NATO, 2015).

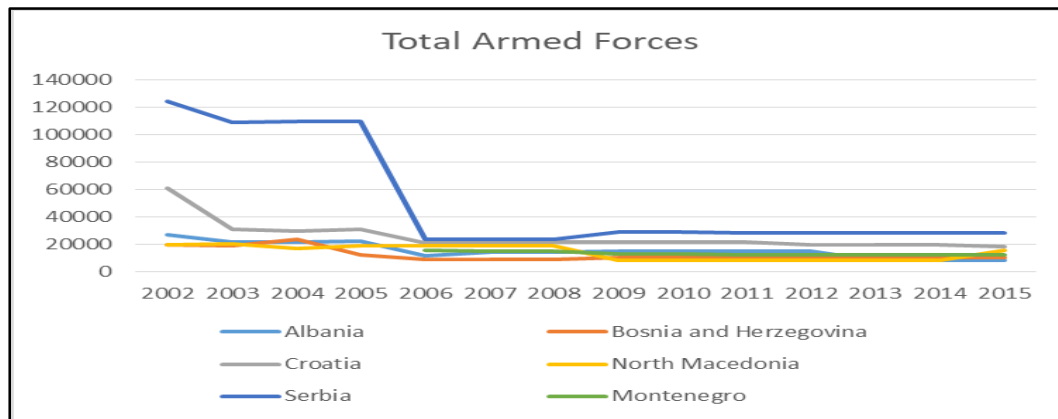


Chart 4.2. Total Armed Personnel of the Western Balkans Countries (2002 – 2015). Source: The World Bank Data. Armed forces personnel.

On the other hand, in the circumstances of major reduction of the risks from armed conflicts, the countries of the region experienced a substantial economic growth, as the data displayed in the Chart 4 clearly indicate. Furthermore, as shown by the data presented in the Chart 5, the economic growth of individual countries of the region in post-conflict era was not accompanied with the increase of military expenditures in terms of their GDP share.

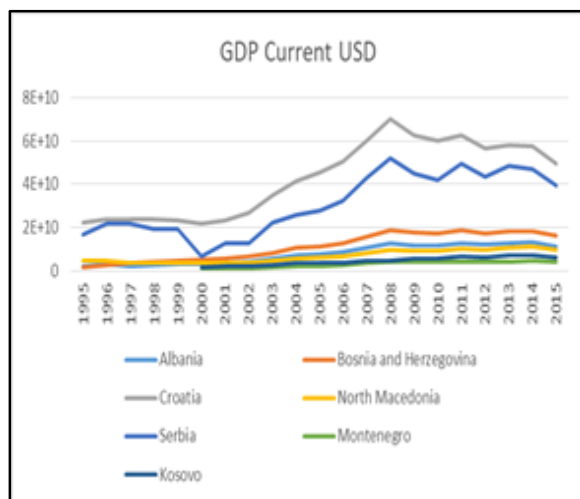


Chart 4.3. GDP of the Western Balkans Countries.

Source: The World Bank Data. National Account Data.

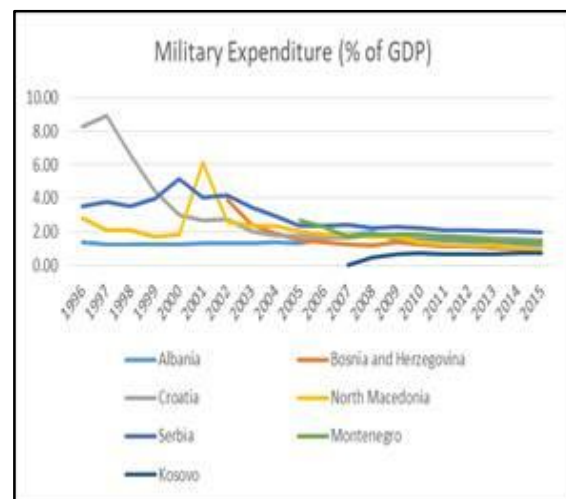


Chart 4.4 Military Expenditure (%GDP).

Source: The World Bank Data. Mil. Exp.

The above analyses shows clearly that the projection of Alliance's soft power, by setting the stability and security agenda in the Western Balkans through partnership and membership instruments, has had as an outcome the amputation of the offensive military capabilities of individual countries of the region, which has made the possibilities of armed conflicts and occurrence of security dilemmas among them almost unthinkable in a foreseeable future. This has driven the relations among these countries towards the conditions of normal peace, as defined by Benjamin Miller (Miller, 2007, p. 44). Also, the substantial economic growth, which was accompanied with low military expenditures, has further strengthened the conditions of normal peace in the Western Balkans.

Contrary to these positive general trends, the relations between Kosovo and Serbia have not witnessed a notable progress, due to the fact that in terms of military security Kosovo is still under "doctrinal attack" by Serbia, given that Belgrade considers Kosovo and Kosovo Security Force as a direct security threat (Peci, 2014, p. 10 and p. 66). Under these circumstances, the key question is whether Serbia might have an interests to use force against Kosovo. Even if the Belgrade's interests for this will be high in a foreseeable future, it will be very difficult that Serbia will take the risk of war without facing political and social opposition, in a situation in which it is experiencing a steady economic growth, due to the strengthening relations with the West. In addition, Serbia, on one hand, has no possibility to deploy a major share of its limited military troops in Kosovo, and on the other, because of the fact that Kosovo is protected by NATO's led mission KFOR (Ibid, p. 65).

Nevertheless, after the First Agreement on Normalization of the Relations between Kosovo and Serbia (GOK, 2013) and exchange of their respective Liaison Officers (EUBusiness, 2013) in 2013, their relations have moved from the conditions of cold war to those of cold peace, given that they have established semi-official contacts, and, this, in addition to the KFOR presence, has contributed to the reduction of possibilities for open conflicts.

Against this background of the Western Balkans individual countries, Mehdiu argues that NATO's partnership and membership instruments have helped, first and foremost, the restructuring of

the Albanian armed forces in line with its ambitions to become a NATO member, through training, modernization, and peace-keeping missions (Mehdiu, 2019), which, in addition, according to Rakipi, have also entailed a state-building component (Rakipi, 2019). In this vain, Starova observes that the essential transformation of the security and defense policies of Albania has been completed, such as strategic defense and military documents, placement of the military under the civilian control, substantial downsizing of military forces, including equipment and personnel. Furthermore, Starova argues that Albania has had many motives to join PfP, where the most remarkable ones were its entire historic tradition of non-aggression against other countries and of defense of its territories against foreign invaders, as well as the preparation of the Albanian Armed Forces for NATO membership (Starova 2019).

According to Cikotić, NATO encouraged and assisted all the states of the region, including Bosnia and Herzegovina, through education, training and modernization, to make significant reforms within security and defense sectors, and it helped these states to become part of some valuable mechanisms of regional and international exchange and cooperation, thus providing all the states of the region with a chance to prosper and move forward. In this line Hamidičević argues that cooperation with NATO through PfP also increases the security of Bosnia and Herzegovina (Hamidičević, 2019), whereas according to Sarajlić, motivation of the country's military staff for reform was supported by socialization, through PfP activities, with the professionalism of NATO officers (Sarajlić, 2019).

In the case of Croatia, according to Knezović, NATO's partnership and membership instruments have had a paramount importance for the security and defense reforms in the country, since they paved the way for the first post-conflict state in Europe to join the alliance. Furthermore, according to Knezević, the process of building and reform of all the elements of national security in Montenegro through NATO's partnership and membership instruments, was cheaper and more effective (Knezević, 2015, p. 61).

In this vein, Ružin asserts that, through these instruments, North Macedonia was pushed to undertake major reforms in the transformation of security and modernization of military forces,

intelligence service, and long term budget planning, but it also had to address the political, economic, and legal aspects of these reforms (Ružin, 2019), whereas Demjaha gives a particular importance to the PARP, that has provided the basis for identifying and evaluating forces and capabilities of North Macedonia, including interoperability with NATO forces, and promotion of the democratic control of the nation's armed forces (Demjaha, 2019).

Regarding Kosovo, Gashi argues that presence of NATO for more than 20 years has contributed enormously and continuously, not only to peace, stability, safety, and security, but also to the development of security policies of the country. After the declaration of independence, in 2008, NATO immediately contributed with a team of experts to help the building from the scratch of the newly Kosovo Security Force, from the processes of recruiting and selection, up to those of training and education. After the Ministry of KSF, and the KSF, reached their full operational capability, the alliance established NATO Advisory and Liaison Team (NALT).⁴⁵ There were also contributions from individual NATO countries, like the one with U.S. Defense Institution Reform Initiative (DIRI) team, in helping Kosovo to draft the Strategic Security Sector Review (Gashi, 2020). According to Sejdiu, through NATO's involvement in the building of the security sector, Kosovo has steadily adopted a very progressive conceptual approach to defense doctrines, including the nature and role of armed forces along the lines with NATO standards (Sejdiu, 2019).

In the case of Serbia, according to Biserko, even the best optimists were not expecting that Serbia would join the PfP in 2006, given that its authorities had not yet arrested Ratko Mladić, which at that time was the "condition of conditions" for Belgrade. The membership of Serbia in PfP was conceived as a victory over conservative forces within military establishment, and it served as a catalyst for security and defense reform (Biserko, 2019). In this vein, Ejodus also argues that PfP has been instrumental in catalyzing defense reforms in Serbia, including professionalization and democratic civilian reforms (Ejodus, 2020).

⁴⁵ For further details on the NATO Advisory Team see (NATO, 2017).

The research results provided in this sub-chapter prove that the projection of NATO's soft power, through partnership and membership instruments, the Alliance has transformed the defense and security policies of the countries of the Western Balkans, which has had as a result the amputation of their offensive military capabilities, professionalization of military forces, and economic development. This has shifted the relations among the countries of the region from the conditions of the cold peace towards those of normal peace, with the exception of relations between Kosovo and Serbia, that have shifted from the conditions of cold war towards those of cold peace.

IV.2. Membership or Neutrality: National Security Choices

During the last century, individual countries of the Western Balkans have had different experiences with alliances and the status of neutrality. In the First Balkan War (1912), Serbia and Montenegro were part of the Balkan League Alliance, together with Bulgaria and Greece, and against the Ottoman Empire, whereas Serbia, Greece, and Romania, formed an alliance against Bulgaria, in the Second Balkan War (1913).⁴⁶ On the other hand, on July 29th, 1913, the London Conference of Ambassadors agreed to recognize Albania's statehood, and to guarantee its neutrality, which was systematically violated by the warring powers of the Triple Alliance and Triple Entente, a part of which was Serbia as well. Thus, the codification of rights and responsibilities of neutrals, through the Hague Conventions of 1899 and 1907, which gave hope that in the case of war, smaller European states could protect themselves through legal neutrality, proved to be illusionary (Fried, 2012, p. 425). Furthermore, during the period between the two World Wars, the Kingdom of Yugoslavia was part of Little Entente, together with Czechoslovakia and Romania, as well as part of the Balkan Pact Agreement, with Greece, Romania, and Turkey (Wandycz, 1981, pp. 548-64).

After the Second World War, Albania was a founding member of the Warsaw Pact, created in 1955. Albania formally left the Pact in 1968, after which it turned to strengthening an alliance with a distant protector – China – which provided Tirana with an increased independence of maneuvering in foreign and domestic affairs (Crump, 2015, p. 61). According to Biberaj, this unequal alliance of Albania with China that lasted until 1978 was a classic case of a small state in search for security (Biberaj, 1986). After the break-up with Beijing, Tirana entered into a phase of deep isolation that lasted until the end of the Cold War. On the other hand, after the break-up with Stalin, in 1948, the Socialist Yugoslavia, in search for security, undertook a major foreign policy shift, from the alignment with Soviet Union, to becoming militarily aligned with NATO, by signing the Treaty of Friendship and Collaboration with Greece and Turkey of 1953 (MFARS, 1934), while retaining simultaneously its internal communist political system. Furthermore, in

⁴⁶ For further exploration on the topic of the Balkan Wars see for example (Hall, 2000; and Schurman, 2010).

1961, Yugoslavia became a founding member of the Non-Alignment Movement (NAM) – a neutralist organization – by continuing to preserve its non-neutral military status. Soon after its foundation, two thirds of the UN members joined the NAM, which was seen as a sensible third way during the Cold War.⁴⁷

The end of the Cold War and the bloody breakup of Yugoslavia found the region in a completely new geopolitical circumstances. Albania, which was coming out from a long term isolation, was making efforts to return to the West, by becoming the first country to apply for NATO membership, on December 16, 1992 (Kola, 2003, p. 295), and Croatia turned to the West, and particularly to the United States, given that only Washington could guarantee the military and diplomatic power to change the balance of force against Federal Yugoslavia (Miller, 1997, p. 512). In this regard, in 1998, the US Ambassador William Montgomery drafted the Roadmap to Partnership for Peace for Croatia, which helped the focus of US programs in the country (Wheaton, 2000). Also, the North Macedonian Parliament issued a declaration for joining the Alliance in 1993 (Georgijeva, 2010, p. 336), Bosnia and Herzegovina was divided along ethnic lines, between the pro-US and pro-Serbian orientation, and the Federal Yugoslavia was viewed rather as a rogue state (Mertus, 2001). On the other hand, Kosovo, as a political entity under a de-facto occupation by Serbia, was oriented towards the US, and the West, in general, which, during the 90's, in its struggles for independence and for finding an acceptable compromise with Belgrade and the West, proposed the neutrality of Kosovo in relations between Albania and Serbia, guaranteed by international community (Der Spiegel, 1992). However, the countries that emerged out of Yugoslavia in the first decade of the XXI century, namely, Montenegro in 2006, and Kosovo, in 2008, even prior to their independence had clarified their ambitions to join the Alliance (Knezevic, 2015, p. 52; and Dielli, 2015), whereas Serbia adopted the policy of military neutrality in 2007 (Litavski, 2012, p. 2).

The key question to be discussed in this subchapter are the reasons that pushed these small countries of the Western Balkans towards membership in the single remaining alliance in Europe

⁴⁷ For further exploration on the topic of Non-Alignment Movement see for example (Bott, at al., 2016).

– NATO, as well as neutrality, in absence of continental and global military competition of the preponderant Western powers with the other non-western powers, like Russia and China, which is also one of the key research objectives of this dissertation.

In this regard, Mehdiu argues that since Albania, as a small country, has faced wars and invasions from other countries in the past, the membership in NATO, from the military and security perspective, has provided the country the guarantees for preserving its sovereignty (Mehdiu, 2019). In this vein, Starova observes that Albania's and Albanians' orientation towards the West and the US was a fundamental driver in Albania's quest for membership in the Alliance, and this was also driven by its history of suffering occupations from neighbouring countries, as well as by the fear coming from Eastern authoritarian regimes (Starova, 2019).

On the other hand, Cikotić argues that by becoming member of the Alliance, Bosnia and Herzegovina will discourage the neighbouring countries to achieve their "greater state" ambitions at its expense, which had failed during the previous aggressions of 1992 and 1995 (Cikotić, 2019), whereas Hamidičević asserts that the security of the country is indispensable from NATO (Hamidičević, 2019), and Sarajlić considers that the Alliance is the main guarantor of peace and stability in the region (Sarajlić, 2019). In the case of Croatia, Knezović claims that membership aspirations were driven by its violent past of the Homeland War, and the quest of the country to return to the West, as well as that the concept of cooperative security offered by NATO presented the only viable option for the country of the size and leverage of Croatia to deal with security threats (Knezović, 2019). Similarly, Knežević puts forward the argument that NATO membership will ensure, first and foremost, the preservation of territorial integrity and sovereignty of Montenegro, while enabling lower costs of the country's defence sector, and providing conditions for a stable and dynamic development (Knežević, 2015, p. 62).

In this regard, Ružin argues that (North) Macedonia's quest to join NATO was driven by the fact that the Alliance guarantees the sovereignty and territorial integrity of its members, and that with this membership, the country will put an end on the issue of the 150 years old Macedonian Question, that in the past had proven to be a subject of great and medium power territorial

ambitions and collisions (Ružin, 2019). According to Demjaha, Macedonia, as a small country surrounded with neighbours with territorial pretensions, was clearly facing a “deficit of hard power” to provide for its own security, thus considering the full NATO membership as the only viable option for ensuring the country's security (Demjaha, 2019). Regarding Kosovo, Hasani argues that motives to join NATO are very rational, given that the country is poor, and it will for sure be more a consumer than a producer of security, on one hand, and on the other, the longest portion of its border is delineated with unfriendly Serbia (Hasani, 2019), whereas Sejdiu asserts that NATO membership is fundamental for ensuring the country's sovereignty, territorial integrity and its stability (Sjedić, 2019).

Against this background, it can be concluded that the aspirations of the Western Balkans countries to join NATO were driven from their past and present constellations, as the “Constellation Theory” (Mouritzen and Wivel, 2005) suggests, from the prevailing perceived threats to their sovereignty and territorial integrity, and from the lack of capabilities to tackle them unilaterally. In this regard, the national security choice of these small countries also fit the classical argument of the alliance theory, that weaker states align with bigger powers, in this case NATO, with the aim of protecting themselves from potential aggressors and for achieving status and stability (Liska, 1962, p. 13).

On the other hand, the Serbia's national security choice of military neutrality, is an exception from general aspirations of Western Balkans countries to join NATO. According to Ejđus, the main motivation of Serbia to declare its military neutrality in December 2007, was the looming unilateral declaration of independence of Kosovo, and NATO's real or perceived role in this process, and was driven by the collective memory of Alliance's intervention in 1999, at the same time when the continued presence of KFOR is considered to be the only guarantee for the protection of Kosovo Serbs. This ambivalent policy towards NATO, according to Ejđus, is the reason why Serbian officials have been deploring NATO's intervention, but opposing the reduction of KFOR troops in Kosovo ever since (Ejđus, 2019).

Against this background, Litavski argues that if Serbia wants to be considered seriously as a militarily neutral power, it has to increase the defense budget, an increase which it obviously cannot afford (Litavski, 2012, p. 6). As a matter of fact, the military expenditures of Serbia in real terms were continuously decreasing, and the share of Serbian GDP allocated to military expenditures in 2016 was 1.91%, that is, 20.7% less than in 2007. Furthermore, the share of Serbia's GDP for military expenditures is much lower than the average of NATO, Europe, and European neutral countries (Stojković and Glišić, 2020). Therefore, this defense spending policy is a clear indication that as a country with the largest military capabilities in the region that can be matched only by those of Croatia (Peci, 2014, p. 33), Serbia feels secure in its regional environment, and does not perceive any longer NATO as a security threat. However, on the other hand, according to Bechev, Serbia's "military neutrality" has solidified the alliance with Russia (Bechev, 2017, p. 62) and, as a result, it had numerous joint ventures in defense matters, such as Joint Centre for Reaction to Emergency Situations, joint military exercises, armed sales, and Serbia's observer Status in the Parliamentary Assembly of the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) (Bechev, 2017, pp. 187-191).

An interesting fact here is that, while Serbia does not consider NATO publicly as a security threat, at the same time it does not hesitate to accuse the Alliance and international community in Kosovo, and doing this jointly with Russia (Lavrov and Dačić, 2020). In line with the Paul's argument on the soft balancing behavior (Paul, 2005, p. 59), it can be assumed that the Belgrade's aim of engaging with the unipol (NATO/US) and of building institutional links through Partnership for Peace, is also pursued for diminishing the possibility of retaliatory actions by the Alliance.

IV.3. Effects on Regional Security and Stability

The research findings of this chapter provide evidence that the projection of NATO's soft power through PfP and membership instruments had multiple effects on the regional security and stability of Western Balkans.

First and foremost, the second hypotheses of this dissertation, that the projection of NATO's soft power through partnership and membership instruments has achieved doctrinal transformation of security and defense policies of the Western Balkans countries, is successfully tested. This transformation has also had as a consecutive outcome the change of strategic patterns of these countries, from those of hard balancing and massive armies based on deterrence, to those of relatively small and professional armies, which stripped profoundly their offensive capabilities. Furthermore, the Western Balkans has already experienced a significant level of economic development of its individual countries, which was not accompanied with an increase of their military expenditures in terms of GDP share. Consequently, the countries of Western Balkans, from the consumers of security provided by the projection of the NATO's soft power, are gradually becoming providers of stability, as well as security exporters through participation in the peace-keeping missions led by the Alliance or by the US, with the exception of Serbia that is solely participating in just a few ESDP missions, and Kosovo that is blocked from any participation in these missions by the four NATO non-recognizers.

In theoretical terms, since all the states of the Western Balkans, with the exception of Serbia, and to a certain level, of Bosnia and Herzegovina, as consequence of the opposition of Republika Srpska, were or are the would-be insiders in relation with NATO, as defined by Mauritzen and Wiwel (2005). These states were most prone to the NATO-s stability projection in regard to their bilateral relations, such as those between Albania with Kosovo and Macedonia, Croatia with Bosnia and Herzegovina and Montenegro, which as a result brought them to the level of normal peace. In this regard, the relations between would-be insiders and outsiders, such as is the case of relations of Croatia and Montenegro with Serbia, were also prone to the stability projection of the Alliance, although at a much lesser extent, and their bilateral relations have shifted towards the conditions of normal peace, given that the armed conflict between them, although not

unimaginable, is highly improbable in a foreseeable future. On the other hand, the relations between Serbia and Kosovo have shifted from the conditions of cold war towards those of cold peace.

Against this background, Shea considers that PfP has proved to be a win-win for both, the Alliance, and the Western Balkans countries. First, PfP was a flexible instrument, which enabled NATO to help countries of the Western Balkans with defense reforms, according to their specific needs and requirements. In this vein, he argues that PfP allowed NATO to accurately measure the readiness of partner countries for NATO membership, by providing Allies with insights into the strengths and weaknesses of their armed forces, as well as with democratic standards of governments and institutions. For others, not seeking NATO membership, such as Serbia, PfP was a way for overcoming historical animosities, and for benefiting from NATO's technical assistance, without creating political frictions in domestic debates. Second, the PfP also provided NATO with a means of integrating partner forces into NATO's missions, and it was a useful form of burden sharing for Alliance in increasing the pool of forces that NATO could draw on. (Shea, 2019).

On the other hand, according to Altman, the weak military capabilities of Western Balkans countries to defend themselves, and the still remaining fear of Belgrade's future nationalistic politics, made PfP very attractive as a pre-entry relationship with NATO, and provided an improved feeling of security and stability, although without Article V guarantees (Altman, 2019). This argument of Altman shed light on the undeclared motives of NATO aspirants of the region to join Alliance, which were essentially based on the balance of threat behavior, against the perceived threats in their neighborhood.

Furthermore, Joseph highlights that NATO-s involvement in the region, through PfP and membership instruments, had a vital stabilizing role against regional and internal threats, as in the case of Montenegro (Joseph, 2019), whereas, Pantev argues that PfP provided a format of dealing with contradictions and conflicting relations in the region, by adapting most of all to a strategic culture and strategic prospects that could gradually turn former foes into allies, or peaceful members, as a minimum (Pantev, 2019).

Therefore, it can be concluded that the projection of NATO's soft power in the region has also diminished the possibilities for importing potential instabilities into Alliance, given that the sources of instabilities in the region, caused by the state-to-nation imbalances, were significantly reduced as a result of internal reforms of individual countries, including those of security and defense sectors.

Consequently, the countries in the region gradually became projectors of stability and exporters of security. As a result, the projection of NATO's soft power in the Western Balkans, has also had as an outcome the increased protection of the Alliance's security interests, due to the profoundly diminished level of asymmetric threats, caused by the potential instabilities in the region, which was also reflected by a substantial downsizing of the KFOR troops in Kosovo.

V. The Projection of NATO's Smart Power

Introduction:

The Enlargement of NATO in the Western Balkans, with the membership of Albania and Croatia in 2009, was a defining moment for the region's security environment, which in the recent past was suffering from bloody conflicts that led to the use and the projection of hard (military) power by the Alliance, in Bosnia and Herzegovina (1995), and in Kosovo (1999). On the other hand, the projection of the soft power of the Alliance, through its partnership and membership instruments, has transformed the defense and security policies of the Western Balkans countries, including the profound reform and transformation of their military forces, which fundamentally reduced the potential of armed conflicts in the region.

Albania and Croatia are small countries that, in terms of military power, could hardly bring any added value to the Alliance. The overall defense expenditures of all NATO members in 2008, when the invitations to join the Alliance have been extended to Albania and Croatia at the Bucharest Summit, amounted to 895,195 million USD (NATO, 2009, p.4). On the other hand, in the same year, the military expenditures of Albania and Croatia amounted to 255.7 million USD and 1.009 billion USD, respectively (SIPRI, 2009). If the memberships of Albania and Croatia in NATO were obviously not about maximizing the military aggregate power of the Alliance, as the classical alliance theories would suggest, then the question is why NATO provides security goods to these small countries through collective defense? Is the enlargement another form of power that the Alliance is projecting in the Western Balkans, and, if yes, then, what kind of power is that?

Against this background, Nye has rightly noted that the smart power, which is neither soft, nor hard, is, in fact, another form of power, that in the context of twenty-first century, is not about maximizing power or preserving hegemony, but is about designing successful strategies to combine power resources, namely those of hard power and soft power (Nye, 2011, p. 207)

In this regard, the combination of these power resources in pursuing the enlargement strategy in the Western Balkans, by providing to the new members security goods of collective defense, was driven by the security interests of NATO. These interests, in general, were related to instabilities in the region and wider Europe (Gallis, 1997, p.5), and from the need to delete the dividing lines in the Post-Cold War Europe as another source of instability (Solana, 1999, p. 5). In the case of the Western Balkans, NATO, obviously was driven, neither by the desire to maximize its power, nor by the one to preserve its “hegemony,” in pursuing the enlargement strategy in the region, which puts this Alliance’s enlargement rational in the domain of projection of smart power, in pursuing its security interests, which will be further deliberated in this Chapter.

In this regard, in this Chapter will be discuss the nature of the smart power projected in the Western Balkans by the Alliance through the enlargement of NATO, including implications of the Article V of the Washington Treaty on the inter-state borders in the region, as well as their effects on the regional security and stability. Ultimately, this Chapter will test the third hypotheses of this theses, namely, that NATO’s projection of smart power through enlargement is locking the interstate borders in the Western Balkans.

V.1. Enlargement in the Western Balkans

The NATO's first round of enlargement in the Western Balkans was preceded with important geopolitical developments that had a major impact in the region and wider Euro-Atlantic area. Firstly, there was the decision of the George W. Bush Administration to deploy the interceptor missiles and radar installations in Poland and the Czech Republic, in the beginning of 2007 (Hildreth and Ek, 2009), that was boldly condemned by the President Putin of Russia, who considered this an act that will alternate the current "world strategic stability," and threatened with the new Cold War (Hardin, 2007). And, secondly, on February 17th, 2008, Kosovo declared independence, which was received with great hostility by Serbia (The New York times, 2008), and was also strongly opposed by Russia (The Sydney Morning Herald, 2008).

Under these circumstances, marked by the strongest course of collision between NATO and Russia since the Alliance's war against Yugoslavia in 1999, the decision-making process of the Alliance was taking place in reviewing the possibility for membership of Albania, Croatia and Macedonia. Yet, in the Bucharest Summit of April 2008, the invitations to join the Alliance were issued only to Albania and Croatia (NATO, 2008). The membership of Macedonia was blocked by Greece, due to the unresolved name dispute, but, on the other hand, NATO agreed that a membership invitation will be extended to Skopje, as soon as a solution of this issue is reached (Ibid).

Against this backdrop, according to a Congressional Research Report, the NATO membership of Albania and Croatia, in terms of military and general resources, were not considered to be of "strategic presence" in the alliance, in despite of their significant contributions to NATO operations, when compared to their military capabilities (Morelli et al, 2009, p. 1). Furthermore, according to a report submitted to the U.S. Senate on September 23, 2008, by the Committee on Foreign Affairs, two conditions have been included for the accession protocols of Albania and Croatia, which required that memberships of these two countries in NATO should not result in an increase of the overall percentage share of the U.S. in NATO's common budget, and that their membership should not affect the U.S. military requirements outside of the North Atlantic area

(Morelli et al, 2008, p. 16), thus implying explicitly that the memberships of these two countries should not have financial and military implications for Washington.

In this regard, the estimated costs of enlargement for Albania and Croatia were expected to be fairly low, amounting in total to 120 million USD (60 million USD apiece), which was projected to be expended over a ten years period, for infrastructure that will be used by NATO personnel, and for establishing secure communications between them and the alliance. Furthermore, according to a report of the Committee on Foreign Relations of the US Congress, due to the calculated financial contribution of Albania and Croatia to NATO's budget, the U.S. financial contribution to NATO was estimated to decrease by 0.08% (CFR, 2008, pp. 5-6). Thus, in financial terms, the enlargement costs for Albania and Croatia were minimal, if not free altogether. Compared with the costs of NATO enlargement for Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland, that amounted to 1.5 billion USD (ibid.), the costs of this round of enlargement were negligible. On the other hand, the development of "niche" capabilities of these countries for participation in NATO's operations, remained the price that they should pay for membership (Nation, 2011, p. 134).

Nevertheless, as Nation observes, the Albanian and Croatian membership has transformed, in geostrategic terms, the Adriatic Sea, into a "virtual NATO lake," and this has also strengthened the maritime security in the Mediterranean coastline, that may be a vital European interest (Nation, 2011, p. 125). Furthermore, he argues that since the "Albanian world in the Balkans" has become a pillar of the U.S. policy for bringing the wider region under Western influence, the membership of Albania into the Alliance is a "vital step" in this direction (ibid.). In this vein, he observes that in the case of local or regional instabilities, Albania can become a "Forward Operating Base" for relieving forces to KFOR, whereas Croatia will become a crucial ally, if NATO would need to intervene again in Bosnia and Herzegovina (Ibid, pp. 126-127). In addition, the potential impacts of the membership of Albania and Croatia on the North Atlantic and the U.S. security, were discussed in the U.S. Presidential Report of March 2008, delivered to the Senate, which, among others, underlined the contributions of the two countries to regional peace and stability, NATO operations, and in the war on terrorism (Christoff, 2009, pp. 81-82).

Against this background, the majority of NATO members were confident that memberships of Albania and Croatia could strengthen the stability in South-East Europe, particularly due to the independence of Kosovo, and the prevailing hostility towards the Alliance by important political parties in Serbia (Morelli at all, 2008, p.27). However, at the end of the day, the membership of Albania and Croatia was a political decision of allies, based on the judgment related to the contribution of Tirana and Zagreb to their security, in case of their membership (Ibid, pp. 5-9). Ultimately, Albania and Croatia became members of the Alliance on April 1st, 2009, thus marking the first round of enlargement in the Western Balkans, which made them entitled to enjoying the fundamental security goods that NATO provides, namely the security guarantees of collective defence, as envisaged by the Article V of the Washington Treaty of 1949 (NATO, 1949).

Against this context, an interesting correlation between contribution of a new small member state to regional stability and international security, and the security goods provided by the Alliance can be identified, which I have defined as the Alliance's Stability–Security Exchange Correlation. This correlation assumes that if the membership requirements are fulfilled, NATO accepts small states as full-fledged members in case when the perceived security costs of membership (C_M), and those of providing collective defence (C_D), will be smaller than the perceived benefits of increased level of regional stability (BSt_R), and those of security gains (BS_G), of the geostrategic (Gst), military (Mil) and financial (F) nature, that the alliance will enjoy from their membership: this is presented in the following inequation:

$$SC_{(M+D)} < BSt_R + BS_G (Gst+Mil+F)$$

In the case of the membership of Albania and Croatia, it is obvious that the costs of enlargement were negligible, amounting to 120 million USD in total, for both countries over a period of ten years, an amount which will also be balanced by their contributions to NATO's general budget, as discussed above. On the other hand, having in mind that both countries are bordered, either with NATO members, or small aspirant and neutral states (Austria and Serbia, respectively), the provision of collective defence, in a case of external threat instigated by any other state of the region, is very small, due to the deterrent capability of the hyper-powerful Alliance.

On the other hand, the benefits that NATO gained by the membership of Albania and Croatia are obvious in the increased regional security, due to the fact that these two small states did become, *de facto*, the forward bases of NATO for addressing any instabilities that might occur in the region, and, as such, they provide a deterrence against possible revisionists policies of other non-member countries.

Furthermore, the membership in NATO has also increased regional stability because it serves as a refraining mechanism against possible adventurous policies of these two countries, given that the security goods provided by Alliance's collective defence, as envisaged by Article V, are not automatic, and cannot be taken for granted, and, also, for any other possible destabilizing or aggressive intentions of other countries, and, especially, the "neutral" Serbia, which is the harbour of Russian destabilizing policy in the South East Europe. In addition, with the NATO membership of Albania and Croatia, allies have gained in geostrategic terms from the increased security in the Mediterranean, employment of their "niche capabilities" in the Alliance's operations, and financial contribution to NATO's general budget, regardless of the smallness of the two countries in terms of population, economy and military capabilities.

Therefore, it is obvious that the perceived security costs of membership, and of collective defence, for these two new members, were considerably smaller than the benefits of the Alliance from the increased regional stability, and the above discussed security gains, which tests successfully the Security–Stability Exchange Correlation, that reflects a specific dimension of the projection of NATO's smart power in the Western Balkans.

V.2. Article V and its implications on the inter-state borders

The Article V of the Washington Treaty, that provides collective defense for all NATO member states, has been the backbone of the Alliance since its birth, on April 4, 1949. Nevertheless, in despite of the fact that Article V underlines that “an armed attack against one or more [allies] shall be considered an attack against them all,” does not guarantee unconditional military assistance of other NATO members, to an attacked ally. The additional wording of the Article clarifies that “each of them ... will assist the Party or Parties so attacked by taking forth with, individually and in concert with the other Parties, such action as it deems necessary, including the use of armed force” (Gallis, 1997, p.1). This formulation of collective defense arrangements, during the negotiations of the Washington Treaty, was a result of a compromise between the hesitant US, and insisting European allies, on the automatic participation in collective defense (Sloan, 2006).

However, this phenomenon is not new in the history of alliances. As Benson observes, out of 256 alliances created from 1816 to 2000, 74 pledged automatic defense to an ally, 139 conditioned the defense of an ally with initiation of armed conflict by a non-alliance state, and 46 pledged commitments for the defense of an ally were ambiguous. This ambiguity has been coined by the U.S. State Secretary Dulles, as the “deterrence by uncertainty” (Benson, 2012, pp. 1-2). But, in essence, this formulation of the Article 5 of the Washington Treaty, represents a classic case of the Alliance Security Dilemma (Snyder, 1984), and it displays a balance, between the US fears of being entrapped into undesired conflicts instigated by the European allies, and the fears from the U.S. abandonment of the European allies, in case of conflict with other states, especially by Russia, or revived Germany. In this vein, the famous words of the first NATO Secretary General, Lord Ismay, that the Alliance was created to “*keep the Soviet Union out, the Americans in, and the Germans down.*” reflects in the best way the European perspective on the NATO's security dilemma at its very inception.

Nevertheless, during the Cold War, regardless of these uncertainties, the Article V provided a credible deterrence towards the Warsaw Pact. However, after the Cold War, there were some

tendencies that occurred for the “regionalization” of the Article V, that could have undermined its viability. For instance, the case of the Kuwait War, of 1991, when Germany opposed considering NATO’s military assistance to Turkey, in case of Iraqi retaliation, or the fact that allies, such as Italy, Greece, and Turkey, were more concerned about the stability in the Balkans, than Norway or Denmark, which, in turn, were more concerned about regional stability in the Baltics (Gallis, 1997, pp. 5-6), were classical cases of the “regionalization” of the Article V in the aftermath of the Cold War.

But, nowadays, as Kamp observes, there is also no consensus among allies, on what NATO is prescribed to defend (Kamp, 2011, p. 23). In this regard, he raises a number of issues, such as that of balancing of NATO’s role in defending its territory, with Alliance’s operations far beyond its borders,⁴⁸ like Afghanistan, which is viewed as “Article V at a distance”; of how to maintain the credibility of Article V in the external borders of NATO/Europe; on when the Article V is applicable in undertaking pre-emptive measures in facing contemporary security threats; and on how to provide collective defense against those threats (Ibid., pp. 23-24).

In this regard, Schmitt argues that the attacks to which NATO is supposed to employ Article V responses, may occur without warning. According to him, these attacks may cause devastating human and physical consequences, even by remaining within a virtual domain, whereas, at the same time, a consensus is required to invoke the Article V, among increasingly diverse allies. Consequently, these developments have made Article V more elusive than during the Cold War, but, on the other hand, according to him, this Article will serve the same purpose in the foreseeable future, and will provide the deterrence effect, as long as Allies, and particularly the United States, do not challenge the credibility of collective defense commitments (Schmitt, 2019, pp. 119-120). This uncertainty of applicability of the Article V provisions, has also implications for the self-defense of Albania and Croatia, which, on one hand, provides them with security goods

⁴⁸ Johnson analyses this specific issue through the debate of the two like-minded groups within Alliance, namely “collective defenders,” such as Norway, Central European, and Baltic Countries, and “Expeditionaries,” such as United States, Great Britain, the Netherlands, Canada, and Denmark (Johnson, 2010).

of collective defense, and, on the other, has a refraining effect on their possible intentions to instigate conflicts with their neighboring countries.

Against this background, the implications of membership of Albania and Croatia on the interstate borders in their neighborhood will be discussed, through a scenario based case studies, of Albania's joining with Kosovo,⁴⁹ or of Croatia's joining with the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, with which it had achieved an agreement for a Confederation, on March 18th, 1994 (USIP, 1994), or with Croatian majority cantons of the Federation, in the case of dissolution of Bosnia and Herzegovina with the consent of its entities.

The international aspects of joining of states nowadays reflect the provisions of the Vienna Convention on Succession of States in Respect of Treaties (United Nations, 1978) and of the Vienna Convention on Succession of States in Respect of State Property, Archives and Debts (United Nations, 1983), which are neither fully regulated, nor treated, in a consistent manner by the international community (Malcolm, 2008, p. 958). Nevertheless, there are two general models of unification of two independent states, namely the merging of the two states into a completely new state, or the voluntary absorption of one state by the other, in which case, the absorbed state ceases to exist and the absorbing one preserves state continuity with an enlarged territory and population (Crawford, 2007, p. 705).

In contrast to United Nations, which regulates the succession of its member states in the event of unification,⁵⁰ the North–Atlantic Treaty does not regulate explicitly this issue. Furthermore, the membership into Alliance is not limited solely to countries that are members of the United Nations (Peci and Demjaha, 2020, p. 46). On the other hand, the single case of unification of a NATO member with a non-member state, since its creation in 1949, was the one of the absorption of the Democratic Republic of Germany by the Federal Republic of Germany, in fall 1990. But,

⁴⁹ This case is discussed thoroughly by the author, in (Peci, and Demjaha, 2020).

⁵⁰ In a case of merger of two states into a new state, the United Nations provides the replacement of the membership of predecessor states in this organization, with the membership of the new state, and in the case of a voluntary absorption of one state by another, the membership of the absorbed state in this organization ceases to exist (Malcolm, 2008: 238-242).

most importantly, the North-Atlantic Council, at its ministerial level meeting of June 7–8, 1990, took the decision to extend the security guarantees, as specified by Articles 5 and 6 of the North-Atlantic Treaty, to the entire territory of the united Germany (NATO, 1990, point. 15), almost four months prior to the formal re-unification of the country on October 3, 1990. This decision of the Alliance has prescribed an important precedent, if such cases occur in the future.

Against this background, it can be assumed that Albania and Croatia, as NATO members, theoretically, can unite with the respective non-members, Kosovo and the Bosnian Federation/Cantons, based on the precedent of the German unification. Consequently, in case of absorption of Kosovo by Albania, or of the Bosnian Federation/Cantons by Croatia, the prior and consensual support of all NATO countries, for extending the guarantees of the Articles 5 and 6 of the North-Atlantic Treaty in the entire territories of these enlarged states, is necessary. Nevertheless, it is hard to assume that such an option would gain any support from NATO allies, under the current circumstances of the Alliance's military and political supremacy in the Euro-Atlantic area, and the prevailing Brussels' non-change of inter-state borders policy.

On the other hand, the undertaking of any unilateral steps in this direction by Albania and Croatia would have devastating implications for them. Although NATO has not in place any legal provision for the suspension of membership of its members, if such a case occurs, the other NATO member countries, based on the Article 60 of the Vienna Convention of the Law on Treaties (United Nations, 1969), can claim that countries that have undertaken such steps in enlarging their territories without prior NATO support, have conducted "material violation" of the North Atlantic Treaty. Consequently, NATO can either suspend or terminate their membership in the Alliance.⁵¹ Such a scenario would undoubtedly be fatal to Albania and Croatia, due to the fact that, in addition to losing NATO's membership, they will be undoubtedly treated by the West as "rogue states" that endanger the international order and security. In the case of a merger, they may face similar implications, because the Allies can claim that, since Albania and Croatia have ceased to

⁵¹ See for instance the Sari's analysis on a possible suspension or discontinuation of the membership of Turkey in NATO (Sari, 2019).

exist as states, their membership in the alliance should be automatically nullified (Peci and Demjaha, 2020, p. 48).

An interesting case to analyze are the implications of possible absorption of Kosovo by Albania, or of Bosnian Federation by Croatia, without prior approval by the Alliance, if both Kosovo and Bosnian Federation would be NATO members. In that case, Albania and Croatia could face, either suspension, or termination, of their membership, whereas Kosovo and Bosnian Federation will lose NATO's security guarantees in their territory, due to the fact that they will nominally cease to exist as states. In the case of merger, all of them may face self-dismissal from the Alliance, which is subject to legal interpretation by other allies, since they can claim that their membership has ceased to exist, and as new states, they should re-apply for membership⁵².

Against this background, R. M. argues that, on this matter, there are no pre-identified procedures, whereas Schmunk and Phillips underline that the joinder of one NATO member state with a non-member state, is a matter of NATO's political decision with legal ramifications, which, so far, were out of consideration in the NATO Council (Shmunk, 2009 and Phillips, 2009). On the other hand, Shea argues that this issue depends whether the country in question remains the same, or changes fundamentally, as a result of such a merger, which, in case of a new state that separates from a NATO member, should re-apply for membership (Shea, 2019). Starova also observes that this case would be unprecedented, and, hence, it has to be treated in a unique way (Starova, 2019).

In this regard, Vahlas argues that, in legal terms, there is no problem regarding the merger or absorption of one state by another, as long as it is done with the consent of participating entities, and does not violate the territorial integrity of other states, as envisaged by the principle of variability of the state in the public international law. According to him, from a political point of view, it could be considered as inappropriate by other member states, and, as such, weaken the

⁵² The possible implications for Albania and Kosovo are thoroughly analyzed by author in (Peci, and Demjaha, 2020). The same implications are be applicable for Croatia and the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina as well.

political cohesion of the alliance. In the worst case, a member state could decide that Article V should not be used to protect the territory of an ally (Vahlas, 2019).

On the other hand, Pantev underlines that NATO would not accept the entering into Alliance through the “back door,” in a situation when only the front door would preserve the unity and cohesion of NATO, but, at the end of the day, it is always a matter of concrete political decision (Pantev 2019). Joseph observes that Article V obligation is premised on the entrant country's political and territorial status as of entry, and argues that “union” with a non-member would throw the Alliance's Article V commitment into question (Joseph, 2019), whereas Altman considers that, prior to any unification, the affected states should renegotiate the membership treaty, that is a matter of consensus within the Alliance (Altman, 2019).

Furthermore, Serwer argues that the Alliance would oppose such unifications, due to possible implications for Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine. In case of union of Kosovo and Albania, according to him, the alliance would be more likely to expel Albania, than to accept Greater Albania as a member (Serwer, 2019), which would be the same with Greater Croatia. A similar standpoint is also shared by Ružin, who argues that such “unifications” will be certainly vetoed by not a small number of NATO member states (Ružin, 2019). Finally, Demjaha argues that since scenarios for partition or unification are still advocated by certain politicians in different countries of the region, in this regard the Alliance becomes a kind of guarantor of the territorial integrity of member states (Demjaha, 2019).

From the above analyses and inputs of the interviewed experts, it can be argued that the impact of Article V on non-changing of the borders of NATO members in the Western Balkans has fundamental implications. First and foremost, Article V provides nominal protection of their borders from any external aggression. Secondly, the provisions of Article V have a refraining effect on NATO members in the region from undertaking any unilateral steps towards joining with other non-member states or entities, as well as with member states, due to the consequences that they may face by the Alliance, which may vary from the suspension, to the termination of their membership in NATO. Having in mind that Serbia is the only state in the

region which is not an aspirant for NATO membership, while it is expected that in a foreseeable future it will be fully surrounded with NATO members, it can be concluded that NATO's projection of smart power through enlargement, is locking the interstate borders in the Western Balkans, not only among NATO members, but also between aspirants and Serbia, which has also tested successfully the third hypotheses of this thesis.

Finally, the findings of this Chapter have shed light on the correlation between costs of the alliance's enlargement and those of collective defence with the contribution of a new small member state to regional stability and the security goods gained by NATO, as specific dimension of Alliance's smart power projection that is labelled the Security–Stability Exchange Correlation. Having in mind the tiny military and financial resources of Albania and Croatia as new NATO members, this correlation proves that providing of collective defense to these two countries is cost-beneficial in comparison with the level of increased stability in the Western Balkans that comes with the enlargement of the Alliance in the region. The projection of the NATO's smart power through enlargement, in the case of the Western Balkans, has proved to be a contextual strategy that provides simultaneously stability and security in the region, by being loved and feared at the same time, as the smart power has been described by Nye (Nye, 2011, p.208).

IV.3. Effects on Regional Security and Stability

The research findings of this chapter provide evidence that the projection of NATO's smart power through enlargement in the Western Balkans did have fundamental effects on the regional security and stability.

First and foremost, as data provided in the last chapter show, from the membership date of Albania and Croatia in 2009, and up to 2015, the total number of armed forces personnel of the Western Balkans countries has not marked any significant increase of the total armed forces and of military expenditure in percentage of GDP,⁵³ and it is a significant effect that the enlargement in the region has not instigated any change of the non-offensive character of those armed forces.

Secondly, as analyzed above, the membership of Albania and Croatia has increased regional security, because they *de facto* became the forward bases of NATO for addressing any instabilities that might occur in the region, and, as such, they provide a deterrence against possible revisionists' policies of other non-member countries. Thirdly, the membership in NATO of these two countries has increased the regional stability because it serves also as a refraining mechanism against possible adventurous policies by the political elites of these two countries.

Fourthly, the enlargement has practically locked and bolded the interstate borders in the Western Balkans, not only among NATO members, but also between aspirants and Serbia. As a result of these four effects, the relations between NATO members and aspirant countries of the Western Balkans has been brought at the level of high peace, whereas the relations between the "neutral" Serbia and other countries of the region have remained at the same level as prior to the membership of Albania and Croatia in the Alliance, especially due to the fact that Belgrade has become the stronghold of Russian interests in the region.

Against this background, the insights from the interviewed experts support the above presented findings. In this regard, Shea argues that the purpose of NATO enlargement has not been to

⁵³ See Chart 4.2., Chart 4.3. and Chart 4.4.

increase NATO's military strength and firepower, but to promote Euro-Atlantic integration and to strengthen democracy in the countries that join NATO, and the international legitimacy of the alliance. According to him, as there is no immediate military threat to the Western Balkans, NATO enlargement and NATO's open door policy are a means of keeping the countries in this region oriented towards the West, at a time when there is a competition for influence in the region from powers offering very different models, such as Russia, China or Saudi Arabia (Shea, 2019).

In this vein, Schmunk argues that membership of the Western Balkans countries in the Alliance geographically and geopolitically closes a land gap between "old" NATO members, Italy in the North, and Greece in the South, and, as such, is eliminating the "black security hole" in Europe (Schmunk, 2019). In this vein, Bugajski argues that in post Yugoslavia, NATO helps to ensure that no country will forcefully dominate the Western Balkans (Bugajski 2019), Joseph argues that the new member countries are both, more secure, and more responsible, in their behaviour, lessening the likelihood of conflict in an unstable region, and that they form a bulwark against malign Russian influence (Joseph, 2019), whereas Sejdiu underlines that the immediate impact of NATO's enlargement in the region is also the pacification effects it transmits for the relations among its members, as well as that extending membership to the Western Balkans countries sends a clear signal to Russia that this space is domestic for the Alliance (Sejdiu, 2019).

Therefore, it can be concluded that following the NATO memberships of Albania and Croatia, the relations among the countries of the region have shifted from 'normal peace' to high level peace, with the exception of relations between Serbia and its neighbors, that have remained at the level of 'normal peace,' and those of Serbia with Kosovo, that are at the level of 'cold peace.'

VI. Conclusion

The research results of this thesis prove that NATO's involvement has transformed the inter-state relations among countries of the Western Balkans, from the conditions of 'hot war' to those of 'cold war' and 'cold peace,' following the military interventions in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo, from 'cold peace' to 'normal peace,' following the PfP membership of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, and Serbia, and from 'normal peace' to 'high level peace,' following the NATO memberships of Albania and Croatia, with the exception of relations between Serbia and its neighbors, that have remained at the level of 'normal peace,' and those of Serbia with Kosovo, that are at the level of 'cold peace.' These results also prove that NATO's military intervention has provided the regional hard military balance, while the PfP membership of Serbia has marked the beginning of an era of military non-dominance in the region.

In terms of national security choices of the Western Balkans countries for joining NATO, this thesis provide evidence, that their aspirations, on one hand, were driven from their past and present constellations, such as from their state-making history and the desire to belong to the West, and on other, from the perceived threats to their sovereignty and territorial integrity, that are coupled with the lack of their national capabilities to tackle them unilaterally. Regarding the Serbia's choice for a "military neutrality" that was declared in 2007, the thesis provides evidence that it was driven by the recent constellations, namely, NATO's intervention in 1999 and the declaration of independence of Kosovo, and also from the desire to employ a soft balancing tactics towards the West, by aligning with Russia and becoming a harbor of the Kremlin's interests in the region.

Furthermore, this thesis, also sheds light on the balance of power character of the wars in the region, through the introduction of theoretical notions of patron poles, poles, sub-poles, and composite poles, and it also identifies the correlation of perceived enlargement costs with the stability and security benefits that NATO acquires with the membership of small states.

The extended conclusion of this dissertation will present in a synthesized manner the answers to the research questions, the testing of the research hypotheses, the theoretical achievements of the dissertation, and their applicability in other regions outside the Western Balkans, which will be presented in the following sections.

VI.1. Research Questions

The research results of this dissertation that are provided in the third, fourth and fifth chapter, give a clear answer on the first and second research question, which address the role of NATO on the security and stability in the Western Balkans, and the issue of the power transformation dynamics between the countries of the Western Balkans and NATO as a hyper powerful alliance, which will be further elaborated bellow.

Research Question 1. What is NATO's Role on the Security and Stability of the Western Balkans?

In order to get a better view on NATO-s role in the Western Balkans, in the following chart is synthesized the Alliance's projection of the hard (military intervention and peace enforcement missions), soft (partnership and membership instruments) and smart (enlargement) power.

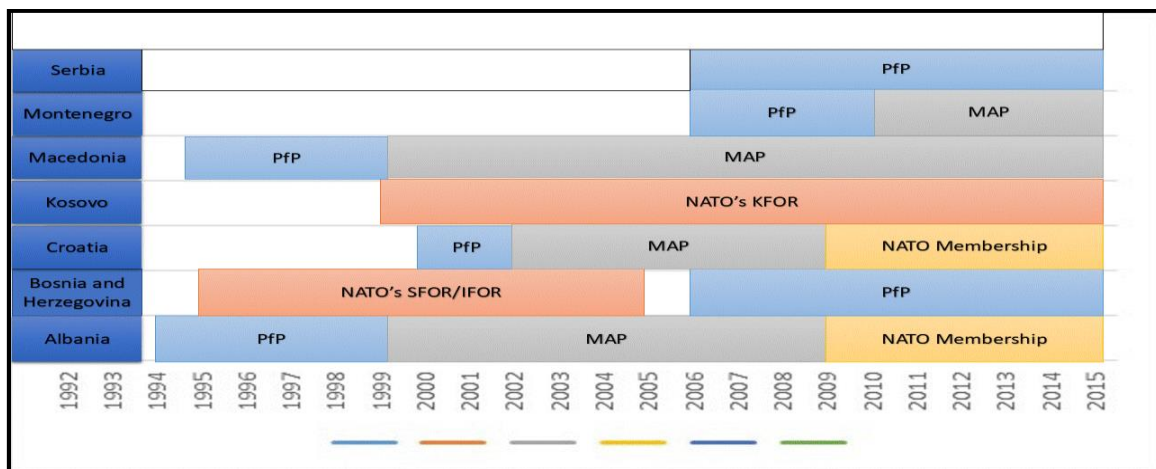


Chart 6.1. NATO's Projection of the Hard, Soft and Smart Power in the Western Balkans

The research results indicate that NATO intervention in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the deployment of the IFOR/SFOR in 1995 have transformed the relations between Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, and Yugoslavia, from the conditions of hot war to those of cold war that lasted approximately until the beginning of the post-Tudjman and Milošević era, given that during this period, hostilities could have broken at any time in the absence of NATO's presence. The cold peace relations among these countries prevailed in the period following the end of Tudjman and Milosević era that lasted until Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, and Montenegro, joined the PfP, in 2006. The PfP membership of Serbia was also marked with a substantial reduction of its national military personnel by Serbia, and as such, symbolized the beginning of the period of normal peace among Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Montenegro and Serbia.

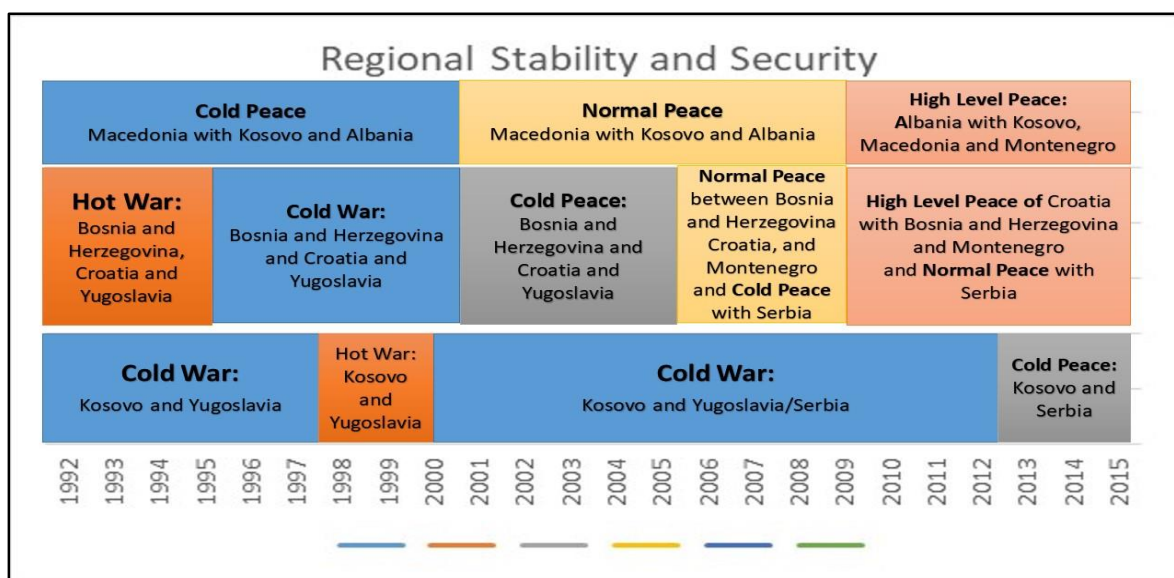


Chart 6.2. Effects of NATO's Involvement on Regional Stability and Security

A ground breaking development related to security and stability in the region was the membership of Albania and Croatia into NATO, that transformed their relations with other aspirant countries, from the conditions of normal peace to those of high level peace, thus making the war among them highly unimaginable, which is a result of the implications of the Article V, as presented in the fifth chapter. Nevertheless, the relations of regional NATO members, Albania and Croatia with the "neutral Serbia," remained at the level of normal peace, given that in current

circumstances the war between them is highly improbable, but not unimaginable. On the other hand, NATO's intervention, and the deployment of KFOR, in 1999, transformed relations between Kosovo and Serbia/Yugoslavia from the conditions of hot war to those of cold war, that lasted until both countries achieved the first agreement for normalization of their relations, in April 2013. This momentum transformed the relations between two countries to the conditions of cold peace, which, without the presence of KFOR in Kosovo, could move very easily in opposite direction

Research Question 2. What is the Power Transformation Dynamics between Western Balkan countries and NATO?

The research results of the third, fourth and fifth chapter indicate that the military power transformation dynamics has been developed throughout three phases, which are the outputs of the different forms of power that the Alliance has projected in the region, as summarized in the following chart.

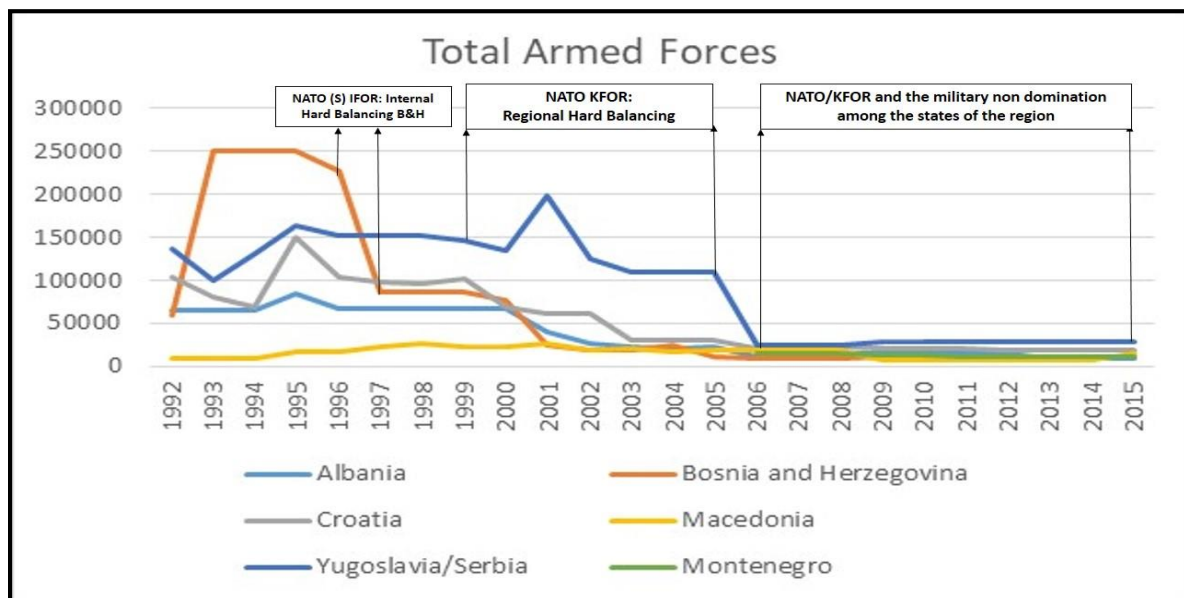


Chart 6.3. The Transformation Dynamics of the Armed Forces in the Western Balkans

The first phase was marked by the NATO's intervention in Bosnia and Herzegovina (1995) and the subsequent deployment of the IFOR/SFOR Missions in the country. In addition to the peace-enforcement mandate of these missions, under the leadership of the United States, an internal balance between the Armed Forces of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and those of Republika Srpska based on the premises of the "mutual deterrence" has been put in place. Nevertheless, due to the fact that the mandate of these NATO-led missions was strictly limited to the borders of Bosnia and Herzegovina, they proved to be an insufficient regional balancing and deterrent force towards revisionist Milošević's Yugoslavia/Serbia. The second phase was marked by the NATO's military intervention and deployment of the KFOR Mission in Kosovo (1999), which had a significant impact on ensuring a regional hard balance of power, since it marked the end of the Serbia's military preponderance in the region. The beginning of the third phase coincides with the PfP membership of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Serbia, which symbolises the commencement of the period of military non-dominance among the countries of the Western Balkans.

This period was also accompanied with end of the SFOR Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the reduced presence of KFOR in Kosovo. This military non-dominance pattern has not witnessed any noteworthy changes after the NATO membership of Albania and Croatia, in 2009, which, as discussed in the fourth chapter, was followed with a rapid economic growth of all states in the region, and was not accompanied with increases of the military spending in terms of share of the national's GDP percentage.

VI.2. Research Hypotheses

This thesis has put forward three research hypotheses that have been successfully tested in the chapters three, four, and five, of this dissertation.

Hypotheses 1: Projection of NATO's Hard Power has ensured stability through deterrence of possible aggressive intentions within the Western Balkans, the re-balancing of power, and prevented the possibilities for escalation of inter-ethnic conflicts in the region.

This hypotheses has been discussed and tested in the third chapter of this dissertation. The research findings have shown that the projection of NATO's hard power, through interventions and establishment of the Alliance's led missions, in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Kosovo, has changed in a fundamental manner the balance of power in the Western Balkans, especially in curtailing the preponderant power of the revisionist Yugoslavia/Serbia, and it has also served as a retaliatory force for deterring possible aggressive intentions by different nationalistic entities within the Western Balkans. But, this effect was fully achieved only after NATO's intervention in Kosovo, and the deployment of the KFOR Mission, since the IFOR/SFOR missions alone were not able to produce such an effect towards Yugoslavia/Serbia. The NATO's involvement in Macedonia in 2001 has also prevented the eruption of a large scale inter-ethnic conflict in the country.

Hypotheses 2: The Projection of NATO's soft power through Partnership and Membership Instruments has achieved doctrinal transformation of security and defense policies of the Western Balkans countries.

This hypotheses has been discussed and tested in the fourth chapter of this thesis, and it was proven that the projection of Alliance's soft power has had as its effect, a doctrinal reform of security and defense policies of Western Balkans countries, and transformation of massive armed forces based on conscription, to the relatively small and professional armies that stripped fundamentally their offensive capabilities against their neighbors. Consequently, the countries of the Western Balkans, from the consumers of security, are gradually becoming providers of stability, as well as security exporters, through participation in the Alliance, or the US, led peace-

keeping missions, with the exception of Serbia, that is participating solely, in a very limited manner, in just a few ESDP missions, and Kosovo, whose participation is curtailed due to its incomplete integration within the international community.

Hypotheses 3: The projection of NATO's Smart Power through enlargement is locking the interstate borders in the Western Balkans.

This hypotheses has been discussed and tested in the fifth chapter of this dissertation, and concludes that if a NATO member undertakes unilateral steps in joining with another non-member state or entity, or with another NATO member state, it can face harsh consequences that may vary, from suspension of membership, to the expulsion from the Alliance. Against this background, the Article V has fundamental implications, since, in addition to providing nominal protection of the NATO's member states against any external aggression, it also has a refraining effect on the allies in the region from undertaking any unilateral steps in joining, either with other non-member states or entities, or with the member states.

Having in mind that Serbia, on one hand, is the only state in the region which is not an aspirant for NATO membership, and on the other, is expected to be fully surrounded in a foreseeable future by the Alliance's members, it can be concluded that NATO's projection of smart power through enlargement, is locking the interstate borders in the Western Balkans, not only among NATO members, but also between aspirants and Serbia, and, as such, has faded the ambitions of a part of ethnic Albanian elites of Prishtina and Tirana for joinder with Albania, and of a part of ethnic Croatian elites of Zagreb and Mostar, for joinder with Croatia, but most importantly, it has also faded the ambitions of elites in Belgrade for revamping the project of "Greater Serbia," that was the cause of the bloody dissolution of Tito's Yugoslavia.

VI.3. Theoretical Achievements and Applicability of the Western Balkans Case: Possibilities and Limitations

In addition to answering the research questions, and to the testing of the research hypotheses, this dissertation has also provided two original theoretical achievements in the alliance's theory. The first is the introduction of the new *theoretical notions of patron poles, poles, sub-poles, and composite poles*, that provided a framework for analyses of the wars in former Yugoslavia through the theoretical lenses of the balance of power, alliance security dilemma, and underbalancing. This analytical framework has a potential of being further developed into a full-fledged theoretical concept for analysing other armed conflicts of proxy nature, especially the Russia's proxy wars with Moldova, Georgia, and Ukraine, the conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan over Nagorno Karabakh, Syrian war, and the conflict in Yemen.

The second theoretical achievement is the introduction of the Security–Stability Exchange Correlation, that sheds light on the relation between the perceived costs of the Alliance's enlargement, and those of collective defence, with the perceived benefits from the contribution of a new small member state to regional stability, and the security goods that NATO gains through membership of this state. This correlation provides a theoretical framework for understanding the rationale of the Alliance for admitting the small states. If tested with the cases of the previous rounds of the NATO's enlargement in Central Europe, Baltics, and Eastern Balkans, as well as with the aspirant countries, like Georgia and Ukraine, this correlation has a potential to be developed into a full-fledged theoretical concept.

Konkluzioni

Rezultatet e hulumtimit të kësaj teze dëshmojnë që përfshirja e NATO-s i ka transformuar marrëdhëniet ndërshtetërore ndërmjet vendeve të Ballkanit Perëndimor, nga kushtet e 'luftës së nxehtë' në ato të 'luftës së ftohtë' dhe të 'paqes së ftohtë,' në vijim të intervenimeve ushtarake në Bosnje e Hercegovinë dhe në Kosovë, nga 'paqja e ftohtë' në 'paqen normale,' në vijim të anëtarësimit në PpP të Bosnje e Hercegovinës, Malit të Zi dhe Serbisë, dhe nga 'paqja normale' në 'paqen e nivelit të lartë,' në vijim të anëtarësimit në NATO të Shqipërisë dhe Kroacisë, me përjashtim të marrëdhënieve midis Serbisë dhe fqinjëve të saj, që kanë mbetur në nivelin e 'paqes normale,' dhe të atyre të Serbisë me Kosovën, të cilat janë në nivel të 'paqes së ftohtë.' Këto rezultate po ashtu dëshmojnë që intervenimi ushtarak i NATO-s e ka krijuar balancin e fortë ushtarak rajonal, ndërkohë që anëtarësimi në PpP i Serbisë e ka shënuar fillimin e epokës së mos-dominimit ushtarak në rajon.

Nga këndvështrimi i zgjedhjeve të sigurisë kombëtare të vendeve të Ballkanit Perëndimor për t'iu bashkangjitur NATO-s, kjo tezë ofron dëshmi se, nga njëra anë, aspiratat e tyre ishin të shtyra nga konstelacionet e tyre të kaluara dhe të tashme, të tilla si historia e tyre shtet-ndërtuese dhe dëshira për t'i takuar Perëndimit, dhe, nga ana tjetër, nga kërcënimet e perceptuara ndaj sovranitetit dhe integritetit të tyre territorial, që janë të lidhura me mungesën e mundësive të tyre kombëtare për t'u përballur me to në mënyrë të njëanshme. Lidhur me zgjedhjen e Serbisë për "neutralitetin ushtarak," e cila është shpallur në vitin 2007, teza ofron dëshmi që kjo është nxitur nga konstelacionet e kohës, domethënë, nga intervenimi i NATO-s i vitit 1999 dhe shpallja e pavarësisë së Kosovës, dhe, po ashtu, edhe nga dëshira për të zbatuar një taktikë të balancimit të butë ndaj Perëndimit, duke u afruar me Rusinë, dhe duke u shndërruar në një strehë të interesave të Kremlinit në rajon.

Për më tepër, kjo tezë po ashtu hedh dritë në karakterin e balancit të fuqive të luftërave në rajon, përmes futjes së nocioneve teorike të poleve patrone, poleve, sub-poleve dhe të poleve kompozite, dhe kjo po ashtu e identifikon korrelacionin e kostove të perceptuara të zgjerimit me benefitet e stabilitetit dhe të sigurisë që i fiton NATO-ja me anëtarësimin e shteteve të vogla.

Konkluzioni i zgjeruar i këtij disertacioni do ta paraqesë në një mënyrë të sintetizuar përgjigjet në pyetjet hulumtuese, testimet e hipotezave hulumtuese, arritjet teorike të disertacionit, dhe shfrytëzueshmërinë e tyre në rajonet e tjera jashtë Ballkanit Perëndimor, të cilat do të prezantohen në pjesët në vijim.

VI.1 Pyetjet Hulumtuese

Rezultatet hulumtuese të këtij disertacioni, që janë dhënë në kapitujt tre, katër dhe pesë, e japin një përgjigje të qartë në pyetjen e parë dhe të dytë hulumtuese, që kanë të bëjnë me rolin e NATO-s në sigurinë dhe stabilitetin në Ballkanin Perëndimor, me çështjen e dinamikës së transformimit të fuqisë midis vendeve të Ballkanit Perëndimor, dhe me NATO-n si një aleancë hiper-të-fuqishme, dhe këto do të elaborohen në vijim.

Pyetja Hulumtuese 1. Çfarë është Roli i NATO-s në Sigurinë dhe Stabilitetin e Ballkanit Perëndimor?

Për ta fituar një pamje më të mirë në rolin e NATO-s në Ballkanin Perëndimor, në tabelën vijuese është sintetizuar projeksioni i Aleancës i fuqisë së fortë (misionet e intervenimit ushtarak dhe të zbatimit të paqes), asaj të butë (instrumentet e partneriteti dhe të anëtarësisë), si dhe të mençur (zgjerimi).

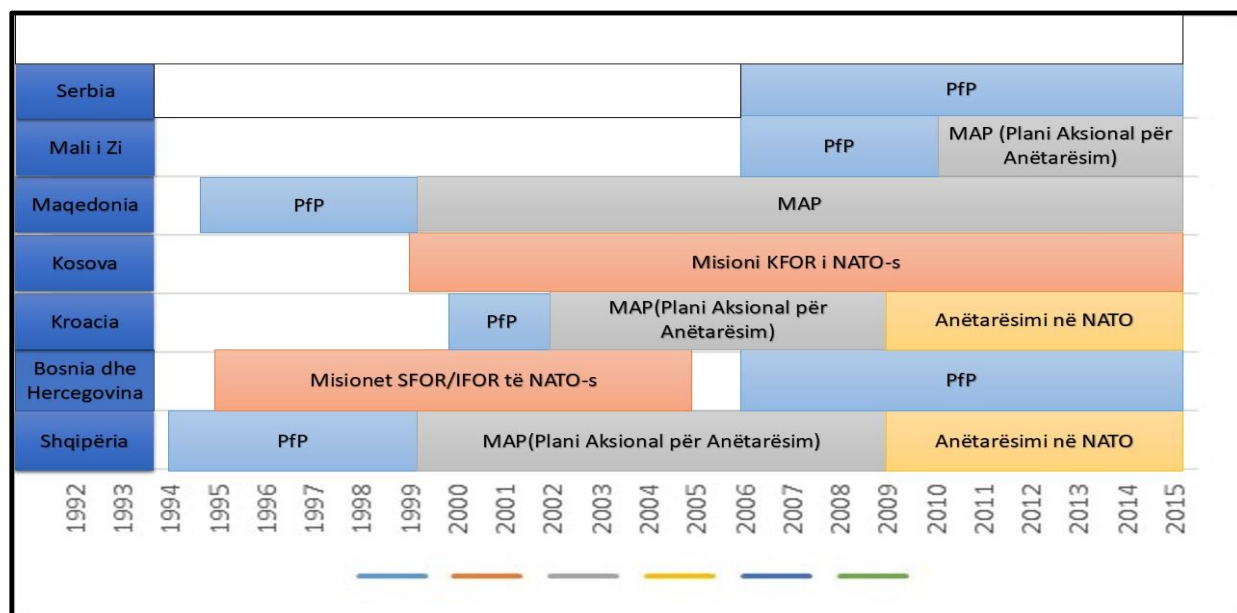


Tabela 6.1. Projektioni i NATO-s i Fuqisë së Fortë, të Butë dhe të Mençur në Ballkanin Perëndimor

Rezultatet hulumtuese tregojnë se intervenimi i NATO-s në Bosnje e Hercegovinë, dhe vendosja atje e misioneve IFOR/SFOR, në vitin 1995, i kanë transformuar marrëdhëniet ndërmjet Bosnjes e Hercegovinës, Kroacisë dhe Jugosllavisë, nga kushtet e luftës së nxehtë në ato të luftës së ftohtë, e të cilat zgjatën përafërsisht deri në fillimin e epokës së pas-Tugjmanit dhe të Milosheviqit, meqë gjatë kësaj periudhe, në mungesë të pranisë së NATO-s, armiqtë kanë mundur të shpërthejnë në çdo çast. Marrëdhëniet e paqes së ftohtë ndërmjet këtyre vendeve mbizotëruan në periudhën pas përfundimit të epokës së Tugjmanit dhe të Milosheviqit, dhe zgjatën derisa Bosnja e Hercegovina, Serbia dhe Mali i Zi në vitin 2006 iu bashkangjitën Partneritetit për Paqë (PfP). Anëtarësimi në PfP i Serbisë u shënuar po ashtu me një reduktim përmbajtësor të personelit të saj kombëtar ushtarak, dhe, si e tillë, e simbolizoi fillimin e periudhës së paqes normale ndërmjet Bosnjës e Hercegovinës, Kroacisë, Malit të Zi dhe Serbisë.

Stabiliteti dhe siguria regionale

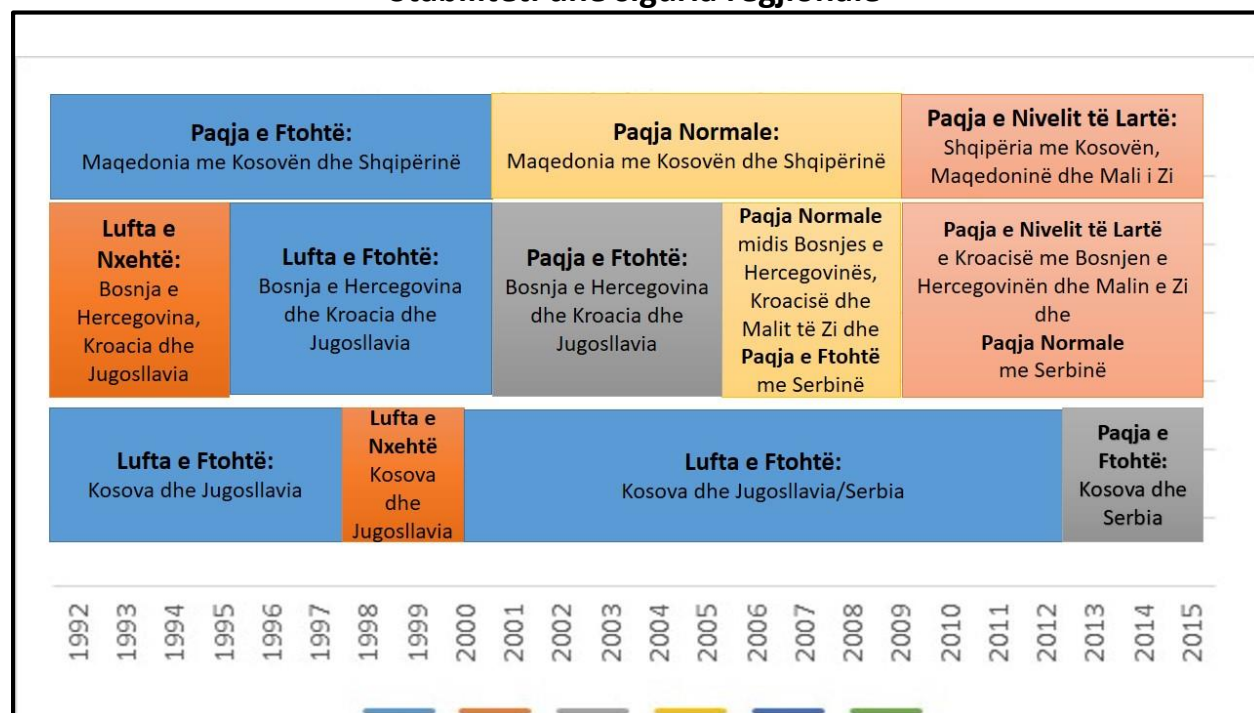


Tabela 6.2. Efektet e Përfshirjes së NATO-s në Stabilitetin dhe Sigurinë Rajonale

Një zhvillim në tërësi i ri lidhur me sigurinë dhe stabilitetin në rajon ishte anëtarësimi i Shqipërisë dhe Kroacisë në NATO, dhe ky i transformoi marrëdhëniet e tyre me vendet e tjera aspiruese nga kushtet e paqes normale në ato të paqes së nivelit të lartë, duke e bërë kështu luftën midis tyre të paimagjinueshme, gjë kjo që është pasojë e implikimeve të Nenit V, ashtu siç është paraqitur në kapitullin e pestë. Megjithatë, marrëdhënie e anëtarëve rajonalë të NATO-s, Shqipërisë dhe Kroacisë, me “Serbinë neutrale,” mbetën në nivelin e paqes normale, meqë në rrethanat aktuale lufta midis tyre është tejet e pagjasë, mirëpo, jo edhe e paimagjinueshme. Nga ana tjetër, intervenimi i NATO-s dhe vendosja e KFOR-it në 1999, i transformuan marrëdhëniet midis Kosovës dhe Serbisë/Jugosllavisë nga kushtet e luftës së nxehtë në ato të luftës së ftohtë, që zgjatën deri kur dy vendet e arritën marrëveshjen e parë për normalizimin e marrëdhënieve midis tyre, në prillin e vitit 2013. Ky moment i transformoi marrëdhëniet midis dy vendeve në kushtet e paqes së ftohtë, e cila, pa praninë e KFOR-it në Kosovë, do të mund të lëvizte fare lehtë në kahun e kundërt.

Pyetja Hulumtuese 2. Çfarë është Dinamika e Transformimit të Fuqisë midis vendeve të Ballkanit Perëndimor dhe NATO-s?

Rezultatet hulumtuese të kapitujve tre, katër dhe pesë, tregojnë se dinamika e transformimit të fuqisë ushtarake është zhvilluar nëpër tri faza, të cilat janë rezultate të formave të ndryshme të fuqisë që Aleanca i ka projektuar në rajon, ashtu siç është përmbledhur në tabelën në vijim.

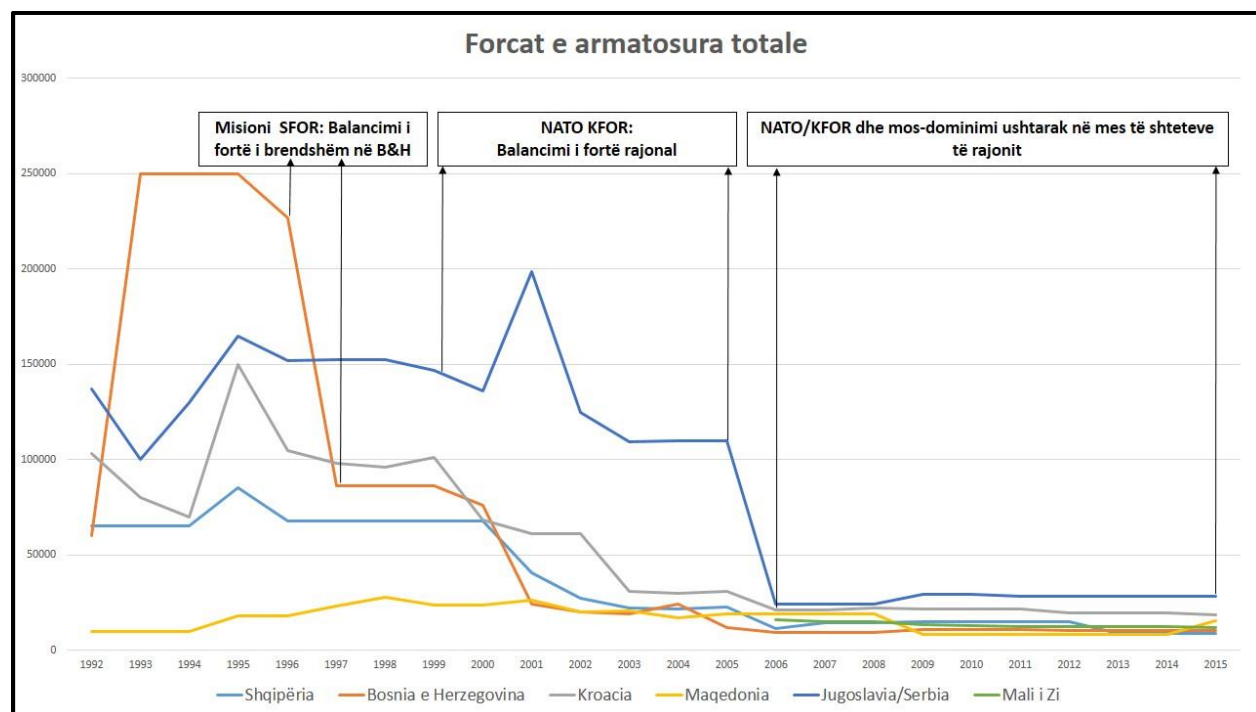


Tabela 6.3. Dinamika e Transformimit të Forcave të Armatosura në Ballkanin Perëndimor

Faza e parë është shënuar nga intervenimi i NATO-s në Bosnje e Hercegovinë (1995), dhe vendosja e mëpastajme e Misioneve SFOR/IFOR në këtë vend. Pos mandatit të vendosjes së paqes të këtyre misioneve, nën udhëheqjen e Shteteve të Bashkuara është vendosur edhe një balanc i brendshëm midis Forcave të Armatosura të Federatës së Bosnjes e Hercegovinës dhe atyre të Republikës Serbe, bazuar në premisat e “prapësimit të ndërsjellë.” Megjithatë, për shkak të faktit se mandati i këtyre misioneve të udhëhequra nga NATO-ja ishte i kufizuar në tërësi në kufijtë e Bosnjes e Hercegovinës, ato u dëshmuar si një forcë e pamjaftueshme për balancimin dhe përmbajtjen rajonale të Jugosllavisë/Serbisë revizioniste të Milosheviqit. Faza e dytë u shënuar nga intervenimi ushtarak i NATO-s dhe vendosja e misionit KFOR në Kosovë (1999), e cila pati një impakt domethënës në sigurimin e një balanci të fortë rajonal të fuqisë, meqë e shënoi

edhe fundin e mbizotërimit ushtarak të Serbisë në rajon. Fillimi i fazës së tretë përkon me anëtarësinë në PfP të Bosnjes e Hercegovinës, Malit të Zi dhe të Serbisë, e cila e simbolizon edhe fillimin e periudhës së mos-dominimit ushtarak ndërmjet vendeve të Ballkanit Perëndimor.

Kjo periudhë u shoqërua, po ashtu, me fundin e Misionit SFOR në Bosnje e Hercegovinë dhe me praninë e reduktuar të KFOR-it në Kosovë. Ky model i mos-dominimit ushtarak nuk ka pësuar ndryshime të theksuara pas anëtarësimit në NATO të Shqipërisë dhe Kroacisë në vitin 2009, i cili, ashtu siç u diskutua në kapitullin e katërt, u vijua nga rritja e vrullshme ekonomike e të gjitha shteteve të rajonit, dhe nuk u shoqërua me rritje të shpenzimeve ushtarake, si përpjesë e tyre në përqindjen e GDP-së kombëtare.

VI.2. Hipotezat Hulumtuese

Kjo tezë i ka parashtruar tri hipoteza hulumtuese që janë testuar me sukses në kapitujt tre, katër dhe pesë të këtij disertacioni.

Hipoteza 1: Projektimi i Fuqisë së Fortë të NATO-s e ka siguruar stabilitetin përmes përmbajtjes së synimeve të mundshme agresive brenda Ballkanit Perëndimor, e ka ri-balancuar fuqinë, dhe i ka parandaluar mundësitë për përshkallëzimin e konflikteve ndëretnike në rajon.

Kjo Hipotezë është diskutuar dhe testuar në kapitullin e tretë të këtij disertacioni. Gjetjet hulumtuese kanë treguar se projektimi i fuqisë së fortë të NATO-s, përmes intervenimeve dhe vendosjes së misioneve të udhëhequra nga Aleanca në Bosnje e Hercegovinë dhe në Kosovë, e kanë ndryshuar në një mënyrë thelbësore balancin e fuqive në Ballkanin Perëndimor, posaçërisht në pakësimin e fuqisë mbizotëruese të Jugosllavisë/Serbisë revizioniste, dhe po ashtu kanë shërbyer si një forcë ndëshkuese për përmbajtjen e synimeve të mundshme agresive të entiteteve të ndryshme nacionaliste brenda Ballkanit Perëndimor. Mirëpo, ky efekt është arritur në tërësi vetëm pas intervenimit të NATO-s në Kosovë, dhe vendosjes së Misionit të KFOR-it, meqë misionet IFOR/SFOR, si të vetme, nuk ishin në gjendje ta jipnin një efekt të tillë ndaj

Jugosllavisë/Serbisë. Përfshirja e NATO-s në Maqedoni në vitin 2001, po ashtu e parandaloi shpërthimin e një konflikti ndëretnik të një shkalle të lartë në këtë vend.

Hipoteza 2: Projektimi i fuqisë së butë të NATO-s, përmes Instrumenteve të Partneritetit dhe Anëtarësisë, e ka arritur transformimin doktrinar të politikave të sigurisë dhe të mbrojtjes të vendeve të Ballkanit Perëndimor.

Kjo Hipotezë është diskutuar dhe testuar në kapitullin e katërt të kësaj teze, dhe është dëshmuar se projektimi i fuqisë së butë të Aleancës e ka pasur si efekt të vetin reformën doktrinare të politikave të sigurisë dhe të mbrojtjes së vendeve të Ballkanit Perëndimor, dhe transformimin e forcave të armatosura masive, të bazuara në rekrutim, në ushtri relativisht të vogla dhe profesionale që thelbësisht u zhveshën nga aftësitë e tyre ofensive kundër fqinjëve të tyre. Rrjedhimisht, vendet e Ballkanit Perëndimor, janë duke u shndërruar gradualisht, nga konsumuesit e sigurisë në ofrues të stabilitetit, si dhe në eksportues të sigurisë, përmes pjesëmarrjes në Aleancë, ose në misionet paqeruajtëse të udhëhequra nga SHBA-të, me përjashtim të Serbisë, e cila, në një trajtë shumë të kufizuar, është duke marrë pjesë vetëm në disa ESDP misione, si dhe të Kosovës, pjesëmarrja e së cilës është e kufizuar për shkak të integritetit të saj jo të plotë në bashkësinë ndërkombëtare.

Hipoteza 3: Projektimi i Fuqisë së Mençur të NATO-s përmes zgjerimit është duke i mbyllur kufijtë ndërshtetërorë në Ballkanin Perëndimor.

Kjo Hipotezë është diskutuar dhe testuar në kapitullin e pestë të këtij disertacioni, dhe përfundon se nëse një anëtar i NATO-s ndërmerr hapa të njëanshëm për bashkimin me ndonjë shtet apo entitet tjetër jo-anëtar, apo me ndonjë shtet tjetër anëtar të NATO-s, ai mund të përballë me pasoja të rënda, të cilat mund të ndryshojnë, që nga suspendimi i anëtarësisë, e deri tek dëbimi nga Aleanca. Përballë këtij sfondi, Neni V ka implikime thelbësore, meqë ky, pos që e ofron një mbrojtje nominale të shteteve anëtare të NATO-s kundër çdo agësoni të jashtëm, po ashtu e ka

një efekt përmbajtës të aleatëve në rajon nga ndërmarrja e çfarëdo hapave të njëanshëm për bashkim, qoftë me shtetet apo entitetet e tjera jo-anëtare, qoftë me shtetet anëtare.

Duke patur parasysh se Serbia, nga njëra anë, është shteti i vetëm në rajon i cili nuk është aspirues për anëtarësim në NATO, dhe, nga ana tjetër, që pritet se ajo në një të ardhme të parashikueshme do të jetë në tërësi e rrethuar nga anëtarët e Aleancës, mund të përfundohet se projektimi i NATO-s i fuqisë së mençur është duke i mbyllur kufijtë ndërshtetërorë në Ballkanin Perëndimor, jo vetëm ndërmjet anëtarëve të NATO-s, por edhe midis vendeve aspiruese dhe Serbisë, dhe, si i tillë, i ka zbehur ambiciet e një pjese të elitës etnike shqiptare të Prishtinës dhe Tiranës, për bashkimin me Shqipërinë, dhe të një pjese të elitave etnike kroate të Zagrebit dhe Mostarit, për bashkimin me Kroacinë, dhe, që është më e rëndësishmja, i ka zbehur edhe ambiciet e elitave në Beograd për ripërtëritjen e projektit të “Serbisë së Madhe,” që ishte shkaku i shpërbërjes së përgjakshme të Jugosllavisë së Titos.

VI.3. Arritjet Teorike dhe Shfrytëzueshmëria e Rastit të Ballkanit Perëndimor: Mundësitë dhe Kufizimet

Pos dhënies së përgjigjeve në pyetjet hulumtuese dhe testimit të hipotezave hulumtuese, ky disertacion i ka dhënë edhe dy arritje origjinale teorike në teorinë e aleancave. E para është futja e *nocioneve të reja teorike të poleve patrone, të poleve, të sub-poleve dhe të poleve kompozite*, që e ka ofruar një kornizë për analizën e luftërave në ish-Jugosllavi përmes thjerrëzave teorike të balancit të fuqive, të dilemës së sigurisë së aleancës, dhe të nën-balancimit. Kjo kornizë analitike ka potencial për t'u zhvilluar më tutje në një koncept të plotë teorik për analizimin e konflikteve të tjera të armatosura të një natyre përfaqësuese, posaçërisht në luftërat indirekte të Rusisë me Moldavinë, Gjeorgjinë dhe Ukrainën, në konfliktin midis Armenisë dhe Azerbajxhanit për Nagorno Karabahun, në luftën siriane, dhe në konfliktin në Jemen.

Arritja e dytë teorike është futja e *Korrelacionit të Shkëmbimit Siguri–Stabilitet*, që hedh dritë në lidhjen midis kostove të perceptuara të zgjerimit të Aleancës dhe atyre të mbrojtjes kolektive, me benefitet e perceptuara nga kontributi i shteteve të vogla të reja anëtare për stabilitetin rajonal, dhe të të mirave të sigurisë që i fiton NATO-ja përmes anëtarësisë së këtyre shteteve. Ky korrelacion e jep një kornizë teorike për të kuptuarit e mënyrës së mendimit të Aleancës për pranimin e shteteve të vogla. Nëse testohet me rastet e raundeve paraprake të zgjerimit të NATO-s në Evropën Qendrore, në Baltik dhe në Ballkanin Lindor, si dhe me vendet aspiruese, si Gjeorgia dhe Ukraina, ky korrelacion e ka potencialin për t'u zhvilluar në një koncept teorik të plotë.

Bibliography

Books and Book Chapters

1. Ackermann, A. (2000). *Making Peace Prevail: Preventing Violent Conflict in Macedonia*. New York: Syracuse University Press.
2. Ahrens, G.H. (2007). *Diplomacy on the Edge: Containment of Ethnic Conflict and the Minorities Working Group of the Conferences on Yugoslavia*. Washington D.C: Woodrow Wilson Center Press.
3. Alesina A. and Spolaore, E. (2003). *The Size of Nations*, Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
4. Archer, C. Bailes, A.J.K, and Wivel, A. (Eds.). (2014). *Small states and International Security: Europe and Beyond*. London: Routledge.
5. Asmus, R.D. (1997), *NATO's Double Enlargement: New Tasks, New Members*. in Clay Clement (Ed.). *NATO and the quest for Post-Cold War Security*. Hampshire: MacMillan Press. LTD.
6. Asmus, R.D. (2002). *Opening NATO's Door: How the Alliance Remade Itself for a New Era*. New York: Columbia University Press.
7. Baldwin, D.A. (2016). *Power and International Relations: A Conceptual Approach*. New Jersey: Princeton University Press.
8. Barret, J. (1996). *NATO' Year of Study: Results and Policy Implications*. in Haglund, D.G. (Ed.). *Will NATO Go East?*, Kingston: Queen's University Press.
9. Baumann, R.F., Gawrych, G.W. and Kretchik, W.E. (2004). *Armed Peacekeepers in Bosnia*, Fort Leavenworth: Combat Studies Institute Press.
10. Bebler, A.A. (1999). *The Challenge of NATO Enlargement*, Westport. C.T. Praeger Publishers.
11. Bechev, D. (2017). *Rival Powers: Russia in Southeast Europe*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press.
12. Benson, B.V. (2012). *Constructing International Security: Alliances, Deterrence, and Moral Hazard*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
13. Biberaj, E. (1986). *Albania and China: A Study of an Unequal Alliance*. Boulder: Westview Press.
14. Biehl, H., Giegerich, B. and Jonas, A. (Eds.). (2013). *Strategic Cultures in Europe, Security and Defence Policies across the Continent*, Munich: Springer VS.
15. Bilinsky, Y. (1999). *Endgame in NATO's Enlargement: The Baltic States and Ukraine*. Westport, CT: Praeger.
16. Black, J.L. (2000). *Russia Faces NATO Expansion: Bearing Gifts Or Bearing Arms?*. London: Rawman & Littlefield.

17. Blank, S. (Ed.) (1998). *European Security and NATO Enlargement: A View from Central Europe*. Carlisle: Strategic Studies Institute, American War College.
18. Boland, F. (2017). *NATO and the Partnership for Peace*. in Kerr, A. and Miklaucic, M. (Eds.). *Effective, Legitimate, Secure: Insights for Defense Institution Building*. Washington D.C.: Institute for National Strategic Studies, National Defense University Press.
19. Bott, S., Hanhimäki, J.M. Schaufelbuehl, J.M. & Wyss, M. (2016). *Neutrality and Neutralism in the Global Cold War: Between or within the blocs?*. London: Routledge.
20. Bugajski J. & Assenova, M. (2016). *Eurasian Disunion: Russia's Vulnerable Flanks*. Washington D.C. The Jamestown Foundation.
21. Bugajski, J. (2004). *Ethnic Politics in Eastern Europe: A Guide to Nationality Policies, Organizations and Parties*. New York: M.E. Sharp.
22. Burg, S.L and Shoup, P.S. (1999). *The War in Bosnia-Herzegovina: Ethnic Conflict and International Intervention*. New York: M.E. Sharp, Inc.
23. Burton, J. (2018). *NATO's Durability in a Post-Cold War World*. New York: State of University of New York Press.
24. Čalić, M.J. (2000). *Kosovo in the twentieth century: A Historical Account*. in Schnabel A. and Thakur R. *Kosovo and the Challenge of Humanitarian Intervention: Selective Indignation, Collective Action, and International Citizenship*, Tokyo: United Nations University Press.
25. Campbell, J.W. (1995). *The Year the Future Began*, Berkley: University of California Press.
26. Carr, E. H. (1946). *The Twenty Years' Crisis, 1919-1939: An Introduction to the Study of International Relations*. 2nd Edition. London:, MacMillan and Co. Ltd.
27. Caspersen, N. (2010). *Contested Nationalism, Serb Elite Rivalry in Bosnia and Croatia in the 90s*. New York: Berghahn Books.
28. Caspersen, N. (2012). *Unrecognized States: The Struggle for Sovereignty in the Modern International System*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
29. Chamberlain, R. (2014). *Security Exchange Theory: How Great Powers Trade Security with Small States*, (Ph.D. Thesis). New York: Columbia University.
30. Charles, P. and Alan, A. (2006). *Encyclopedia of Historical Treaties & Alliances*. New York: Facts On File Inc.
31. Chislett, W. (2005). *Spain and United States: A quest for mutual rediscovery*. Madrid: Royal Institute Elcano for International and Strategic Studies.
32. Christopher, W. (2001), *Chances of Life Time*, New York: Scriber.
33. Clark, W. (2001). *Waging the Modern War: Bosnia, Kosovo and the Future of Combat*. New York: Public Affairs.
34. Clinton, B. (2004). *My Life*, New York: Knopf Publishing Group.

35. Collins, J. and Futter, A. (2015). *Reassessing Revolution in Military Affairs: Transformation, Evolution and Lessons Learned*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.
36. Crawford, J.R. (2007). *The Creation of States in International Law. Second Edition*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
37. Crump, L. (2015). *The Warsaw Pact Reconsidered: International Relations in Eastern Europe, 1955-1969*. London: Routledge.
38. Daadler, I.H. & O'Hanlon, M.E. (2000). *Winning Ugly: NATO's war to save Kosovo*. Washington D.C.: Brookings Institution Press.
39. Demjaha, A & Peci, L. (2015). *Insurgencies in the Balkans: Albanian Liberation Armies*. in Schnabel, A. & Gunaratna, R. (Eds.). *Wars from within: Understanding and Managing Insurgent Movements*. London: Imperial College Press.
40. Edström, H., Matlary, J.H. and Petersson, M. (2011). *NATO: The Power of Partnerships*. London: Palgrave MacMillan.
41. Eisenhower, S. (1997). *Russian Perspectives on the Expansion of NATO*. in Clemens, C. (Ed.). *NATO and the Quest for Post-Cold War Security*. London: MacMillan Press LTD.
42. Fox, A.B. (1959). *The Power of Small States: Diplomacy in Second World War*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
43. Geller, D.S. and Singer, D.J. (1998). *Nations at War: A Scientific Study of International Conflict*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
44. Gilpin, R. (1981). *War and Change in World Politics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
45. Glaurdic, J. (2011). *The Hour of Europe: Western Powers and the Breakup of Yugoslavia*. New Heaven: Yale University Press.
46. Goetschel, L. (1998). *Small States Inside and Outside European Union: Interests and Policies*. New York: Springer.
47. Gow, J. and Zverzhanovski, I. (2013). *Security, Democracy and War Crimes in Serbia*. London: Palgrave MacMillan.
48. Grow, J. (2000). *Diplomacy in the Post-Cold War World*. Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc.
49. Hall, R.H. (2000), *The Balkan Wars 1912–1913: Prelude to the First World War*. London: Routledge,
50. Hodge, C.C. (2013). *A Sense of Return, NATO's Libyan Intervention in Perspective*. in Hallams, E., Ratti, L. and Zyla, B. (Eds.), *NATO Beyond 9/11: The Transformation of the Atlantic Alliance*. London: Palgrave MacMillan.
51. Hasani, E. (2001). *Self-determination, Territorial Integrity and International Stability: The Case of Yugoslavia*. Ph.D. Thesis. Ankara: Bilkent University.
52. Holbrooke, R. (1999). *To End A War*, New York, The Modern Library.

53. Holsti, O. R., Siverson, R.M. and George, A. L. (Eds.). (1980). *Change in the International System*. Nashville: Westview.
54. Hosmer, S.T. (2001). *The Conflict Over Kosovo: Why Milosevic Decided to Settle When He Did*. Santa Monica: Rand Corporation.
55. Hunter, R. (1997). *Reforming and enlarging NATO*. in *Strategic Survey 1996/97*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
56. IISS (1998). *Strategic Survey 1997/98*. London: Oxford University Press.
57. IISS, *The Military Balance 1996* (1996). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
58. IISS. (1993). *Military Balance 1992*. London: Taylor and Francis Group.
59. Ikenberry, J.G. (2000). *After Victory: Institutions, Strategic Restraint, and the Rebuilding of Order after Major Wars*. New Jersey: Princeton University Press.
60. Independent International Commission on Kosovo (IICK). (2000). *Kosovo Report: Conflict, International Response, Lessons Learned*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
61. Ingebritsen, C., Neumann, I., Gstöhl, S. and Beyer, J. (Eds.) (2006). *Small States in International Relations*. Washington D.C.: University of Washington Press.
62. Ireland, T.P. (1981). *Creating the Entangling Alliance: The Origins of the North Atlantic Alliance*. Westport: Praeger.
63. Jazbec, M. (2001). *The Diplomacies of New Small States: The Case of Slovenia with some comparison from the Baltics*. Farnham: Ashgate.
64. Jeffries, I. (2002). *The Former Yugoslavia at the Turn of Twenty First Century: A Guide to the Economies in Transition*. London: Routledge.
65. Jesse, N.G. and Dreyer, J.R. (2016). *Small States in the International System: At Peace and at War*. Washington D.C.: Lexington Books.
66. Judah, T. (2008). *Kosovo: What Everyone Needs to Know*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
67. Katsirdakis, G. (2002). *Defense Reform and NATO*, in Gyarmati, I. and Winkler, Th. *Post-Cold War Defense Reform: Lessons Learned in Europe and the United States*. Dulles: Brassey's Inc.
68. Kaul, I., Conciacao, P. Le Goulven, K. and Mendoza, R.U. (Eds.). (2003). *Providing Global Public Goods: Managing Globalization*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
69. Keohane, R. (1980). The Theory of Hegemonic Stability and Change in International Economic Regimes, 1967–1977. in Holsti, O. R., Siverson, R.M. and George, A. L. (Eds.). (1980). *Change in the International System*. Nashville: Westview.
70. Kerr, A. and Miklaucic, M. (Eds.). (2017). *Effective, Legitimate, Secure: Insights for Defense Institution Building*. Washington D.C.: Institute for National Strategic Studies, National Defense University.

71. Kieninger, S. (2019). *Opening NATO and Engaging Russia: NATO's Two Tracks and the Establishment of the North Atlantic Cooperation Council.*, in Hamilton, D.S. and Spohr, K. (Eds). *Open Door NATO and Euro-Atlantic Security After the Cold War*. Washington D.C.: Brookings Institution Press.
72. Kipp, J.B. (April 1998). "From Prague"... After Paris and Madrid. in Stephen Blank(Eds). *European Security and NATO Enlargement After the Cold War*. Carlisle Barracks: Strategic Studies Institute. US War College.
73. Kissinger, H. A. (1957). *A World Restored: Metternich, Castlereagh and the Problems of Peace 1812–22*. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson.
74. Kleingeld, P. (Ed.). (2006). *Toward Perpetual Peace and Other Writings on Politics, Peace and History*, New Heaven and London: Yale University Press.
75. Koinova, M. (2013). *Ethno-nationalist Conflict in Post-Communist States: Varieties of Governance in Bulgaria, Macedonia, and Kosovo*. Berkley: University of California Press.
76. Kola, P. (2003). *The Search for Greater Albania*. London: Hurst & Company.
77. Kollander, P. (2004). *The Civil War in Former Yugoslavia and International Intervention*. in Morton, J.S. et all (Eds.). *Reflections on the Balkans Wars: Ten Years After Breakup of Yugoslavia*. London: Palgrave MacMillan.
78. Last, D. (2000). *Organizing Effective Peace-Building*. in Ramsbotham, O. & Woodhouse, T. (Eds.). *Peace – Keeping and Conflict Resolution*. London: Frank Cass Publishers.
79. Latifi, V. (2011). *NATO and EU: New Relations in Crisis Management*, Skopje: Friedrich Ebert Stiftung.
80. Liska, G. (1962). *Nations in Alliance: The Limits of Interdependence*. Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press.
81. Machiavelli, N. (2008). *The Prince*. Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company.
82. Marcu, B.H. (2009). *Essentials of Defence Institution Building*. Vienna – Geneva LAVAK.
83. Mayo, A. and Nohria, N. (2005). *In Their Time: The Greatest Business Leaders of the Twentieth Century*. Boston: Harvard Business School Press.
84. McCloy, J.J. (1969). *The Atlantic Alliance: its origins and its future*. New York: Columbia University Press.
85. McNerney, M.J. et al. (2014). *Assessing Security Cooperation as a Preventive Tool*. Santa Monica: RAND Corporation.
86. Mearsheimer, J. (2001). *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*. Ney York: W. W. Norton & Company Ltd.
87. Mearsheimer, J. (2018). *The Great Delusion: Liberal Dreams and International Realities*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
88. Mearsheimer, J.J. (1983). *Conventional Deterrence*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

89. Mesic, S. (2004). *The Demise of Yugoslavia: A Political Memoir*. Budapest: Central European University Press.
90. Miller, B. (2007). *States, Nations and Great Powers: The Sources of Regional War and Peace*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
91. Minot, J. (Ed.). (2013). *Thucydides: The War of the Peloponnesians and the Athenians*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
92. Morgenthau, H. (1971). *Politics among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace*. Fifth Edition. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc.
93. Mouritzen H. and Wivel, A. (Eds.). (2005). *The Geopolitics of Euro-Atlantic Integration*. London: Routledge.
94. Naim, M. (2013). *The End of Power: From Boardrooms to Battlefields and Churches to States, Why being in charge isn't what used to be?*. New York: Basic Books.
95. NATO. (2008). *NATO Handbook*. Brussels: NATO Public Diplomacy Division.
96. Nye, J.S. (1990) *Bound to Lead: The Changing Nature of American Power*. New York: Basic Books.
97. Nye, J.S. (2004). *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics*. New York: Public Affairs.
98. Nye, J.S. (2008). *The Powers to Lead*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
99. Nye, J.S. (2010). *Responding to my critics and concluding thoughts*. in Parmar, I. and Cox, M. (Eds.). *Soft Power and US Foreign Policy: Theoretical, Historical and Contemporary Perspectives*. London: Routledge.
100. Nye, J.S. (2011). *The Future of Power*. New York: Public Affairs.
101. Nye, J.S. and Keohane, R.O. (1977). *Power and Interdependence: World Politics in Transition*. Boston: Little Brown and Co.
102. Nye, J.S. and Welch, D.A. (2014). *Understanding Global Conflict and Cooperation: Intro to Theory & History*. London: Pearson Education Limited.
103. Oberschall, A. (2007). *Conflict and Peace Building in Divided Societies: Responses to Ethnic Violence*. London: Routledge.
104. Owen, D. (Ed.). (2013). *Bosnia – Herzegovina: The Vance/Owen Plan*. Liverpool: Liverpool University Press.
105. Parmar, I. and Cox, M. (Eds.). (2010). *Soft Power and US Foreign Policy: Theoretical, Historical and Contemporary Perspectives*. London: Routledge.
106. Paul, T.V., Wirtz, J. and Forman, M. (Eds.). (2004). *Balance of Power: Theory and Practice in 21st Century*. Palo Alto: Stanford University Press.
107. Perritt, H.H. Jr. (2008). *Kosovo Liberation Army: The Inside Story of an Insurgency*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

108. Peterson Ulrich, M. P. (2003). *The New NATO and Central and Eastern Europe: Managing European Security in the Twenty First Century*, in Krupnick, Ch. (Ed.). *Almost NATO: Partners and Players in Central and Eastern European Security*. Maryland: Rowman and Littlefield.
109. Phillips, D.L. (2012). *Liberating Kosovo: Coercive Diplomacy and US Intervention*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
110. Phillips, J. (2004). *Macedonia, Warlords and Rebels in the Balkans*. London: I.B.Tauris & Co Ltd.
111. Rakipi, A. (2008). *Weak States and Security: Rethinking the Balkans Post-Cold War Security Agenda*. Tirana: Albanian Institute for International Studies.
112. Ralser, K. and Thompson, W.R. (2005). *Puzzles of Democratic Peace Theory: Geopolitics and Transformation of World Politics*. London, New York and Shanghai: Palgrave MacMillan.
113. Ramet, S.P. (2005). *Thinking about Yugoslavia: Scholarly Debates about Yugoslav Breakup and the Wars in Bosnia and Kosovo*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
114. Raucchhaus, R. (Ed.). (2000). *Explaining NATO Enlargement*. Portland, Frank Cass Publishers.
115. Reiter, E. and Gartner, H. (Eds.). (2001). *Small States and Alliances*. New York: Springer.
116. Reka, B. (2003). *UNMIK as an international governance in post-war Kosova: NATO Intervention, UN Administration and Kosovar Aspirations*. Skopje: Logos.
117. Ripley, R. (1999). *The UN and NATO Campaign in Bosnia 1995*. Lancaster: Center for Defence and International Security Studies.
118. Rothstein, R. (1968). *Alliances and Small Powers*, New York: Columbia University Press.
119. Ruhle, M. (2013). *Reflections on 9/11: A view from NATO*, in Hallams, E., Ratti, L. and Zyla, B. (Eds.). *NATO Beyond 9/11: The Transformation of the Atlantic Alliance*. London: Palgrave MacMillan.
120. Schurman, J.G. (2010). *The Balkans War 1912 – 1913*. Memphis: General Books LLC.
121. Serwer, D. *From War to Peace in the Balkans, the Middle East and Ukraine*. London: Palgrave MacMillan.
122. Shaw, M.N. (2008). *International Law. Sixth Edition*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
123. Shrader, Ch. (2003). *The Muslim-Croat Civil War in Central Bosnia: A Military History 1992 – 1994*. College Station: Texas A&M University Press.
124. Shweller, R.L. (1998). *Deadly Imbalances: Tripolarity and Hitler's Strategy of World Conquest*. New York: Columbia University Press.
125. Singer, D.J. and Small, M. (1972). *The Wages of War 1816 – 1965: A Statistical Handbook*. New Jersey: Wiley.

126. Smith, M. (2000). *NATO Enlargement during the Cold War: Strategy and System in the Western Alliance*, London: Palgrave Macmillan.
127. Smith, M.A. (2006). *Russia and NATO since 1991: From Cold War through Cold Peace to partnership*. London: Routledge.
128. Snyder, G.H. (1997), *Alliance Politics*, Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press.
129. Solomon, G.B. (1998). *The NATO Enlargement Debate 1991-1997: Blessing of Liberty*. London: Praeger.
130. Tabeau, E. (Ed.) (2009). *Conflict in Numbers, Casualties of the 1990's Wars in former Yugoslavia (1991-1999)*, Belgrade: Helsinki Committee for Human Rights in Serbia.
131. Talbot, S. (2007). *The Russia Hand: A Memoir of Presidential Diplomacy*, New York: Random House.
132. Tarpley, W.G. and Chaitkin, A. (2004). George Bush: *The Unauthorized Biography*. Joshua Tree: Progressive Press.
133. Thomas N. and Mikulan, K. (2006). *The Yugoslav Wars (2), Bosnia, Kosovo and Macedonia*. Oxford: Osprey Publishing.
134. Toye, A. (2008). *America, the EU and Strategic Culture: Renegotiating the transatlantic bargain*. London and New York: Routledge.
135. Trap, J. (2011). *Sun Tzu: The Art of War*. London: Amber Books, Ltd.
136. Tsygankov, A.P. (2016) *Russia's Foreign Policy: Change and Continuity in National Identity*. London: Rowman & Littlefield.
137. Vetschera, H & Damian, M. (2007). *Security Sector Reform in Bosnia and Herzegovina*. in Brzoska, M. & Law, D. *Security Sector Reconstruction in Peace Support Operations*. London: Routledge.
138. Walt, S.M. (1987/1990). *The Origins of Alliances*. Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press.
139. Waltz, K. (1979/2010). *Theory of International Politics*. Long Grove: Waveland Press, Inc.
140. Weitzman, P.A. (2004). *Dangerous Alliances: Proponents of Peace, Weapons of War*. Palo Alto: Stanford University Press.
141. Worsley, P. and Kitromilides, P. (1979). *Small States in the Modern World: The Conditions for Survival*. Nicosia: Zanalis Print Limited.
142. Zimmermann, W. (1996). *Origins of a Catastrophe: Yugoslavia and Its Destroyers—America's Last Ambassador Tells What Happened and Why*. New York: Times Books.

Articles in Journals

1. Armitage, R.L. & Nye, J.S. (2007). A smarter, more secure America, CSIS Commission on Smart Power. Washington: CSIS.
2. Ashbrook, J. & Bakich, S.D. (2010). Storming to partition: Croatia, the United States, and Krajina in the Yugoslav War. *Small Wars & Insurgencies*. Volume 21. No.4.
3. Asmus, R. Kugler, R & Larrabee, S. (1993) Building a New NATO. *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 72, No.4.
4. Barry, Ch. (1996). NATO's Combined Joint Task Forces in Theory and Practice. *Survival*. Vol. 38, No.1.
5. Bearce, D.H., Flanagan, K.M. & Floros, K.M. (2006). Alliances, Internal Information, and Military Conflict Among Member States. *International Organization*. Vol.60. No.2.
6. Bee, R.J. (2000). Boarding the NATO train: Enlargement and national interests. *Contemporary Security Policy*, Vol. 21. No.2.
7. Bellamy, A. (2002). The new wolves at the door: Conflict in Macedonia. *Civil Wars*. Vol.5. No.1.
8. Bellamy, A.J. & Griffin, S. (2000). OSCE peacekeeping: Lessons from the Kosovo Verification Mission. *European Security*, Vol. 11. No.1.
9. Bensson, B.V. (2011). Unpacking Alliances: Deterrent and Compellent Alliances and Their Relationship with Conflict 1886-2000. *The Journal of Politics*. Vol.73. No.4.
10. Bluth, Ch. (1995). Arms Control and Nuclear Safety: The National and International Politics of Russia's Nuclear Arsenal. *Government and Opposition*. Vol. 30. No. 4.
11. Borawski, J. (1999). Partnership for Peace "Plus": Joint Responsibility for Euro-Atlantic Security. *Defense & Security Analysis*. Vol. 15, No.3.
12. Brooks, S and Wolfforth, W. Hard Times for Soft-Balancing. *International Security*. Vol. 30. No. 1.
13. Brown, M. (1999). Minimalist NATO: A wise Alliance knows when to retrench. *Foreign Affairs*, Vol.78. No. 3.
14. Brzezinski, Z. (2009). An Agenda for NATO: Toward a Global Security Web. *Foreign Affairs*. Vol. 88. No. 5.
15. Christoff, J.A. (2009). GAO Report on NATO Enlargement: Albania and Croatia. *Connections*. Vol. 8, No. 2.
16. Cohen, L.J. (1992). Post-Federalism and Judicial Change in Yugoslavia: The Rise of Ethno-Political Justice. *International Political Science Review*. Vol.13. No.3.
17. Dahl, R. (1957). The Concept of Power, *American Behavioral Science*. Vol.2. No.3.
18. Dardel, J.J. (2008). PfP, EAPC, and the PfP Consortium: Key Elements of the Euro-Atlantic Security Community. *Connections*. Vol. 7. No.3.
19. Deutch, K. & Singer, D. (1964). Multipolar Power Systems and International Stability. *World Politics*. Vol. 16.No.3.
20. Fried, M.B. (2012). The Cornerstone of Balkan Power Projection: Austro-Hungarian War Aims and the Problem of Albanian Neutrality, 1914–1918. *Diplomacy & Statecraft*, Vol.23, No.3.
21. Fryc, M. (2016). From Wales to Warsaw and Beyond: NATO's Strategic Adaptation to the Russian Resurgence on Europe's Eastern Flank. *Connections*. Vol.15. No.4.

22. Gallis, P.E. (July 1997). NATO: Article V and Collective Defense. Report for Congress. Washington D.C.: Congressional Research Service.
23. Gartzke, E. & Gleditsch, K.S. (2004). Why Democracies May Actually Be Less Reliable Allies. *American Journal of Political Science*. Vol. 48, No.4.
24. Georgijeva, L. (2010). Macedonia and NATO: Uneasy Path to Membership. *Security Dialogues*, Vol. 1, No.1. Skopje: University St. Cyril and Methodius, Faculty of Philosophy. Institute of Security, Defence and Peace.
25. Gerosa, G. (1992). The North Atlantic Cooperation Council. *European Security*. Vol. 1, No.3.
26. Gibler, D.M. & Welford, S. (2006). Alliances, Then Democracy: An Examination of the Relationship between Regime Type and Alliance Formation. *The Journal of Conflict Resolution*. Vol.50, No.1.
27. Granville, J. (1999). The Many Paradoxes of NATO Enlargement. *Current History*. Vol. 98, No. 627.
28. Holbrooke, R. C. (1995). America: A European Power. *Foreign Affairs*. Vol. 74, No.2.
29. Kamp, K.H. (2009). Towards a New Strategy for NATO. *Survival*. Vol.51. No.4.
30. Kaplan, L.A. (1969). The United States and the Origins of NATO 1946 – 1949. *The Review of Politics*. Vol.31, No.2.
31. Karajkov, R. (2008). Macedonia's 2001 ethnic war: Offsetting conflict. What could have been done but was not?. *Conflict, Security & Development*. Vol.8. No.4.
32. Keohane, R.O. (1969). Lilliputians' Dilemmas: Small States in International Politics. *International Organization*, Vol. 23, No. 2.
33. Kimball, A.L. (2006). Alliance Formation and Conflict Initiation: The Missing Link. *Journal of Peace Research*. Vol. 43, No. 4.
34. Klaiber, K.P. (1999). The Membership Action Plan: Keeping NATO's Door Open. *NATO Review*. Vol. 47. No. 2.
35. Knežević, S. (2015). Montenegro and NATO Challenges and Perspectives, *Security Dialogues*, Vol. 6, No.2, Skopje: University St. Cyril and Methodius. Faculty of Philosophy. Institute of Security, Defence and Peace.
36. Kolstoa, P. & Paukovic, D. (2013). The Short and Brutish Life of Republika Srpska Krajina: Failure of De-Facto State. *Ethnopolitics*, Vol.13. No.4.
37. Krauthammer, Ch. (1990). The Unipolar Moment. *Foreign Affairs*, Vol.70, No.1.
38. Kubo, K. (2010). Why Kosovar Albanians Took Up Arms against the Serbian Regime: The Genesis and Expansion of the UÇK in Kosovo. *Europe-Asia Studies*. Vol. 62. No.7.
39. Lai, B. and Reiter, B. (2000). Democracy, Political Similarity, and International Alliances. *The Journal of Conflict Resolution*. Vol. 44, No.2.
40. Lamb, Ch.J., Arkin, S. & Scudder, S. (2014). The Bosnian Train and Equip Program, A Lesson in Interagency Integration of Hard and Soft Power. *Strategic Perspectives*. No. 15.
41. Layne, Ch. (1997). From Preponderance to Offshore Balancing: America's Future Grand Strategy. *International Security*. Vol.22, No.1.
42. Leeds, B.A. (2003). Do Alliances Deter Aggression? The Influence of Military Alliances on the Initiation of Military Interstate Disputes. *American Journal of Political Science*. vol. 47, NO.3.
43. Leeds, B.A. (2007) Why Do States Abrogate Agreement?, *The Journal of Politics*, Vol. 69, No.4.

44. Mattes, M. (2012). Democratic Reliability, Pre-commitment of Successor Governments, and the Choice of Alliance Commitment. *International Organization*. Vol.66. No.1.
45. Mearsheimer, J and Walt, S. (2016). The Case for Off Shore Balancing: A Superior U.S. Grand Strategy. *Foreign Affairs*. Vol.95. No. 4.
46. Mertus, J. (2001). Serbia: Reimagining Europe's Outlaw Nation. *Journal of International Affairs*, Vol. 54, No. 2.
47. Miller, R.F. (1997).Tudjman's victory: Croatia, the UN, NATO and the US. *Nationalities Papers. The Journal of Nationalism and Ethnicity*. Vol. 25. Issue 3.
48. Nagy, B. (1997). Hungaria – Romania: Treaty of Understanding, Cooperation and Good Neighborliness. *International Legal Materials*. Vol. 36, No. 2.
49. Nation, C. (2010). NATO in the Western Balkans: A Force for Stability?. *South Eastern Europe*. Vol.35. No.1.
50. Nye, J.S. (1988). Neorealism and Neoliberalism. *World Politics*, Vol.40, No.2.
51. Nye, J.S. (2007). Get Smart: Combining Hard and Soft Power, *Foreign Affairs*. Vol.88. No.4.
52. Nye, J.S. (2008a). Security and Smart Power. *American Behavior Scientist*. Vol.51. No.9.
53. Nye, J.S. (2008c). Toward a Liberal Realist Foreign Policy: A memo for the next president, *Harvard Magazine*.
54. Odom, W.E. (1998). Russia's several seats at the table. *International Affairs*. Vol.74 No. 4.
55. Page, R.A. (2005). Soft Balancing against the United States. *International Security*. Vol. 30. No. 1.
56. Paul, T.V. (2005). Soft Balancing in the Age of US Primacy. *International Security*. Vol. 30. No. 1.
57. Pellet, A. (1992). The Opinions of the Badinter Arbitration Committee: A Second Breath for the Self-Determination of Peoples. *European Journal of International Law*. Vol. 3. No.1.
58. Posen, B.R. (2000). The War for Kosovo, Serbian Political- Military Strategy. *International Security*. Vol. 24. No.4.
59. Ruhe, V. (1993). Shaping Euro-Atlantic Policies: A Grand Strategy for a New Era. *Survival*, Vol.35, No.2.
60. Sarrote, M.E. (2019). How to Enlarge NATO: The Debate inside the Clinton Administration, 1993–1995. *International Security*. Vol. 44. No.1.
61. Schmitt, M.N. (2019). The North Atlantic Alliance and Collective Defense at 70: Confession and Response Revisited. *Emory International Law Review*. Vol. 34. No.1.
62. Schwartz, B. (1997). Permanent Interests, Endless Threats: Cold War Continuities and NATO Enlargement. *World Policy Journal*. Vol. 14. No.3.
63. Schweller, R.L. (2004). Unanswered Threats: A Neoclassical Theory of Underbalancing. *International Security*. Vol. 29, No. 2.
64. Sejdiu, B. and Peci, L. (2018). Engaging with the self-captive nation: Albania in the US official documents from 1945 to 1980, *Journal of South-East European and Black Sea Studies*, Vol. 18. No.1.
65. Smith, A. (1995). Alliance Formation and War. *International Studies Quarterly*. Vol. 39, No. 4.
66. Snyder, G.H. (1984). Security Dilemma in Alliance Politics. *World Politics*, Vol. 37, No. 4.
67. Solana, J. (1999). A defining moment for NATO: The Washington Summit decisions and the Kosovo Crisis. *NATO Review*. Vol. 47. No. 2.

68. Søndergaard, R.S. (2015). Bill Clinton's 'Democratic Enlargement' and the Securitization of Democracy Promotion. *Diplomacy & Statecraft*, Vol. 26, No.3.
69. Stojković, D. & Glišić, M. (2020). Serbia's Military Neutrality: Is It Economically Beneficial?, *Defence and Peace Economics*. Vol. 31. Issue 5.
70. Walt, S.M. (2009) Alliances in a Unipolar World. *World Politics*. Vol. 61, No.1.
71. Waltz, K. (2000). Structural Realism after the Cold War. *International Security*, Vol. 25, No.1.
72. Wandycz, P. S. (1981). The Little Entente: Sixty Years Later. *Slavonic and East European Review*. Vol. 59. No.4.
73. Wheaton, K.J. (September 2000) Cultivating Croatia's Military. *NATO Review*.
<https://www.nato.int/docu/review/articles/2000/09/01/cultivating-croatias-military/index.html>.
74. Whitaker, B.E. (2008). Soft Balancing Among Weak States? Evidence from Africa. *International Affairs*. Vol.86. No.5.
75. Whiteman, J. (2000). The Kosovo Refugee Crisis: NATO's humanitarianism versus human rights. *The International Journal of Human Rights*. Vol. 4, Issue 3-4.

Research Papers and Reports

1. Albert, E. (February, 2018). China's big bet on Soft Power. Backgrounder. Washington D.C.: Council on Foreign Relations.
2. Alcaro, R. & Lucarelli, S. (Eds.) (2013). *Dynamic Change: Rethinking NATO's Capabilities, Operations and Partnerships*, NATO Allied Command Transformation, Bologna: University of Bologna and Institute of International Affairs.
3. Armakolas, I. (November, 2010). *NATO and the Western Balkans: New Strategic Concept, Old challenges*. Athens Working Group: Transforming the Balkans. Athens: Hellenic Center for European Studies.
4. Bekaj, A. (2009). *The KLA and the Kosovo War: From Intra-State Conflict to Independent Country*. Berghof Conflict Research Report. Berlin: Berghof Foundation.
5. Carpenter, T.D. (17 March 1994). *U.S. Troops In Macedonia: Back Door To War?*. Foreign Policy Briefing No. 30. Washington D.C.: Cato Institute.
6. Dugolli, I. and Peci, L. (2005). *Enhancing Civilian Management and Oversight of the Security Sector in Kosovo*. London-Prishtina: Safer World and KIPRED.
7. Elcano. (2018). *Global Presence Report 2018*. Madrid: Elcano Royal Institute.
<http://www.globalpresence.realinstitutoelcano.org/media/1e7032b57492e684fa6a51dbef72ef9f.pdf>, retrieved on February 15, 2019.
8. Flockhart, T. (2014). *Cooperative Security: NATO's Partnership Policy in a Changing World*. Copenhagen: Danish Institute for International Studies.

9. Gallis, P.E. (July, 1997). NATO Enlargement: The Process and Allied Views. Report for Congress. Washington D.C.: Congressional Research Service.
10. Gardner, H. (1999). NATO Enlargement: Toward a Separate Euro-Atlantic Command. Washington D.C.: Federation of American Scientists.
11. Harland, D. (2017). Never Again: International Intervention in Bosnia and Herzegovina. London: UK Government Stabilization Project.
12. Hildreth, S.A. & Ek, C. (September, 2009). Long-Range Ballistic Missile Defense in Europe. Report for Congress. Washington D.C.: Congressional Research Service, <https://fas.org/sgp/crs/weapons/RL34051.pdf>, retrieved on September 15, 2020.
13. Jonson, P. (May 2010). The debate about Article V and its credibility: What is it all about?. Research Paper 58. Rome: NATO Defense College.
14. Kalemaj, I. (2014). Marrëdhëniet Kosovë – Shqipëri: Quo Vadis?. Tirana: Friedrich Ebert Stiftung.
15. Karatnycky, A. (October, 1997). How to think about Russia, Enlarging NATO: The Political, Economic and Cultural Dimensions. Alpbach: The New Atlantic Initiative.
16. Kendra, D. at all. (2017). PRIO Policy Brief. Trends in Armed Conflict, 1946–2016, Conflict Trends. Oslo: Peace Research Institute Oslo.
17. Kieninger, S. (2020). New Sources on NATO Enlargement from the Clinton Presidential Library. Washington D.C.: Wilson Center. <https://www.wilsoncenter.org/blog-post/new-sources-nato-enlargement-clinton-presidential-library>, retrieved on March 10, 2020.
18. Kingston R, (2017). The Lisbon Protocol at Glance. Fact Sheets & Brief. Washington D.C: Arms Control Association. <https://www.armscontrol.org/node/3289>, retrieved on February 10, 2020.
19. Litavski, H. (August 2012). The Controversies of Military Neutrality of Serbia. Belgrade: The New Century. Quarterly of the Center for Euro-Atlantic Studies.
20. McClory, J. (2015). Soft Power 30 Report 2015. Portland: Portland's Communication <https://portland-communications.com/publications/a-global-ranking-of-soft-power-2015/>, retrieved on February 15, 2019.
21. McClory, J. (2018). Soft Power 30 Report 2018, Portland: Portland's Communication <https://softpower30.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/The-Soft-Power-30-Report-2018.pdf>, retrieved on February 15, 2019.
22. Oest, K.J.N. The End of Alliance Theory. Working Paper 2007/3. Copenhagen: Institute of Political Science of the University of Copenhagen.
23. Peci, L. (2014). Kosovo in the Security and Defence Context of the Western Balkans. Policy Report. Prishtina: Kosovar Institute for Policy Research and Development (KIPRED).
24. Peci, L. and Demjaha, A. (February, 2020). Deconstruction of the Idea of Unification: The Future of Relations between Kosovo and Albania. Prishtina: KIPRED.
25. Perry, W.J. (February, 1999) Keeping the door open?, in Serfaty, S. (Ed.) NATO at 50, What Now, What Next, What Else?. European Studies Conference Report. Washington D.C.: CSIS.
26. Rękawek, K. (June, 2013). The Western Balkans and the Alliance: All Is Not Well on NATO's Southern Flank?. Policy Paper. Warsaw: The Polish Institute of International Affairs.
27. Sari, A. (October, 2019). Can Turkey be Expelled from NATO? It's Legally Possible, Whether or Not Politically Prudent, Just Security, New York: Reiss Center of Law, New York University

School of Law. <https://www.justsecurity.org/66574/can-turkey-be-expelled-from-nato/>, retrieved on September 15, 2020.

28. Sloan, S.R. (June 2006). Negotiating Article 5, NATO Review. <https://www.nato.int/docu/review/articles/2006/06/01/negotiating-article-5/index.html>. retrieved on September 15, 2020.
29. Tobias, P. (2006). Defense Reform and Conversion in Albania, Macedonia and Croatia. Policy Brief 34, Bon – Geneva: Bon International Center for Conversion and DCAF.
30. Wheatley, W.M. (2001). Partnership for Peace in a New Millennium, Strategy Research Project. Carlisle: The U.S. War College.

Personal Interviews

1. Altmann, Franc Lotar. Ph.D. Associate Professor, Bucharest State University. (2019 June 15). e-mail interview.
2. Biserko, Sonja. Former Yugoslav Diplomat, Director of the Helsinki Committee for Human Rights in Serbia. (2019, September 10). e-mail interview.
3. Bugajski, Janush. Ph.D. Senior Fellow, Center for European Policy Analyses (CEPA). (2019, June 10). e-mail interview.
4. Cikotic, Selmo. Ph.D. Former Defense Minister of Bosnia and Herzegovina. (2019, June 29). e-mail interview.
5. Demjaha, Agon. Ph.D. Former Ambassador of North Macedonia to Sweden, Associate Professor, University of Tetovo, (2019, June 17). e-mail interview.
6. Ejodus, Filip. Ph.D. Associate Professor, Faculty of Political Science, University of Belgrade, President of the Board, Belgrade Center for Security Policy. (2019, June 10). e-mail interview.
7. Gashi, Xhavit. General (Retired) Former Military Attaché of Kosovo in the United States of America. (2020, August 31). e-mail interview.
8. Hamidicevic, Sanjin. M.A, Center for Security Studies of Bosnia and Herzegovina. (2019, June 10). e-mail interview.
9. Hasani, Enver. Ph.D. Professor of International Relations, University of Prishtina. (2019, June 8) e-mail interview.
10. Joseph, Edward. Ph.D. Adjunct Professor, John Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies, Conflict Management Area, Senior Fellow, SAIS Foreign Policy Institute. (2019, June 23). e-mail interview.
11. Knezovic, Sandro. Ph.D. Senior Research Associate, Institute for Development and International Relations (IRMO), Zagreb. (2019, June 11). e-mail interview.
12. Mehdiu, Fatmir. Former Defense Minister of Albania. (2019, June 17). e-mail interview.

13. Pantev, Plamen. Ph.D. Director, Institute for Security and International Studies. Sofia. (2019, June 7). e-mail interview.
14. Phillips, D.L. Ph.D. Director of Human Rights Program, Columbia University. (2019 June 19).
15. Rakipi, Albert. Ph.D. Chairman, Albanian Institute for International Studies, Former Deputy Foreign Minister of Albania. (2019, June 27). e-mail interview.
16. R, M. Ph.D. US Scholar. (2019, June 23). Telephone interview.
17. Ruzin, Nano. Ph.D. Former Ambassador of North Macedonia to NATO, (2019, June 5). e-mail interview.
18. Sarajlic, Denisa. Ph.D. Security and International Relations Expert, Bosnia and Herzegovina. (2019, June 22). e-mail interview.
19. Schmunk, Michael. Ambassador. Retired German career diplomat and independent researcher, Former Head of the German Missions in Kosovo and Bosnia and Herzegovina. (2019, June 18). e-mail interview.
20. Sejdiu, Bekim. Ph.D. Former Ambassador of Kosovo to Turkey, Professor at the Faculty of Law, University of Prishtina. (2019, June 19). e-mail interview.
21. Serwer, Daniel. Ph.D. Scholar, Middle East Institute and Professor of Advanced International Studies, John Hopkins University. (2019, June 20). e-mail interview.
22. Shea, Jamie. PhD. Professor of Strategy and Security, University of Exeter. (2019, June 6). e-mail interview.
23. Starova, Arian. Ph.D. Former Foreign Minister and Deputy Defense Minister of Albania, Dean of the Faculty of Political Sciences of the UBT College, Prishtina, (2019, June 17). e-mail interview.
24. Wahlas, Alexis. Ph.D. Professor, Robert Schuman University, Strasbourg, Former Political Adviser, NATO Joint Force Command, Naples, Italy (2019, June 21). e-mail interview.
25. Zore, Gregory. Ambassador (Ret.) Former Diplomatic Advisor at the Geneva Center for Democratic Control of Armed Forces (DCAF), (2019, June 22). e-mail interview.

Documents

1. CIA. (1993, November). Combatant Forces in Former Yugoslavia. National Intelligence Estimate. Washington D.C.: Central Intelligence Agency.
2. CIA. (1994.a, July 17). The Albanian Armed Forces, National Intelligence Estimate. Washington D.C.: Central Intelligence Agency.
3. CIA. (1994.b, July 7). Albania: An Overview. National Intelligence Estimate. Washington D.C.: Central Intelligence Agency.
4. CIA. (February 1998), Terrorism Review, National Intelligence Estimate. Washington D.C.: Central Intelligence Agency.
5. Committee on Foreign Relations. (CFR). (2008, September 23). Report Rept. 110-27 110th Congress, U.S. Senate, Exec. Protocols to the North Atlantic Treaty of 1949 on the accession of Albania and Croatia. <https://www.congress.gov/110/crpt/erpt27/CRPT-110erpt27.pdf> , retrieved on September 1, 2020.
6. Delo. (1974). The Constitution of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. Ljubljana. <https://www.worldstatesmen.org/Yugoslavia-Constitution1974.pdf>, retrieved on March 11, 2020.
7. FAS. The Treaty Between the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics on the Reduction and Limitations of Strategic Offensive Arms and Associated Documents (START I), <https://fas.org/nuke/control/start1/text/index.html>, retrieved on February 15, 2020.
8. Ministry of Defense of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Sarajevo. (2005, June). Defense White Paper of Bosnia and Herzegovina.
9. Ministry of Defense of Croatia. Zagreb. (2015). Armed Forces Long-Term Development Plan 2015 – 2024. https://www.morh.hr/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/ltdp_en_2015.pdf, retrieved on July 10, 2020.
10. Ministry of Defense of the Republic of Macedonia. Skopje. (2012)..White Paper on Defence 2012.
11. Ministry of Defense of the Republic of Serbia. Belgrade. (2009). National Security Strategy of the Republic of Serbia.
12. Ministry of Defense of the Republic of Serbia. Belgrade. (2010). “White Paper on Defense of Republic of Serbia.
13. Morelli V. at all, (October, 2008). NATO Enlargement: Albania, Croatia and Possible Future Candidates, Report for Congress. Washinton D.C. Congressional Research Service.
14. Morelli, V. at all. (April 2009). NATO Enlargement: Albania, Croatia and Possible Future Candidates, Report for Congress, Washington D.C. Congressional Research Service.

15. NATO. (1949, April 4). The North Atlantic Treaty, Washington D.C.
https://www.nato.int/nato_static_fl2014/assets/pdf/stock_publications/20120822_nato_treaty_en_light_2009.pdf, retrieved on September 1, 2020.
16. NATO. (1990, June 7-8). Final Communiqué: Meeting of the North Atlantic Council at the Level of Foreign Ministers of 7–8 June 1990,
https://www.nato.int/cps/su/natohq/official_texts_23696.htm?selectedLocale=en, retrieved on September 5, 2020.
17. NATO. (1991, 7-8 November). The Alliance's New Strategic Concept, agreed by the Heads of State and Government participating in the Meeting of the North Atlantic Council.
https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_23847.htm, retrieved on February, 15 2020.
18. NATO. (1994.c, January 11). Press Release. The Brussels Summit Declaration,
https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_24470.htm?mode=pressrelease, retrieved on February 16, 2020).
19. NATO. (1994.a, January 10-11). Partnership for Peace: Invitation, Ministerial Meeting of the North Atlantic Council/ North Atlantic Cooperation Council.
<https://www.nato.int/docu/comm/49-95/c940110a.htm>, retrieved on March 8, 2020.
20. NATO. (1994.b, January 10-11). The Partnership for Peace Framework Document. Ministerial Meeting of the North Atlantic Council /North Atlantic Cooperation Council,
<https://www.nato.int/docu/comm/49-95/c940110b.htm>, retrieved on March 8, 2020.
21. NATO. (1995, September 3). Study on NATO Enlargement.
https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_24733.htm retrieved on February 17, 2020.
22. NATO. (1997.a, 27 May). NATO – Russia Founding Act,
https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_25468.htm, retrieved on February 20, 2020.
23. NATO. (1997.c, July 8). Madrid Declaration on Euro-Atlantic Security and Cooperation issued by the Heads of State and Government at the Meeting of the North Atlantic Council,
<https://www.nato.int/docu/pr/1997/p97-081e.htm>. retrieved on February 20, 2020.
24. NATO. (1997.b, May 30). Press Release. The Basic Document of the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council. <https://www.nato.int/docu/pr/1997/p97-066e.htm> retrieved on February 20, 2020.
25. NATO. (1999.a, April 24). Press Release NAC-S(99) 066, NATO Membership Action Plan approved by the Heads of the Government participating in the Meeting of the North Atlantic Council. https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_27444.htm?, retrieved on March 8, 2020.
26. NATO. (1999.b, April 25), NATO Press Release NAC-S(99) 69. Defence Capability Initiative, approved by the Heads of the Government participating in the Meeting of the North Atlantic Council. <https://www.nato.int/docu/pr/1999/p99s069e.htm>, retrieved on March 8, 2020.

27. NATO. (1999.c, April 24). The Alliance's Strategic Concept. Washington Summit. https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/official_texts_27433.htm?selectedLocale=en, retrieved on February 21, 2020.
28. NATO. (1999.d, April 23). Washington Declaration. <https://www.nato.int/docu/pr/1999/p99-063e.htm>, retrieved on February 21, 2020.
29. NATO. (2002.a, November 21) Press Release: Prague Summit Declaration, issued by the Heads of State and Government participating in the meeting of the North Atlantic Council in Prague, Czech Republic. https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_19552.htm, retrieved on March 8, 2020.
30. NATO. (2002.b, December 09). Operation Essential Harvest. <https://www.nato.int/fyrom/tfh/home.htm>, retrieved on March 8, 2020.
31. NATO. (2003, February 12). Operation Amber Fox. <https://www.nato.int/fyrom/tff/home.htm>, retrieved on March 8, 2020.
32. NATO. (2008, April 3). Bucharest Summit Declaration. https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/official_texts_8443.htm, retrieved on August 20, 2020.
33. NATO. (2009, October 22). NATO's Nuclear Forces in the New Security Environment, https://www.nato.int/nato_static/assets/pdf/pdf_topics/20091022_Nuclear_Forces_in_the_New_Security_Environment-eng.pdf, retrieved on February 15, 2020.
34. NATO. (2010.a, May 17). Expert Group Report. NATO 2020: Assured Security; Dynamic Engagement. <https://www.nato.int/strategic-concept/expertsreport.pdf>, retrieved on March 8, 2020.
35. NATO. (2010.b, November 19). Active Engagement, Modern Defence: Strategic Concept for the Defence and Security of the Members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation adopted by Heads of State and Government in Lisbon. https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_68580.htm, retrieved on March 8, 2020.
36. NATO. (2015, February 1). Kosovo Force: Key Facts and Figures. https://www.nato.int/nato_static/f12014/assets/pdf/pdf_2015_02/20150127_150201-kfor-placemat.pdf, retrieved on July 10, 2020.
37. NATO. (2017, June 9). NATO Topics. Individual Partnership Action Plans, last updated on June 9th, 2017, https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_49290.htm, retrieved on March 9, 2020.
38. NATO. (2017, June, 17). NATO Advisory and Liaison Team (NALT).
39. NATO. (2018, May 9). NATO Topics. Partnership Action Plan on Defence Institution Building, http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/topics_50083.htm, retrieved on March 9, 2020.
40. NATO. (2020, March 2). NATO Topics: NATO and Afghanistan. https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_8189.htm, retrieved on March 7, 2020.

41. Nitze, P. at all. (1954, April 14). NSC 68: United States Objectives and Programs for National Security. A Report to the President pursuant to the President's Directive of U.S. Washington D.C.: State Department. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1950v01/d85>, retrieved on June 10, 2019.
42. OSCE. (1990, November 19). Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe, Vienna, <https://www.osce.org/library/14087?download=true> retrieved on December 30, 2019.
43. OSCE. (2001, August, 31). Ohrid Framework Agreement, <https://www.osce.org/files/f/documents/2/8/100622.pdf>, retrieved on March 8, 2020.
44. Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina (PBH). Sarajevo. (2006, February). Security Policy of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina (in Bosnian language). http://www.mod.gov.ba/slike2014/02.28.20_1_Sigurnosna%20politika%20BiH.pdf. retrieved on July 10, 2020.
45. Solsten, E. and Meditz, S.W. (Eds.) (1988). Spain: A Country Study. Washington D.C.: GPO for the Library of Congress, 1988, <http://countrystudies.us/spain/>, retrieved on January 10th, 2020.
46. State Investigation and Protection Agency. Ministry of Security of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Sarajevo. (2012, February). Strategic Action Plan State Investigation and Protection Agency 2012-2014.
47. The Government of Montenegro. Podgorica. (2008, March 6). Presentation Document of the Montenegro – NATO Individual Partnership Action Plan.
48. The Government of the Republic of Albania. Tirana. (2004). The National Security Strategy of the Republic of Albania.
49. The Government of the Republic of Kosovo (GOK) (2016, June 15). Brussels Agreements: Implementation State of Play, Report Submitted to the European Union/European External Action Service. http://www.kryeministri-ks.net/repository/docs/Kosovo_Report_on_State_of_Play_in_the_Brussels_Dialogue_15_June_2016-signed.pdf retrieved on July 25, 2020.
50. The Government of the Republic of Kosovo (GOK). (2013, April 19) First Agreement of Principles Governing Normalization of Relations, http://www.kryeministri-ks.net/repository/docs/FIRST_AGREEMENT_OF_PRINCIPLES_GOVERNING_THE_NORMALIZATION_OF_RELATIONS,_APRIL_19,_2013_BRUSSELS_en.pdf, retrieved on July 26, 2020.
51. The Government of the Republic of Kosovo. Prishtina. (2014, March). Analysis of the Strategic Security Sector Review of the Republic of Kosovo.
52. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Serbia. (MFARS). (1934, February 9). Pact of Balkan Agreement between Yugoslavia, Greece, Romania and Turkey.
53. The Parliament of the Republic of Croatia. Zagreb. (2002, March 19) .Strategy for the Republic of Croatia's National Security. Class: 200-01/02-01/02.

54. U.S. State Department. (1992, May 23). The Lisbon Protocol, <https://2009-2017.state.gov/documents/organization/27389.pdf>, retrieved on February 15, 2020.
55. United Nations (1995, December 15). Resolution 1031(1995) adopted by the Security Council at its 3607th meeting. <https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/201088?ln=en>, retrieved on February 20, 2020.
56. United Nations. (1968). The Non-Proliferation Nuclear Treaty. London, Moscow and Washington. <http://disarmament.un.org/treaties/t/npt> retrieved on February 15, 2020.
57. United Nations. (1969, May 23). Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties. Entered into force on 27 January 1980. http://legal.un.org/ilc/texts/instruments/english/conventions/1_1_1969.pdf retrieved on September 15, 2020.
58. United Nations. (1978, August 23). Vienna Convention on Succession of States in Respect of Treaties. Entered into force on 6 November 1996. http://legal.un.org/ilc/texts/instruments/english/conventions/3_2_1978.pdf, retrieved on September 15, 2020.
59. United Nations. (1983, April 8). Vienna Convention on Succession of States in Respect of State Property, Archives and Debts. (Not entered into force). http://legal.un.org/ilc/texts/instruments/english/conventions/3_3_1983.pdf, retrieved on September 15, 2020.
60. United Nations. (1991, September 25). UNSC Resolution 713 (1991). [https://undocs.org/S/RES/713\(1991\)](https://undocs.org/S/RES/713(1991)), retrieved on March 10, 2020.
61. United Nations. (1995, November 30). The General Framework for Peace Agreement in Bosnia and Herzegovina S/1995/999. https://peacemaker.un.org/sites/peacemaker.un.org/files/BA_951121_DaytonAgreement.pdf, retrieved on March 11, 2020.
62. United Nations. (1996, December 12). March 11, 2020. <http://unscr.com/en/resolutions/1088>, retrieved on March 11, 2020.
63. United Nations. (1996, September). United Nations Protection Force, Former Yugoslavia – UNPROFOR. https://peacekeeping.un.org/sites/default/files/past/unprof_b.htm, retrieved on March 14, 2020.
64. United Nations. (1992.a, February 21). UNSCR Resolution 743 (1992) [https://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/RES/743\(1992\)](https://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/RES/743(1992)), retrieved on March 10, 2020.
65. United Nations. (1992.b, October 9). UNSC Resolution 781 (1992). <http://unscr.com/en/resolutions/781>, retrieved on March 10, 2020.
66. United Nations.a. (1999, June 7). Rambouillet Agreement: Interim Agreement for Peace and Self Government in Kosovo. S/1999/648.

https://peacemaker.un.org/sites/peacemaker.un.org/files/990123_RambouilletAccord.pdf,
retrieved on February 20, 2020.

67. United Nations. (1999.b, June 10). UNSC Resolution 1244/1999,
https://peacemaker.un.org/sites/peacemaker.un.org/files/990610_SCR1244%281999%29.pdf,
retrieved on February 20, 2020.
68. USIP. (1994, March 1). Washington Agreement signed by Bosnian Prime-Minister Haris
Silajdzic, Croatian Foreign Minister Mate Granic, and Bosnian Croat Representative Kresimir
Zubak.
https://www.usip.org/sites/default/files/file/resources/collections/peace_agreements/washagree_03011994.pdf, retrieved on March 11, 2020.

Online resources

1. Aliu, A. (2014, December 19). Si kaloi vizita e pare e Ibrahim Rugovës në Tiranë. Telegrafi.
<https://telegrafi.com/si-kaloi-vizita-e-pare-e-ibrahim-rugoves-ne-tirane/>, March 12, 2020.
2. Alliance Treaty Obligations and Provisions (ATOP) project <http://www.atopdata.org/> ,
retrieved on December 15, 2018.
3. Carol, R. (2001, March 19). UN envoy says country is close to the precipice. The Guardian.
<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2001/mar/19/balkans4>. retrieved on March 20, 2020.
4. CIA. The World Factbook. <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/rankorder/2004rank.html> retrieved on December 20, 2018.
5. Clinton Presidential Library, <https://clinton.presidentiallibraries.us/collections/show/18>,
retrieved on March 6, 2020.
6. Cooker, Ch. (2009, March 27). Commentary: Post-modern NATO, RUSI
<https://rusi.org/commentary/post-modern-nato>, retrieved on March 7, 2020.
7. Correlates of War (COW) Project, <http://www.correlatesofwar.org/data-sets>, retrieved on
December 15, 2018.
8. Der Spiegel. (1992, June 8). Interview with Ibrahim Rugova. Da spielen wir nicht mit.
<https://www.spiegel.de/spiegel/print/d-13681757.html>, retrieved on August 1, 2020.
9. Dielli. (December 2015). Presidenti Rugova: Kosova e pavarur në NATO e në BE dhe në
miqësi të përhershme me SHBA. <https://gazetadielli.com/presidenti-rugova-kosova-e-pavarur-ne-nato-e-ne-be-dhe-ne-miqesi-te-perhershme-me-shba/>,
retrieved on August 1, 2020.
10. Drozdak, W. (1999, June 6). Russia's Concession led to Breakthrough. Washington Post.
<https://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/inatl/longterm/balkans/stories/diplomacy060699.htm> , retrieved on February 21, 2020.

11. Erlanger, S. (1998, March 10). U.S and Allies Threaten to Impose Sanctions on Yugoslavia, New York Times.
<https://archive.nytimes.com/www.nytimes.com/library/world/031098yugo-sanctions.html>
retrieved on February 21, 2020.
12. EU Business (2013, June 13). Serbia, Kosovo exchange liaison officers.
<https://www.eubusiness.com/news-eu/serbia-kosovo.p71>, retrieved on July 26, 2020.
13. European Union External Action. (2020, February 24). European Union Force in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Operation Althea, <http://www.euforbih.org/eufor/index.php/about-eufor/background>, retrieved on March 11, 2020.
14. FAS. (1994, January 14). Moscow Declaration.
<https://fas.org/nuke/control/detarget/docs/940114-321186.htm>, retrieved on December 20, 2018.
15. Fezviu B. (2013, March 26), RTV Klan. Opinion. Pandeli Majko: Lufta në Kosovë [The War in Kosovo], <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eyU3FQSDyzU>, retrieved on March 12, 2020.
16. FocusEconomics (2018, November 8). The World Top 10 Largest Economies.
<https://www.focus-economics.com/blog/the-largest-economies-in-the-world>.
17. Hardin, L (2007, April 11). Russia threatening new cold war over missile defence, The Guardian, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2007/apr/11/usa.topstories3>, retrieved on August 20, 2020.
18. Haxhiu A. (2020, January 21). Klan Kosova. Zona B: Skender Hyseni.
https://youtu.be/F_cmu9l_bio, March 12, 2020.
19. Kelmendi, A. (2019, July 23). KTV. Rubikon: Ramush Tahiri.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xSoD3vgpkXY&feature=share>, March 12, 2020.
20. Lake, A. (1993, September 21). Speech "From Containment to Enlargement" delivered at the John Hopkins University, School of Advanced International Studies, Washington DC,
<https://www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/intrel/lakedoc.html>, retrieved on February 16, 2020.
21. Lavrov, S. & Dacic, I. (2020, June 18). The Kosovo knot: is a fair solution possible?. The Ministry for Foreign Relations of the Russian Federation. https://www.mid.ru/en/foreign_policy/asset_publisher/zwI2FuDbhJx9/content/sovmetstnaa-stat-a-ministra-inostrannyh-del-rossijskoj-federacii-s-v-lavrova-i-pervogo-zamestitela-predsedatela-pravitelstva-ministra-inostrannyh-del-101_INSTANCE_zwI2FuDbhJx9_redirect=https%253A%252F%252Fwww.mid.ru%252Fen%252Fdiverse%253Fp_id%253D101_INSTANCE_zwI2FuDbhJx9%2526p_lifecycle%253D0%2526p_state%253Dnormal%2526p_mode%253Dview%2526p_col_id%253Dcolumn-1%2526p_col_pos%253D2%2526p_col_count%253D6, retrieved on August 9, 2020.
22. Lippman, T.W. (1997, March 22). Clinton, Yeltsin Agree on Arms Cuts and NATO, Washington Post Foreign Service, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/inatl/longterm/summit/summit.htm>, retrieved on February 20, 2020.

23. Lugar, R. (1993, August 2). Media Release. NATO: Out of Area or Out of Business: A call for US leadership to revive and redefine the Alliance, Remarks Delivered to the Open Forum of the US State Department, <https://collections.libraries.indiana.edu/lugar/items/show/342#?c=0&m=0&s=0&cv=0&xywh=-4881%2C-375%2C14835%2C7495>, retrieved on February 16, 2020.
24. Mearsheimer, J. & Vera, S.V. (1999, April 19). Redraw the map, Stop Killing. New York Times. <https://www.nytimes.com/1999/04/19/opinion/redraw-the-map-stop-the-killing.html>, retrieved on March 20, 2020.
25. NATO. (2019, April 26). Peace support operations in Bosnia and Herzegovina. https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/topics_52122.htm. Retrieved on February 20, 2020.
26. NATO. (1999.e., March 23) Press Statement by Dr. Javier Solana, Secretary General of NATO, https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/opinions_27615.htm, retrieved on February 21, 2020.
27. Pavlic, V. (2017, January 30). Croatia Reintroducing Compulsory Military Training in Total Croatia News. <https://www.total-croatia-news.com/politics/16278-croatia-reintroducing-compulsory-military-training-in-2019#:~:text=After%20Croatia%20abolished%20compulsory%20military,whom%20600%20women%2C%20since%202008>. retrieved on July 20, 2020.
28. RFERL (1997, July 9). NATO: Achievements of the Madrid Summit. <https://www.rferl.org/a/1085615.html> February 20, 2020.
29. Sucic, D.S. and Matt, R. (2013, February 15). After years of toil, book names Bosnian war dead. Reuters. <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-bosnia-dead/after-years-of-toil-book-names-bosnian-war-dead-idUSBRE91E0J220130215>, retrieved on March 11, 2020.
30. The New York Times. (1999, March 24). In the President's Words: 'We Act to Prevent a Wider War'. (Transcript of the speech by President Clinton.) <https://www.nytimes.com/1999/03/25/world/conflict-in-the-balkans-in-the-president-s-words-we-act-to-prevent-a-wider-war.html>, retrieved on February 28, 2020.
31. The New York Times. (2008.a, February 22). Protesters attack U.S. Embassy in Belgrade. <https://www.nytimes.com/2008/02/22/world/europe/22kosovo.html>, retrieved on August 20, 2020.
32. The New York Times.(2008.b, March 18). UN accuses Serbian officials of encouraging Kosovo riots. <https://www.nytimes.com/2008/03/18/world/europe/18iht-kosovo.4.11227930.html>, retrieved on August 20, 2020.
33. The Sydney Morning Herald (2008, February 23). Putin calls Kosovo independence 'terrible precedent'. <https://www.smh.com.au/world/putin-calls-kosovo-independence-terrible-precedent-20080223-gds2d5.html>, retrieved on August 20, 2020.

34. US State Department (1997, May 9). Bureau of European and Canadian Affairs, Fact Sheet: The North Atlantic Cooperation Council, https://1997-2001.state.gov/regions/eur/nato_fsnacc.html, retrieved on February 15, 2020.
35. War Resisters International. (2008, August 22). Albania to end conscription by 2010, 22, <https://wri-irg.org/en/story/2008/albania-end-conscription-2010#:~:text=According%20to%20a%20report%20in,longer%20have%20compulsory%20military%20service>, retrieved on July 20, 2020.
36. Whitney C.R. (1999, January 29). NATO Says It's Ready to Act to Stop Violence in Kosovo. New York Times. <https://archive.nytimes.com/www.nytimes.com/library/world/europe/012999kosovo-nato.html>, retrieved on February 21, 2020.
37. World Bank Data, Military Expenditure, <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/MS.MIL.XPND.GD.ZS?locations=AL-BA-HR-XK-ME-MK-RS>, retrieved on July 25, 2020.
38. World Bank Data, Total Country Armed Forces Personnel, <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/MS.MIL.TOTL.P1?end=2016&start=1992&view=chart>, retrieved on July 25, 2020.
39. World Bank National Account Data, GDP (Current USD), <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.MKTP.CD?locations=AL-BA-HR-XK-RS-MK-ME>, retrieved on July 25, 2020.
40. Worldometer. <http://www.worldometers.info/world-population/population-by-country/>, retrieved on December 18, 2018.