Just War or just war?

Constructivist and Gramscian insights into the conflict in Kosovo and NATO's decision to intervene

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On the cover: an F14 'Tomcat', participating in Operation Allied Force, lands on the USS Theodore Roosevelt on May 4, 1999. US Navy photo by Photographer's Mate First Class Dennis Taylor. (Source: Official Department of Defense image archive 990503-N-6119T-001)

‘The wise man will wage just wars’
- Augustine of Hippo, 426 AD

‘We act to protect thousands of innocent people in Kosovo from a mounting military offensive. We 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. And we act to stand united with our allies for peace. By acting now we are upholding our values, protecting our interests and advancing the cause for peace.’
- William J. Clinton, March 23, 1999

Introduction

On March 24, 1999, NATO launched Operation Allied Force, a bombing campaign against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. The campaign was a response to the ongoing humanitarian crisis in Kosovo. Over the course of the previous year, hostilities between the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and the separatist Kosovo Liberation Army had escalated. The Yugoslav army launched a campaign of terror that resulted in the death of thousands of civilians and the displacement of several hundred thousand refugees. The United Nations Security Council passed several resolutions condemning the violence but did not authorise military action to end it. In March 1999, peace talks between the two sides broke down. Shortly afterwards, NATO commenced air strikes. Hostilities continued until June 10, when the Yugoslavian government in Belgrade agreed to a ceasefire and withdrew its troops from Kosovo. A NATO peacekeeping force was then formed which remains in Kosovo to this day.

NATO's decision to intervene in Kosovo has been the subject of extensive debate and controversy. US President Bill Clinton proudly called the intervention in Kosovo 'the first ever humanitarian war.'[1] At the time, however, states like Russia, China and India argued that NATO actions were illegitimate because of the absence of a mandate from the Security Council. Others criticised NATO for acting on its own interests rather than on humanitarian motives. NATO responded to these criticisms in three ways. Firstly, they advanced the argument that their actions were legal, referring to resolutions passed by the UN Security Council condemning the violence in Kosovo. Many observers have questioned the validity of this argument, instead preferring the oft-heard phrase 'illegal but legitimate.' Secondly, they stated that the conflict, with its potentially destabilising effect on the region, represented a security threat to NATO which warranted action by the alliance. Thirdly, they claimed a moral imperative to act in the face of human rights abuses. In a speech to NATO's peacekeeping forces in Kosovo, Clinton clearly stated his intentions. 'If somebody comes after innocent civilians and tries to kill them en masse because of their race, their ethnic background or their religion, and it's within our power to stop it, we will stop it.'[2] UK Prime Minister Tony Blair acknowledged that there were interests at stake: 'there are all those strategic reasons and they are important and I don't wish to diminish them in any way at all. But I think there is a proper sense of moral outrage at what Milosevic has done that we should not shy away from but should be proud of feeling.'[3] Without denying the strategic interests that were at stake, both Clinton and Blair appealed to a sense of moral responsibility to act in the face of a humanitarian crisis.

More than any other area of foreign policy, humanitarian intervention raises questions about a state's motivation to act. Claiming to act on ethical motives makes a politician vulnerable to all kinds of criticism, in particular the accusation that his stated motives are not pure or not valid or that they are nothing but window dressing to obscure less palatable motives. Sceptics question why a politician, much less an entire state, would stick out his head for anybody unless he would somehow benefit from it himself. This is based on the assumption that interests and values as motives are mutually exclusive. Even when they are both valid, one will usually be decisive, and it is usually interests. Scholars of international relations

1 R.C. Diprizio, *Armed humanitarians: US interventions from Northern Iraq to Kosovo* (2002), 130
2 Remarks by the president to KFOR troops, Skopje, June 22, 1999. available at: http://clinton2.nara.gov/WH/New/Europe-9906/html/Speeches/990622d.html
3 Press Conference Given by the NATO Secretary General, Mr Javier Solana, and the British Prime Minister, Mr Tony Blair, April 20, 1999. available at: http://www.nato.int/docu/speech/1999/s990420a.htm

have advanced different ideas on the relationship between interests and values in motivating state behaviour. The classical rationalist school, which comprises both the neorealist and the neoliberal traditions, maintains that ultimately, states always act to defend their own interests. Drawing on Kenneth Waltz, neorealists claim that the defining characteristic of the international system which distinguishes it from, for example, the domestic realm, is the absence of central, overarching authority. This results in anarchy and a system of self-help. States engage in a constant struggle to survive by maximising their power relative to other states. The key to understanding state behaviour in the international arena is therefore understanding how they defend their interests. To explain NATO's intervention in Kosovo, therefore, rationalists would try to identify what interests were at stake and what options the key players had to defend those interests. Moral arguments were insignificant except to justify the actions that were taken. Neoliberals agree with the main tenets of this narrative although they attach less causal significance to anarchy and point out that states can also pursue their interests through international cooperation.

The rationalist line of reasoning has strong explanatory power for classic security dilemmas like those of the Cold War. But when it comes to explaining issues like human rights and humanitarian intervention, it comes up short. The rationalists dismiss convictions and ideas as motivations for state actions. However, if moral arguments do not play a role in shaping state behaviour, why did human rights become an increasingly pressing issue during the 1990s? And why did NATO leaders feel such a strong need to appeal to humanitarian norms in defending their intervention in Kosovo? By reducing international politics to a system of self-help, rationalism fails to address the role of values and ideas in shaping state behaviour. A number of alternative explanations have gained popularity. One is the constructivist school. Constructivists like Alexander Wendt and Martha Finnemore agree with the rationalist claim that states primarily act to defend their own interests. However, they point out that state interests are not objective facts. Instead, perceptions of interests are shaped by state identities, which are socially constructed.[4] As a result, constructivists believe that ideas and norms can influence state behaviour. They argue that states act according to a 'logic of appropriateness' rather than a 'logic of consequences'.[5] Humanitarianism, constructivists maintain, is a social and cultural norm which, over the years, has developed to a point where it may warrant armed intervention.

Another approach to international relations draws on the ideas of Marxist thinker Antonio Gramsci to understand the modern world order. Gramsci developed a concept of hegemony which consists of not only coercive power, by which an actor can force others to comply with his wishes, but also of constructing consensus on the existing social order. A number of international relations scholars, such as Robert Cox and Stephen Gill, have used Gramsci's concept of hegemony to understand the modern world order.[6] The hegemon, in this case the United States and its allies, successfully propagates a world order comprising certain values, such as democracy and free trade, which most other states willingly comply with. If they fail to do so, the hegemon also possesses the material capabilities to bring them back into the fold. Neo-Gramscians agree with constructivists that norms and identities are essentially socially

4 J. Ruggie, 'What makes the world hang together? Neo-utilitatarianism and the social-constructivist challenge' in: *International organisation* 52:4 (1998), 863
5 M. Finnemore, *National interests in international society* (Ithaca 1996), 29
6 R. Cox, 'Social forces, states and world orders: beyond international relations theory' in: *Millennium – journal of international studies* (1981), pp. 126-155 and 'Gramsci, hegemony and international relations: an essay in method' in: *Millennium – journal of international studies* (1983), pp. 162-175

constructed. Both theories believe that there is a normative quality to state behaviour on the international scene. However, neo-Gramscian scholars trace everything back to material forces while constructivists are more interested in norms and ideas.

The neo-Gramscian perspective has not previously been applied to humanitarian intervention, but it does not require a large leap of the imagination to do so. An important characteristic of hegemony is that it involves articulating and defending a coherent world view based on a set of values. These values may include democracy and free trade, which can be seen as having a direct connection to the economic power base of the hegemon, but also human rights if this helps to lend coherence to the world view that is being propagated.[7] If the dominance of a state or an alliance of states relies on widespread acceptance of a set of values, any deviation from this presents a threat to the existing consensus and therefore the power base of the hegemon. In this situation, the use of coercive power may be warranted. From this perspective, the concept of universal human rights and the willingness to defend them with the use of military force can be regarded as an instrument of American or Western hegemony.

Historians often shy away from the use of theory in their research. With Ranke, they aspire to describe only 'wie es eigentlich gewesen', or how it actually happened. This is a good guiding principle, but it does not always do justice to the complex nature of historical facts and the events they seek to describe. The British physicist Sir William Henry Bragg wrote that 'the most important thing in science is not so much to obtain new facts as to discover new ways of thinking about them.' The task of the historian, then, is not to present all the facts uncritically, leaving it to the reader to pass judgement on them, but to make sense of the facts by studying them from every possible angle. This is where theory come in useful. One theory will place more weight on certain facts than on others, and make connections that are not always visible to the plain eye. Comparing theoretical approaches means acknowledging that there are different angles to a story, that there is more than one way to look at the facts. This is especially crucial for a controversial issue like humanitarian intervention. Constructivism and neo-Gramscianism are well-equipped to elucidate the role of values and norms in international politics, making these theories particularly relevant to the issue of humanitarian intervention.

In order to really understand what happened in Kosovo, we need to not only study the facts, but also examine different ways of looking at them. It is to this end that I will compare and contrast constructivist and neo-Gramscian perspectives to answer the question: why did NATO intervene in Kosovo? As we have seen above, NATO defended its actions on both a legal and a moral basis and on the right to defend their own security interests. This being a historical study, we will not get into the question of legality except in so far as it relates to the other two arguments. The most salient issue, then, is to what extent NATO acted on humanitarian motives, and to what extent they acted on their own interests. Was there legitimacy to the claim that they acted on the basis of values and not just interests, and how do these relate to each other? What norms and values were articulated, and how did they influence the way the war was fought and presented? What was the role of human rights, and was this fundamentally changing, signalling a normative shift? And finally, since this is an exercise in the use of theory, an overarching question will be how convincing both of these theories are in explaining NATO's decision to intervene in

7 M. Rupert, 'Alienation, capitalism and the inter-state system: towards a Marxian/Gramscian critique' in S. Gill, *Gramsci, historical materialism and international relations* (1993), 80

Kosovo.

This paper covers NATO's intervention in Kosovo, but the main emphasis will be on the United States. There are several reasons for this. The US was unquestionably the most dominant member of NATO. It contributed by far the largest number of military assets to the bombing campaign. In addition to this, it exercised clear leadership within the alliance. As one scholar put it: 'where the United States does not tread, the allies do not follow.'[8] NATO intervened in Kosovo because the US wanted it to, so in order to understand NATO's actions it makes sense to start with the US. The focus of my primary research is on public documents. I examine the official statements of the Clinton administration between January and June 1999, the period during which the Kosovo campaign was prepared and carried out. During this period, Kosovo was the subject of several presidential addresses and was discussed extensively in innumerable press briefings. In this way, the administration engaged in constant dialogue with the American public to explain and gain approval for their actions. This is useful for our purposes because values and norms are not constructed behind closed doors or in classified documents, they are articulated and debated in the public realm. The public discourse therefore reveals the normative context, the norms and values shared by the public and politicians. These primary documents will be supplemented by a large body of secondary literature which will be examined through the lens of the two theories.

The paper is structured as follows. The first chapter summarises the events surrounding the intervention in Kosovo based on the available secondary literature to establish the historical context. The second chapter opens with a more detailed discussion of constructivist theory to establish the framework from which to analyse the events. It then moves on to a closer examination of the official rhetoric of the Clinton administration on Kosovo. The third and final chapter will build on the findings of the constructivist analysis to examine what the neo-Gramscian perspective can add, again firstly by sketching the theoretical framework followed by an attempt to apply it to the case of Kosovo. The concluding chapter summarises the findings of this exercise and addresses the questions posed above. In addition to this, some remarks will be made on the utility of the two theories used for this paper and more generally on the use of theory in historical research.

8 Charles Krauthammer, 'The unipolar moment' in: *Foreign Affairs* 70:1 (1991), 24

I. NATO's intervention in Kosovo: historical overview

The international community was relieved in 1995 when the Dayton Accords brought an end to years of bloody conflict in the Balkans. In Europe and the United States, politicians and the public alike hoped that the region would finally know lasting peace. Within a few years, however, these hopes were jeopardised by conflict in Kosovo. In 1998, violence erupted between the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) and the Yugoslav armed forces. A year later, NATO launched an extensive air campaign against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia which ended in the withdrawal of Yugoslavian troops from Kosovo and the deployment of a peacekeeping force. What was the background to the violence in Kosovo? How and why did the international community, especially the US and NATO, become actively involved in the conflict? And how did the decision to launch air strikes against President Milosevic and his armed forces come about? These questions will be addressed in a historical overview of the crisis and international engagement with Kosovo, presented below.

Background of the conflict

Tensions between Serbs and Albanians in Kosovo go back as far as 1912, when Serbia and Montenegro conquered Kosovo from the Ottoman Empire in the First Balkan War. As a result, the Albanian people that made up a small majority of the population of Kosovo became part of Serbia, and not of the newly independent Albania. During the Second World War, Kosovo was briefly united with Albania under Italian rule and large numbers of Kosovar Serbs were expelled. When the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia was declared in 1945, however, Kosovo once again became a constituent of Serbia. Albanian nationalism gained ground during the 1980s as the Yugoslav Federation weakened. By this time, Albanians constituted 90 percent of the population of the province. In 1989, Serbia abolished Kosovar autonomy. The Albanian population responded by setting up a shadow government. In a referendum held in 1991, nearly 100 percent of Kosovar Albanians supported independence. Nonetheless, Serbia, which traditionally considered Kosovo the 'cradle' of the Serbian nation, refused to relinquish control of the province.[9]

Tension continued as the region was engulfed by war in the early 1990s. Yet Kosovo hardly figured in the Dayton Accords in 1995, which left Kosovar Albanians with the feeling that the international community had abandoned them.[10] It is true that until 1998, the media and the public in Western countries paid very little attention to Kosovo. It was overshadowed by the bloody conflicts in Croatia and Bosnia and the international diplomatic efforts to reach a peace settlement there. Western policymakers were aware of Kosovo but did not support independence like they had earlier for Slovenia and Croatia and eventually for Bosnia and Herzegovina and Macedonia, instead presenting Kosovo as an internal problem of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. During the Dayton peace talks, Western politicians refrained from putting Milosevic under pressure over Kosovo, fearing that this might jeopardise peace in Bosnia. Instead, they pursued a policy which Alex Bellamy has called *malign non-engagement*, which consisted of appeasing Milosevic and essentially sacrificing Kosovo to save Bosnia.[11]

9 Marie-Janine Calic, 'Kosovo in the twentieth century: a historical account' in: Albrecht Schnabel & Ramesh Thakur, *Kosovo and the challenge of humanitarian intervention: selective indignation, collective action and international citizenship* (2000), 19-23
10 *Ibid*, 28
11 Alex J. Bellamy, *Kosovo and international society* (2002), 66

This changed, however, in 1998. There were several reasons for this, both internal and external. Within Kosovo, exasperation with the lack of progress led to the formation of the KLA, a militant organisation which targeted Serbian authorities. In 1998, the Serbian government, in an effort to prevent further disintegration of the last remains of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, initiated a large-scale campaign against the KLA. In February, Serbian offensives against KLA strongholds left dozens of people dead, including a large number of civilians, women and children. The events immediately received high level attention in the US and Europe. The Contact Group which had monitored the situation in the Balkans since the early 1990s (France, Germany, Great Britain, Italy, Russia and the US), immediately condemned the attack, demanded that Serbia withdrew its forces from Kosovo and enter into a dialogue with the Albanian population and that humanitarian organisations be allowed to enter Kosovo. This swift response reflected exasperation with Milosevic and a conviction that firm, rapid and united action was necessary to prevent more bloodshed like that seen in Bosnia.[12]

Clinton administration officials were quick to condemn the violence in harsh terms. Secretary of State Madeline Albright stated that the United States would not 'stand by and watch Serb authorities do in Kosovo what they can no longer get away with in Bosnia.'[13] This is curious, given the fact that Kosovo at this point had hardly registered in public opinion polls and the administration was embroiled in the Lewinsky affair.[14] There are several possible explanations for this. One is that the second Clinton administration was more 'hawkish' than the first, with Madeline Albright replacing the more cautious Warren Christopher as Secretary of State and the similarly interventionist Richard Holbrooke appointed as ambassador to the UN.[15] Another is that there was a changing perception of political necessity. When the Dayton Accords were signed, Western politicians were convinced that appeasing Milosevic was the key to peace and stability in the Balkans. As the years went by, however, it turned out that they had misjudged him. The violence that erupted in 1998 confirmed that peace could only come if Milosevic were firmly opposed. The turmoil in Kosovo represented a threat to the fragile stability of the entire region.[16] As a result, in 1998 Kosovo quickly moved to the top of the agendas of Western leaders.

Diplomacy backed by credible force

For a full year, from the first outbreak of hostilities in Kosovo to the NATO air campaign, the United States and its European allies explored diplomatic solutions to the conflict. This policy was based on a number of considerations. For one thing, there was very little domestic appetite for a military intervention, especially in the United States, where Congress was critical of Clinton's foreign policy. Another issue was that there was no international consensus to lend legitimacy to NATO's action. The Security Council would never authorise a military intervention, because Russia and China would be sure to exercise their veto. Furthermore, a NATO intervention in the Balkan region was sure to antagonise Russia and endanger the fragile relationship which the US, NATO and the EU were building with that country. Finally, the NATO allies were divided amongst themselves on the question of whether it was necessary and legitimate to use force, and if so, what kind of force. NATO's actions, both in the diplomatic effort and in the bombing campaign which ensued, were clearly guided by these considerations.

12 Ivo H. Daalder & Michael O'Hanlon, *Winning ugly: NATO's war to save Kosovo* (2000), 24-28
13 *Ibid*, 24
14 Robert C. DiPrizio, *Armed humanitarians: US interventions from Northern Iraq to Kosovo* (2002), 135
15 Stephen Wertheim, 'A solution from hell: the US and the rise of humanitarian interventionism, 1991-2003 in: *Journal of genocide research* 12:3-4 (2010), 160
16 Bellamy, *Kosovo and international society*, 67

President Clinton faced a hostile Congress when it came to his foreign policy objectives. With the end of the Cold War and the demise of the Soviet threat, many questioned the necessity of American commitment to Europe and the rest of the world. It was time for Europe, liberated from the Soviet threat and increasingly unified, to begin to pull its own weight. Even Henry Kissinger, while recognising that the conflict in Kosovo had the potential to destabilise the region, maintained that this was a European problem which did not threaten American interests.[17] The limits of Congressional support for an armed intervention later became painfully clear when the bombing campaign did commence. A resolution to endorse the campaign was tied 213-213, while a resolution which refused funding for the commitment of ground troops was passed with 290-139 votes.[18] The Clinton administration knew from the beginning that securing the support of Congress was going to be a difficult task, and that it would first have to show that it had exhausted all diplomatic options, as well as making a strong case for the necessity to act.

In addition to this, it was clear from the beginning that a military intervention was unlikely to receive its mandate from the UN Security Council. Two of the five permanent members of the Security Council, Russia and China, were staunchly anti-interventionist and were sure to use their veto. This presented a problem for the US and their European allies. They had always attached great value to the UN as an instrument of international cooperation and consensus, but pushing this issue in the Security Council was was unlikely to be successful and sure to create division. Yet acting without consent could cause irreparable damage to the credibility of the Security Council. Either they could 'debilitate the organisation by trying but failing to use it. Or they could discredit the organisation by effectively ignoring it.'[19] Throughout 1998, the US and its allies chose the middle road. They worked through the Security Council to pass resolutions which condemned Serbian actions without authorising military action. But in their negotiations with Milosevic, they explicitly threatened military action if he did not comply with their demands.

The decision to pursue a diplomatic solution to the conflict was also influenced by lack on consensus within the alliance. As we have seen, in the United States many believed that Kosovo was the responsibility of the Europeans. A number of European countries did try to take a leading role in coordinating the response to Milosevic's actions in Kosovo, most notably Great Britain, which adopted a tough stance in early 1998, and France, which had explored diplomatic avenues as early as 1997.[20] British Prime Minister Tony Blair was the first to openly threaten with the use of force, in June 1998. He did not have the support of his European allies, however. Belgium, France and Germany openly questioned the legality of such an intervention, while Greece, Italy and Spain opposed it for political reasons.[21] For several European countries, especially France, an important priority was also not to antagonise Russia, which they believed to be central to European security. The European Union, meanwhile, was incapable of playing a meaningful role. It had no military capabilities and was still

17 Charles A. Kupchan, 'Kosovo and the future of US engagement in Europe: continued hegemony or impending retrenchment?' in: Pierre Martin & Mark R. Brawley, *Alliance politics, Kosovo and NATO's war: allied force or forced allies?* (2000), 77
18 *Ibid*, 76
19 Alan K. Henrikson, 'The constraint of legitimacy: the legal and institutional framework of Euro-Atlantic security' in: Martin & Brawley, *Alliance politics*, 46
20 Simon Duke, Hans-George Ehrhart and Matthias Karadi, 'The major European allies: France, Germany and the United Kingdom' in: Schnabel & Thakur, *Kosovo and the challenge of humanitarian intervention*, 129
21 Bellamy, *Kosovo and international society*, 86

haunted by its failure to successfully address the conflict in Bosnia several years earlier.[22] Whatever policy was pursued, therefore, was contingent on American leadership and would require a unified effort to forge consensus both within the alliance and outside it.

The strategy which was adopted has been described as diplomacy backed by credible force. On 31 March 1998, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Portugal, Sweden, the United Kingdom and the United States introduced a draft resolution to the Security Council which condemned the violence, demanded that both parties enter into negotiations, and introduced an arms embargo against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. The resolution appealed to Chapter VII of the UN Charter, by which it identified the situation as a threat to international peace and stability. Therefore, this was the first time that Kosovo was recognised as an international problem in its own right, rather than as an internal problem for Serbia.[23] Resolution 1160 was passed by 14 votes to 0, with China abstaining. Russia supported the resolution 'on the understanding that there was no threat to international peace and stability.'[24]

During the summer of 1998, international pressure was relaxed somewhat. By all appearances, Milosevic was stepping down his campaign against Kosovo, and NATO governments did not want to be seen as fighting the KLA's war. They were still not in favour of independence for Kosovo, nor could they be seen to be supporting a group which, only a few months before, the US special envoy to the Balkans, Robert Gelbard, had labeled a terrorist group.[25] In late July, however, Serbian troops launched another major offensive against the KLA, forcing 100,000 Kosovars to flee their homes. Against this background, resolution 1199 was introduced. It would take a full month before the Security Council succeeded in passing the resolution because Russia opposed any provisions that could imply the use of military force.[26] On September 23, the resolution was passed unanimously. Again, China abstained. Resolution 1199 was more firmly worded than resolution 1160 and blamed Milosevic and his government directly for the hostitilies, while reaffirming its commitment to the territorial integrity of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, thereby opposing Kosovar independence.[27]

Resolution 1199 stopped short of authorising the use of force if the warring parties failed to comply. Nonetheless, NATO soon began to threaten with air strikes unless Milosevic ended his campaign against Kosovo.[28] Already in June, 80 NATO warplanes had participated in an exercise over Albanian and Macedonian territory to show that they could mobilise air power against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. On September 24, one day after resolution 1199 was passed, NATO issued an activation warning for both limited air strikes and a phased air campaign. NATO Secretary-General Javier Solana warned that after all these threats, NATO credibility was now on the line. Several days later, another massacre took place in the village of Gornji Obrinje which claimed the lives of 21 women, children and elderly people. In the West, these images conjured up memories of Bosnia several years earlier. Yet instead of exploring military options, the United States sent Richard Holbrooke to Belgrade to enter into

22 Anne Deighton, 'The European Union and NATO's war over Kosovo: toward the glass ceiling?' in: Martin & Brawley, *Alliance politics*, 58
23 Bellamy, *Kosovo and international society*, 76
24 'Security Council imposes arms embargo on Federal Republic of Yugoslavia' UN Press release SC/6496 http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/1998/19980331.SC6496.html
25 'The KLA: terrorists or freedom fighters?' *BBC* June 28, 1998 http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/121818.stm
26 Daalder & O'Hanlon, *Winning ugly*, 40-42
27 S/RES/1199, 23-09-1998 http://unscr.com/en/resolutions/doc/1199
28 Henrikson, 'The constraint of legitimacy', 48

negotiations with Milosevic.[29]

Richard Holbrooke had been instrumental in negotiating the Dayton Accords and had first hand experience with dealing with Milosevic. Holbrooke reiterated NATO's threat of air strikes by having General Michael Short, who would be commanding the NATO operation, accompany him to Belgrade.[30] Various assessments of Holbrooke's mission have been offered, most of them influenced by the fact that it ultimately did not succeed in achieving a durable peace. Holbrooke did, however, succeed in obtaining a temporary cease-fire. Milosevic agreed to withdraw his forces from Kosovo and allow unarmed monitors into Kosovo to verify that he kept his word. In the short, term, with winter coming, this may have helped to prevent an acute humanitarian crisis. In the long run, however, it failed to solve the conflict and may have even made matters worse. Daalder & O'Hanlon believed Holbrooke's mission was little more than a way of delaying a difficult decision. It was 'one more indication that the aim was less to find a viable and lasting solution to the conflict than to push the final reckoning as far into the future as possible.'[31] There were a number of reasons why the Clinton administration might have been eager to buy time. For one thing, they may have hoped that a costly armed conflict could still be avoided. In addition to this, in order to defend a military intervention, they would first have to be able to convince the public that all other options had been exhausted.

The agreement brokered by Holbrooke did not provide a long respite. In December 1998, hostilities between the two parties resumed. On January 15, 1999, over 40 people were killed by Serbian armed forces in what appeared to have been a mass execution near the village of Racak. Serbian authorities claimed that the bodies belonged to KLA fighters who had been killed in combat. However, international observers and journalists who arrived the following day stated that most of the victims had been shot in the head or neck at close range, indicating that they had been executed.[32] The Racak massacre, as it soon came to be called, provoked international outrage and increased calls for action in the United States and Europe. US President Bill Clinton and NATO Secretary-General Javier Solana placed the blame for the killings on Serbian troops and promised that they would not tolerate such atrocities.[33]

In a final effort to pursue a diplomatic solution to the conflict, all the parties involved were called to a conference at Rambouillet, near Paris, to negotiate an end to the fighting. The agreement that was drafted at Rambouillet preserved the territorial unity of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia while restoring self-government to Kosovo. A NATO peacekeeping force numbering 30,000 troops would be deployed to Kosovo to ensure that both parties respected the terms of the agreement. Marc Weller, who was present at the conference as legal advisor to the Kosovo delegation, reported that the Yugoslav delegation barely participated in the initial talks but was in the end presented with a draft that was considerably more favourable for them than the initial text. Nonetheless, only the Kosovar delegation ultimately accepted the agreement, while the Yugoslav delegation refused to sign.[34] With the failure of the Rambouillet Conference, a military response from NATO was now imminent. International monitors began to withdraw from Kosovo in anticipation of air strikes. Meanwhile, the Serbian armed forces launched a large-scale

29 Daalder & O'Hanlon, *Winning ugly*, 43-45
30 Bellamy, *Kosovo and international society*, 95
31 Daalder & O'Hanlon, *Winning ugly*, 23
32 'Massacre in Kosovo' *BBC*, January 16, 1999 http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/256364.stm
33 'NATO crisis talks on massacre' *BBC*, January 17, 1999 http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/256453.stm
34 Marc Weller, 'The Rambouillet conference on Kosovo' in: *International affairs* 75:2 (1999), 250-251

campaign of ethnic cleansing.[35]

Was the Rambouillet Conference bound to fail? Some have argued that the terms presented at Rambouillet were impossible to accept for the Yugoslav delegation. As the leader of a sovereign nation, Milosevic could not possibly agree to 30,000 NATO troops being deployed on his territory, even if their only function was peacekeeping. While Kosovo would legally remain part of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, in practice it would mean yielding control of the province for years to come. For the Kosovar delegation, meanwhile, dropping the demand for independence was a huge concession. Perhaps the differences were simply too great. But if this was the case, why embark on negotiations in the first place? Daalder and O'Hanlon argued that the Rambouillet conference served one important purpose: to 'signal the end of the diplomatic road' and justify a resort to military means. They quote Sandy Berger as saying that 'we needed to demonstrate a real commitment to get a peaceful resolution in order to get the allies to go along with the use of significant force.' Likewise, an aide to Albright claimed that the purpose of the negotiations was 'to get the war started with the Europeans locked in.'[36] Bellamy disagrees with this assessment, stating that it was not the failure of the Rambouillet conference that finally convinced NATO to take action, but the campaign of ethnic cleansing that immediately followed it.[37]

Whichever factor was decisive, it was clear by the end of March 1999 that all diplomatic options had been exhausted. On the whole, the various diplomatic efforts that were undertaken to resolve the conflict do demonstrate the reluctance of NATO to address the conflict by means of force. The threat of force was used as a weapon to force the parties to negotiate but the credibility of this threat was undermined by NATO's obvious hesitance to act on it. As we have seen, this hesitance was caused by a number of factors, especially the lack of domestic, international and intra-alliance consensus. In the end, however, as Javier Solana observed, NATO's credibility would have been seriously undermined if its threats turned out to be an empty shell.

Operation Allied Force

On March 24, 1999, NATO launched Operation Allied Force against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. It was 6 days after the failure of the Rambouillet Conference. NATO leaders anticipated a short bombing campaign, believing that Milosevic would soon cave to the pressure. This proved to be a misjudgment, however, and it was not until June 10 that the campaign was suspended, after Milosevic accepted a cease-fire broadly based on the terms which had been negotiated at Rambouillet.

The NATO governments justified their resort to force in a number of ways. Firstly, it was aimed at averting a humanitarian disaster. Secondly, the credibility of NATO was at stake. Thirdly, it would be immoral to stand by while ethnic cleansing was taking place on the doorstep of civilised Europe. And finally, resolutions 1160 and 1199 legitimised an armed intervention.[38] The issue of legitimacy is important because it reflects on all the key obstacles identified earlier in this chapter: the need to achieve international consensus, to convince the public at home and to keep the alliance together. Even though neither resolution 1160 nor resolution 1199 explicitly authorised the use of force against Milosevic,

35 Bellamy, *Kosovo and international society*, 151
36 Daalder & O'Hanlon, *Winning ugly*, 89
37 Bellamy, *Kosovo and international society*, 156
38 Nicholas J. Wheeler, *Saving strangers: humanitarian intervention in international society* (2002), 265

members of NATO, with Great Britain in the lead, argued that these resolutions and the escalation of violence in Kosovo constituted grounds for military action. Russia and a number of other countries protested but did not succeed in getting support for a resolution condemning NATO's actions.[39]

The philosophical basis for humanitarian intervention originated in Augustine's 'Just War' principle and Thomas Aquinas' insistence that war is just when it is waged for the sake of doing good. The legal basis for humanitarian intervention can be traced back to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Genocide Convention, both adopted by the UN in 1948, and Chapter VII of the UN charter, which gives the Security Council the ability to sanction the use of force in situations which constitute a threat to international peace and security. During the 1990s, the Security Council increasingly invoked Chapter VII in response to humanitarian crises.[40] The British argued that earlier interventions in Somalia and Bosnia constituted a precedent for humanitarian intervention in Kosovo, even without explicit Security Council authorisation. The criteria for such an intervention were that there was convincing evidence of a severe humanitarian crisis, that there was no alternative to the use of force, and that the means chosen corresponded to the humanitarian objectives.[41] For the international audience, NATO maintained that its actions were legitimate because they were based on humanitarian grounds, and refuted accusations that their actions were illegal because they did not have explicit Security Council authorisation. On the other side, critics of NATO maintained that its violation of state sovereignty was an inexcusable breach of international law. The general consensus in the academic world is that NATO's actions cannot be justified in legal terms, but many have nonetheless agreed that there were moral grounds to act, concluding that the intervention was 'illegal but legitimate.'[42]

How convincing was the argument that humanitarian concerns constituted the basis for NATO's actions? Many observers have been skeptical about NATO's humanitarian motives. Critics pointed out that there were plenty of instances of more severe atrocities against civilians which were left unpunished by NATO.[43] It is true that the number of victims was low compared to earlier humanitarian crises in, for example, Rwanda and Bosnia. By March 1999, only 2000 had been killed. In addition to this, President Clinton's previous responses to the crises in Rwanda, Bosnia and Haiti did not give the impression that he was particularly concerned with human rights.[44] However, this argument neglects the hundreds of thousands of Kosovars that had been displaced and the fact that Milosevic had a clear record of violence in Bosnia. Adam Roberts believed that it was precisely the previous failures to stand up to humanitarian crises that motivated them to act resolutely in Kosovo. 'The NATO states were united by a sense of shame that in the first four years of atrocious wars in the Balkans, they had failed, individually and collectively, to devise coherent policies and to engage in decisive actions.'[45] This collective experience convinced NATO leaders that in Kosovo, they would have to act quickly and decisively, and do so together, to prevent a disaster like Bosnia from happening again.

39 Wheeler, 'Reflections on the legality and legitimacy of NATO's intervention in Kosovo' in: *The international journal of human rights* 4:3-4 (2000), 153, 156
40 Aidan Hehir, 'NATO's 'humanitarian intervention' in Kosovo: legal precedent of aberration?' in: *Journal of human rights* 8 (2009), 246-7
41 *Ibid*, 247-8
42 *Ibid*, 149
43 Noam Chomsky, *The new military humanism: lessons from Kosovo* (2000), 137
44 DiPrizio, *Armed humanitarians*, 143
45 Adam Roberts, 'NATO's 'humanitarian war' over Kosovo' in: *Survival* 41:3 (1999), 104

The humanitarian argument was both strengthened and weakened by the fact that the conflict in Kosovo immediately escalated when the bombing began. Western intelligence agencies had warned for some time that in the short-term, bombing Milosevic might just cause him to step up his campaign against the Kosovars.[46] On the other hand, there were rumours that Milosevic was already planning a massive campaign called 'Operation Horseshoe' which would encircle Kosovo and drive the Kosovar Albanians out. By acting quickly, NATO leaders argued, they could strike at Milosevic's armed forces and weaken their ability to wage war.[47] While it is true that the air strikes escalated the conflict on the ground in the short term, there is no way of knowing what would have happened or how many would have died if NATO had stood aside and let the events unfold.

The humanitarian motive was also undermined by the decision to rely on air power only. Much has been written about this decision, about the underlying reasons and about the degree to which it was successful. From the very beginning, President Clinton explicitly ruled out the use of ground troops. In addition to this, NATO planes were to fly at altitudes no lower than 15,000 feet to avoid Serbian air defenses. The idea that air strikes would be sufficient to force Milosevic to re-open negotations was based on the success of Operation Deliberate Force in 1995, which ultimately led to the Dayton Accords.[48] It has even been suggested that the reason NATO intervened in Kosovo was precisely because they believed it could be done using air power alone, making the costs reasonable.[49] Relying on air power meant that they could avoid the costs and risks involved in committing ground troops. Such an undertaking could seriously undermine domestic support for the operation as well as the unity of the alliance, since most members were reluctant to say the least to commit ground troops to Kosovo.[50]

However, the limits of the air campaign soon became apparent. Rather than bending to the pressure after a few days of being bombed, as NATO expected, Milosevic only hardened his resolve. NATO commanders did not have a plan B in case the chosen tactic did not work. As the bombing started, the Serbian armed forces intensified their attacks on Kosovo. Hampered by bad weather and forced to fly at high altitudes, NATO pilots were powerless to influence the situation on the ground. In addition to this, the impact of the bombing was limited by a strong desire on the part of the alliance to prevent collateral damage and civilian casualties, as this was sure to undermine domestic support for the war. As a result, the first month of bombing was largely ineffectual. Instead of putting Milosevic and his government under pressure, the bombing initially appeared to solidify his position in Serbia.[51]

The effectiveness of the air campaign increased after the first month, with the help of improved weather conditions and an expansion of targets. Yet after two months of bombing, it was not clear that Milosevic was any closer to giving in to NATO's demands. In this context, a growing number of people questioned whether air power was really sufficient to do the job. British Prime Minister Tony Blair again took the lead in advocating a change in tactics. On May 27, British Defense Minister George Robertson met with his French, Italian, German and American counterparts to discuss the possibility of sending ground forces to

46 Bellamy, *Kosovo and international society*, 165
47 Wheeler, *Saving strangers*, 268
48 Lawrence Freedman, 'The split-screen war: Kosovo and changing concepts of the use of force' in: Schnabel & Thakur, *Kosovo and the challenge of humanitarian intervention*, 423
49 Coral Bell, 'Force, diplomacy and norms' in: Schnabel & Thakur, *Kosovo and the challenge of humanitarian intervention*, 459
50 Wheeler, *Saving strangers*, 268
51 Colin McInnes, 'Fatal attraction? Air power and the west' in: *Contemporary security policy* 22:3 (2001), 37

Kosovo. He pledged 54,000 British troops to such an effort. At this meeting, France and Italy also agreed to commit troops, though not so many, if an invasion did take place. Germany and the United States did not commit at this time. On June 2, Sandy Berger wrote a memo to President Clinton in which he stated that the only viable option left was to stage a ground invasion. According to some inside sources, Clinton agreed with this assessment and was prepared to commit ground troops.[52]

The invasion never came, however, because on June 3, Milosevic and the Yugoslavian parliament accepted a cease-fire. It remains to determine whether NATO was really going to follow through on its threat, or whether it was only intended to sway Milosevic. There were many difficulties with committing ground troops. It was estimated that 200,000 troops would be necessary to launch an invasion of Yugoslavia. Mobilising such a force would take months, and no logistical preparations had as of yet been made. In addition to this, there was no agreement within the alliance on the necessity of launching a full-scale invasion.[53] The British pledge of 50,000 troops was intended to lower the threshold for the other allies, especially the US, which would have to commit the largest share of forces. The biggest obstacle to sending ground forces was what has been called the 'body bag syndrome.' If American soldiers were to return from a distant conflict in body bags, this would be sure to conjure up images of Vietnam and greatly undermine public support for the war.[54] On the other hand, as mentioned before, NATO could not afford to lose face over Kosovo. If air power proved insufficient to defeat Milosevic, eventually other options would have to be considered.

So did air power win the war? In the end, the tactics chosen did prove to be sufficient to bring Milosevic to his knees. However, other factors certainly contributed to the decision to accept a cease-fire. One was that NATO was evidently beginning to seriously consider the option of sending ground troops to Kosovo. Whether this threat was really credible at this stage is a matter of some discussion, but it was one that Milosevic certainly could not ignore. In addition to this, the situation on the ground in Kosovo was changing. A KLA offensive forced Serbian troops to concentrate, making them easier targets for NATO planes.[55] As a result, the Serbians were losing their strategic advantage. Rather than running the risk of being humiliatingly defeated by NATO and the KLA, Milosevic chose to accept a cease-fire.

It is also important not to underestimate the role of Russia. Although it had publicly condemned NATO's threat to intervene from the very beginning, Russia did vote for resolutions 1160 and 1199, unlike China which chose to abstain. The Russians were eager not to be isolated within the Security Council and hoped that these resolutions would serve as a final deterrent to Milosevic. In October 1998, Russian Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov reportedly told his British and American counterparts Robin Cook and Madeline Albright that if they took the Kosovo matter to the Security Council, Russia would be forced to veto it, but if they did not, Russia would just denounce it.[56] Again eager to avoid international isolation, Russian efforts were then directed at playing a major role in the peace settlement between NATO and Milosevic, and ensuring that there would be a Russian contingent in the peacekeeping force that was to be deployed. On June 12, 1999, the 'dash to Pristina', which saw Russian troops occupying Pristina airport

52 Daalder & O'Hanlon, *Winning ugly*, 158-160
53 Andrew L. Stigler, 'A clear victory for air power: NATO's empty threat to invade Kosovo' in: *International security* 27:3 (2002), 142-144
54 McInnes, 'Fatal attraction', 34
55 Ivo H. Daalder & Michael O'Hanlon, 'Unlearning the lessons of Kosovo' in: *Foreign policy* 116 (1999), 131
56 Paul Latawski & Martin A. Smith, *The Kosovo crisis and the evolution of post-Cold War European security* (2003), 94-95

before any NATO troops could be deployed, was probably intended to create a fait accompli to ensure that Russia would not be excluded from the peacekeeping effort. In any case, Russia's decision not to support Milosevic was a crucial element in bringing about a cease-fire.[57]

Conclusion

On June 10, the North Atlantic Council ratified the cease-fire agreement with Milosevic and the air campaign was suspended. Two days later, a NATO-led peacekeeping force entered Kosovo. The Kosovo Force (KFOR) included American, British, French German and Italian troops as well as a Russian contingent. President Clinton was exuberant, stating that from now on, 'if somebody comes after innocent civilians and tries to kill them en masse because of their race, their ethnic background or their religion, and it's within our power to stop it, we will stop it.'[58]

The reason the international community did not pay much attention to Kosovo before 1998 was that it was considered an internal problem of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. It was overshadowed by much bloodier conflicts in Croatia and Bosnia. During the negotiations for the Dayton Accords, western leaders considered Kosovo a concession that had to be made in order to achieve peace in Bosnia. In 1998, it became clear that appeasement had failed to bring peace to the region. The conflict in Kosovo threatened to escalate and many feared that it would spill over into neighboring countries, plunging the Balkans back into war. There was a sense of exasperation with Milosevic and his actions. Instability in the Balkans, strategically placed on the frontier between Europe and the Middle East, was perceived to threaten European security interests.

However, the reasons for international engagement with Kosovo should not just be sought within the country itself. There were a number of external factors at work. For one thing, the 1990s brought increasing international attention to the issue of human rights. From the failed intervention in Somalia, to general inaction in the face of genocide in Rwanda, to NATO's involvement in Bosnia, the international community was continually debating how it should act in the face of humanitarian crises. By the end of the 1990s, there was growing consensus in Europe and the United States on humanitarian norms and the legitimacy of using armed force to defend them. This conviction was accompanied by a more confident second term Clinton administration, with Madeline Albright leading the way towards a more interventionist United States.

Despite all of this, it would take a year before NATO decided to intervene with military force. The reasons for this can be traced back to the need to achieve domestic, international and intra-alliance consensus on the necessity to intervene and the means chosen. Here again, we see an interplay between internal and external factors. On the international scene, the NATO pursued a number of diplomatic options to bring about a solution to the conflict, knowing that an armed intervention would lead to serious resistance from countries like Russia and China as well as opposition at home. However, their efforts were overtaken by events within Kosovo itself, with especially the Racak massacre propelling the US and Europe towards more forceful action. Even then, NATO chose to stage a limited intervention, consisting only of air strikes.

57 *Ibid*, 103-105
58 Speech by Bill Clinton to KFOR Troops in Macedonia, 22 June 1999 http://clinton2.nara.gov/WH/New/Europe-9906/html/Speeches/990622d.html

This decision was necessary to appease the domestic audience, which would not have responded well to the image of soldiers returning in bodybags, and to preserve the unity of the alliance, which contained many opposing views on how best to respond to the crisis.

A historical overview like the one presented here goes a long way towards describing and explaining how and why NATO decided to intervene in Kosovo. However, the challenge lies not only in presenting the facts, but also in interpreting them. The following chapters will explore constructivist and Gramscian approaches and attempt to determine their value in helping us to understand the events.

II. Norms, identities and interests: a constructivist perspective

In order to better understand how and why NATO decided to intervene in Kosovo, this chapter will examine the events described above from a constructivist perspective. In the first part of the chapter, a number of important constructivist scholars will be introduced to give an overview of the main constructivist claims, as well as relating them to the issue of humanitarian intervention. The second part will go on to apply these to the case of Kosovo. This involves a study of the official statements by the Clinton administration and a discussion of what this reveals about the decision to go to war. Special attention will be paid to what norms and values were articulated, and how these were related to national interests. We will consider the social and cultural basis of both norms and interests and attempt to discover to what extent the intervention Kosovo represented a normative shift.

Constructivism and the issue of humanitarian intervention

Constructivism, at its core, is interested in the intersubjective dimension of human action. Max Weber wrote: 'we are cultural beings, endowed with the capacity and the will to take a deliberate attitude towards the world and to lend it significance.' This results in *social facts*, facts that do not exist in the material world, and which 'depend on human agreement that they exist and typically require human institutions for their existence.'[59] Therefore, constructivism is about human consciousness and its role in international life. Constructivists identify a number of shortcomings in the rationalist narrative: it treats identities and interests as given, it fails to consider how identities shape interests or account for changing identities of states and it neglects normative factors in shaping states' identities.[60] Constructivism seeks to address these questions by examining how identities and interests are constructed in the social realm. A central claim of constructivism is that beliefs or convictions have causal power instead of simply acting as 'theoretical fillers' or window dressing to justify foreign policy decisions. The behaviour of states is not just determined by material factors, but ideational factors also have causal and normative significance.[61]

If identities and interests are not given, where do they come from? Constructivists believe that identities and interests are socially constructed, rather than given by nature. Martha Finnemore states that 'much of international politics is about defining rather than defending national interests.'[62] States, like individuals, are embedded in social structures which define their identities. Likewise, interests are constructed by social interaction and 'defined in the context of internationally held norms and understanding about what is good and appropriate.'[63] The international system therefore does have causal power, but this is not, as neo-realists claim, because of its inherent anarchy but because it is the realm where norms, values and interests are constituted. Finnemore is particularly interested in norms. By definition, norms exist in the public realm, they are often a subject of discussion and they always have behavioural consequences. Interests are shaped in part by norms.[64]

Alexander Wendt, one of the most influential constructivists, explains that since states are social actors,

59 John Ruggie, 'What makes the world hang together? Neo-utilitarianism and the social constructivist challenge' in: *International organisation* 52:4 (1998), 856
60 Ibid, 863
61 Ibid, 868, 879
62 Martha Finnemore, *National interests in international society*, ix
63 *Ibid*, 2
64 *Ibid*, 22-27

they act according to the (collective) meanings they attach to objects. Therefore threats and interests are essentially constructed, not given by nature. For this reason, Wendt argues, British nuclear weapons are less threatening to the US than Soviet ones.[65] Despite the fact that they are constructed, the social structures that make up the international order are not necessarily dynamic. This is because firstly, social facts are presented as objective facts, and secondly, actors may find it in their interest to maintain relatively stable role identities. As a result, the international order is relatively stable despite there being no overarching authority and no objectively defined identities and interests.[66]

Wendt's perspective is important because it allows us to look at classic security issues and identify the social processes at work. In humanitarian intervention, or any case of armed intervention, states are undeniably the most important players. This is because it conflicts directly with one of the most basic assumptions of the international order, which Wendt would call an institution and Finnemore a norm: state sovereignty. Indeed, one of the fundamental facts about humanitarian intervention is that it represents a conflict between two powerful norms: state sovereignty and human rights. It poses the philosophical question of whether an individual has rights that transcend state boundaries (universal human rights), or whether his rights exist only by virtue of his belonging to a certain state. States might agree to set aside the fundamental notion of state sovereignty if they believe there to be legitimate reasons to do so. This introduces another fundamental element of international order: the notion of legitimacy.

Ian Hurd has studied the concept of legitimacy in relation to states' compliance with international norms and rules. He challenges the notion that coercion and self-interest are the only good reasons for a state to comply to international rules and norms, instead arguing that states may choose to do so because they genuinely believe the rules and norms to be legitimate. He quotes Mark Suchman who wrote that legitimacy is 'a generalised perception or assumption that the actions of an entity are desirable, proper or appropriate within some socially constructed system of norms, values, beliefs and definitions.'[67] To demonstrate this, Hurd examines the notion of state sovereignty and non-intervention. He notes that most of the world's borders are undefended and unchallenged, and that sovereignty is taken for granted by most states. He argues that the vast majority of states accept sovereignty, for themselves, but also for others, as a legitimate institution, a norm which has been so internalised that it is hardly a subject of discussion.[68] Even so, state sovereignty is not a given but a product of social construction in a normative international context. If the notion of sovereignty has this degree of legitimacy based on shared ideas and understandings, other institutions or norms like human rights might have the same potential. The process of deciding whether a norm is legitimate is one of intersubjective understandings and convergence of certain beliefs. By this logic, one norm can prevail over another norm if the actors involved come to see it as more legitimate. This gives rise to the possibility that the basic rules and agreements that make up the international system can gradually change over time.

The construction and proliferation of norms gives rise to a norm life cycle. In their article 'International

65 Alexander Wendt, 'Anarchy is what states make of it: the social construction of power politics' in: *International organisation* 46 (1992), 394-397
66 *Ibid*, 411
67 Ian Hurd, 'Legitimacy and authority in international relations' in: *International organisation* 53:2 (1999), 387
68 *Ibid*, 393-398

norm dynamics and political change,' Martha Finnemore and Kathryn Sikkink describe this cycle. The first stage is 'norm emergence,' where a new norm (such as the right for women to vote or the abolition of slavery) is pioneered by a number of 'norm entrepreneurs' and organisational platforms. The second stage is 'norm cascade', the point at which the norm gains the support of a large part of the public and powerful state and non-state actors. The third stage is 'internalisation', by which the norm becomes so widely accepted and institutionalised that actors hardly consider non-conformity. This final stage is where the norm is at its most powerful, but also difficult to identify because it is rarely articulated.[69] This echoes the Gramscian concept of hegemony, by which power relies on consensus or unspoken agreement with a certain social order.

The emergence of a norm is not always the result of a conscious campaign as described above. Some may evolve spontaneously or as a collateral to other political or cultural developments. What is important is that the construction and promotion of norms is a social practice. Peter Katzenstein notes: 'self-reflection does not occur in isolation, it is communicated to others. (…) State interests and strategies are shaped by a never-ending political process that generates publicly understood standards for action.'[70] States are social actors that act according to a broadly defined and understood set of values and standards of appropriateness. Even their perception of objective interests can be traced back to social facts. This is true for the domestic realm as well as in the international system.

As we have seen, the most important constructivist claim is that state behaviour, including perceptions of threats and interests, is defined by identity, which in turn can be traced back to social and cultural facts. This means that norms and beliefs influence how states act. Given the importance of norms and values in the debate about human rights and humanitarian intervention, it is worth examining this claim in more detail. Constructivists have identified a number of ways in which norms determine state behaviour. The first is where states act directly on their beliefs of what constitutes appropriate behaviour. The other two relate to how norms define the context and set the parameters for state behaviour on both the domestic and the international scene.

Martha Finnemore defends the claim that states act not only on interests but also on beliefs about standards of appropriate behaviour. She illustrates her case with a number of examples, one of which is the origins of the Geneva convention and the establishment of the International Committee of the Red Cross in nineteenth century Europe. The Geneva Convention and the ICRC originated in the work of a few committed individuals, all of them non-state actors, who succeeded in putting humanitarian norms on the international political agenda. States had no particular material interest in regulating the way wounded enemy soldiers were treated during war. But they did adopt these humanitarian norms, not because it was in their interest to do so, but because they believed it was the right thing to do.[71] This line of reasoning could be applied to other instances where humanitarian motives are involved. The attribution of direct causal power to norms is significant because it opposes the realist narrative which would state that norms are of secondary if any importance because states primarily act to defend their own interests.

69 Martha Finnemore & Kathryn Sikkink, 'International norms dynamics and political change,' in: *International organisation* 52:4 (1998), 895-905
70 Peter Katzenstein, 'Introduction: alternative perspectives on national security' in: Peter Katzenstein (ed.), *The culture of national security* (1996), 21
71 *Ibid*, 86-7

Where norms are articulated, realist scholars would always seek to identify the material motives, like geopolitical or strategic interests, that underlie them. In response to the example given above, skeptics might argue that states may have acted on humanitarian motives in a situation where they had nothing to gain in terms of material interests, but they certainly wouldn't have done so if they had anything to *lose*. In other words, norms can motivate states, but if a conflict between norms and interests arises, interests will always come out on top.

Constructivists respond to these criticisms in two different ways. To those that say that norms are nothing but a guise for more material motives, constructivists would respond that even then, the fact that norms are articulated and used to lend legitimacy to certain actions, demonstrates that norms do matter. The fact that norms are used to justify military action reveals the normative context, the values shared among politicians and the public. This sets the parameters for how politicians can and cannot act and shapes conceptions of interests. In the current international system, humanitarian norms are *permissive* in the sense that they make armed intervention on humanitarian grounds possible but do not require it in any given situation. If moral motives are used to justify a decision, the question to ask is whether that decision would have been made in the absence of credible moral motives. Norms are strengthened by institutionalisation, such as international agreements like the Geneva Convention and organisations like the United Nations. Multilateral consensus is an important prerequisite for a norm to be effective, because the construction and proliferation of norms is a social process.[72]

There is another way in which the articulation of norms can be said to have causal impact on a state's actions. It boils down to the idea that, once articulated as a cause for action, an actor's professed motives acquire a reality of their own. This argument was made most eloquently by Quentin Skinner in his 1974 article 'Some problems in the analysis of political thought and action.' He stated that when an actor professes certain motives for action, he must align his actions to be compatible with those motives. 'Even if the agent is not in fact motivated by any of the principles he professes, he will nevertheless be obliged to behave in such a way that his actions remain compatible with the claim that these principles genuinely motivated him.'[73] Additionally, when a political actor seeks to legitimise an action that would generally be considered illegitimate or immoral, he will try to adapt the normative context to correspond to his actions. If he succeeds in doing so, the 'innovative ideologist', as Skinner calls him, sets a precedent for other such actions.[74] In the discussion on humanitarian intervention, legal scholars often seek to determine whether an event like the intervention in Kosovo sets a legal precedent for other such interventions. However, the same argument can be made in a political context. If an actor succeeds in portraying his actions as legitimate, he makes the normative context more conducive to other such actions.

To sum up: constructivists believe that state identities and interests are not given, that they are socially constructed, that norms do matter and that states can act out of ideational or altruistic motives. Interests are not only defined by material facts but also by social facts. In fact, foreign policy decision making is more about defining national interests than about defending them. Furthermore, states act on certain

72 'Constructing norms of humanitarian intervention' In: P. Katzenstein (ed.), *The Culture of National Security: Norms and Identity in World Politics* (New York 1996), 153
73 Quentin Skinner, 'Some problems in the analysis of political thought and action' in: *Political theory* 2:3 (1974), 299
74 *Ibid*, 292-4

rules and norms which they believe to be legitimate even if it is not in their direct (material) interest to do so. These are important observations that can shed light on some of the key issues surrounding human rights and humanitarian intervention, particularly in helping us to understand the motives of states and the normative considerations which influence the decision of whether or nor to intervene in a conflict.

A constructivist perspective on Kosovo

The following section will apply constructivist insights to the decision to go to war over Kosovo. As will be clear from the above, constructivists are less interested in what goes on behind closed doors and more in the social processes that determine state behaviour. By definition, norms require broad consensus, which means that they are formulated and debated in the public realm. It makes sense, therefore, to study the official rhetoric of the Clinton administration to discover the normative context within which they operated. This includes all documents issued by the Office of the Press Secretary: Presidential (radio) addresses, remarks at public occasions, joint statements with other heads of state, fact sheets, letters to Congress, press conferences held by the President, his Press Secretary Joe Lockhart and senior members of the administration. These most notably include Secretary of State Madeline Albright, Secretary of Defense William Cohen, National Security Advisor Sandy Berger and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General Hugh Shelton. After offering an overview of the Clinton administration's rhetoric on Kosovo, we will proceed to analyse the claims that were made about the reasons to go to war. In particular, we will focus on how the national interest was presented and how humanitarian concerns figured in this narrative. The final section attempts to trace this narrative back to social facts and processes to understand how the decision to intervene was influenced by norms, values and ideas.

The Clinton administration's rhetoric on Kosovo

As we have seen, the White House had been engaging with Kosovo since early 1998. Public attention, however, was focused elsewhere. In the first weeks of 1999, Kosovo hardly figured in the official communications of the White House. The Press Secretary's daily press briefings were dominated by President Clinton's impeachment trials. Official statements tried to draw attention to domestic issues, like the budget surplus, environmental initiatives and education. When foreign policy did come up, it was mostly in relation to the no-fly zones in Iraq. Kosovo began to receive more attention after the Racak massacre on January 15, including a brief mention in the President's State of the Union address on January 19.[75] However, it would take another month before the White House began to pay serious attention to the issue in its official communications. On February 12, Clinton was acquitted from impeachment by the Senate. The following day, he held a radio address to the nation explaining the situation in Kosovo and the need for US engagement with the conflict.[76] It is easy to construe this as a conscious effort to divert attention away from the impeachment trials which had dominated the news cycles during the previous months, but we must also keep in mind that by this time, the talks at Rambouillet were under way and NATO was under increasing pressure to maintain its credibility.

By the end of March, when it became clear that the negotiations at Rambouillet and Paris had failed, Kosovo began to dominate both the White House communications and the questions asked by reporters

75 'State of the Union address' January 19, 1999
76 'Radio address by the President to the Nation' February 13, 1999

at press briefings. On March 24, Clinton announced that NATO had commenced air strikes against Serbian military targets and explained why it was in the interest of the US to do so, something he would continue to do over the following months. From the sheer volume of public statements on Kosovo, by the President, the First Lady as well as Albright, Berger and Cohen, it is clear that the administration pursued a conscious campaign to win public support for its actions. What is striking is that in arguing why it was necessary to intervene, they did not present strategic concerns and humanitarian motives as two contradictory motives. Instead, the Clinton administration emphasised that both of these matters were closely related.

The main message that comes through in all of these statements is that the humanitarian crisis in Kosovo constituted a very real threat to the vital national interests of the United States. Ending these human rights abuses and bringing peace to the Balkans was not only a moral imperative, it was also in the strategic interest. As Clinton stated, 'it is the right thing to do. It is also the smart thing to do, very much in our national interest.'[77] On February 26, 1999, the President gave a speech, dubbed by Sandy Berger 'the State of the Union for foreign policy.'[78] Drawing on the experiences of the First and Second World Wars, he made a strong plea for American engagement with the rest of the world, and especially with Europe. Referring to distant conflicts in the Balkans and elsewhere, he stated:

> 'The true measure of our interests lies not in how small or distant these places are, or in whether we have trouble pronouncing their names. The question we must ask is, what are the consequences to our security of letting conflicts fester and spread. We cannot, indeed, we should not, do everything or be everywhere. But where our values and our interests are at stake, and where we can make a difference, we must be prepared to do so. And we must remember that the real challenge of foreign policy is to deal with problems before they harm our national interests.'[79]

With these words, Clinton essentially outlined his main reasons for engaging in the conflict in Kosovo. He emphasised that the first precondition for sending American troops into war is that American interests are at stake, the second that American values are threatened, and finally that the US possesses the capabilities necessary to end the conflict. However, he fails to specify which interests are at stake. Nor does he define what values are worth fighting for. As for the issue of capabilities, there is no discussion of what the war was allowed to cost and how many American lives were worth risking to 'make a difference.' It is significant that Clinton brings together values and interests, but his choice of words leaves both of these categories wide open to interpretation.

So how did the crisis in Kosovo threaten American national interests? In his March 24 speech announcing the beginning of the bombing campaign, Clinton pointed out the strategic location of Kosovo on the faultline between Christian and Islamic civilisations and in a region still recovering from years of ethnic conflict. A conflict in Kosovo would have 'no natural national boundaries' and could easily spill over into the volatile region. Furthermore, refugee flows into Macedonia and Albania were already beginning to

77 'Remarks by the President on the situation in Kosovo' March 22, 1999
78 'Press briefing by National Security Advisor Sandy Berger' February 26, 1999
79 'Remarks by the President on Foreign policy' February 26, 1999

destabilise these countries. To top it off, the President pointed out that this was the region where World War I began, which was engulfed by World War II and which had seen bitter fighting and ethnic cleansing in the previous years. Again drawing a parallel to the earlier European wars of the twentieth century, he stated that failing to act now would make action more costly later. History had shown that 'if America is going to be prosperous and secure, we need a Europe that is prosperous, secure, undivided and free.' The Clinton administration acted because 'we care about saving innocent lives; because we have an interest in avoiding an even crueller and costlier war; and because our children need and deserve a peaceful, stable, free Europe.'[80]

White House rhetoric on Kosovo contained repeated references to World War II and the Holocaust. On April 12, during the 7th Millennium evening entitled 'The perils of indifference: lessons learned from a violent century', the President, the First Lady and Elie Wiesel drew direct parallels between the Holocaust and what was happening in Kosovo. The President stated that 'when we see people forced from their homes at gunpoint, loaded onto train cars, their identity papers confiscated, their very presence blotted from the historical record, it is only natural that we would think of the events which Elie has chronicled tonight in his own life [the Holocaust].' But this time, the US would not stand by while the horrors unfolded.[81] Likewise, the more recent events in Bosnia were referenced to draw attention to Milosevic's previous record of violence as well as NATO's success in stopping him.[82] Sometimes explicit comparisons were made, but often just the mention of mass graves or of people being deported in train cars was enough to evoke memories of the Holocaust and Bosnia. These images were familiar to the American public. The Holocaust still serves as the ultimate example of evil and the failure of the world to stand up to it. Putting the conflict in Kosovo in these terms made it difficult for critics to refute the argument that the United States had a moral responsibility to act.

In a press conference on March 25, 1999, National Security Advisor Sandy Berger addressed questions on the legitimacy of NATO's actions. Among other things, he addressed the criticism that NATO acted without a clear UN mandate, by claiming that Security Council resolutions 1199 and 1203 spoke out clearly on the issue of Kosovo. However, he went on to say that NATO reserved the right to act without explicit UN approval in situations which posed a threat to its stability and security.[83] Berger was also asked whether NATO's actions established a precedent for humanitarian interventions. He responded that each situation should be assessed on its own merits, but that, given his previous actions in Croatia and Bosnia, for Milosevic to invoke the right to sovereignty was 'rather a weak argument.'[84] This echoes an observation that many scholars of humanitarian intervention have made: that states may forfeit the fundamental right of sovereignty when they engage is massive human rights abuses against their own population.[85] In defending the legitimacy of NATO's actions, then, the National Security Advisor appealed both to the right to act unilaterally where vital national interests are at stake, and to the moral argument that the norm of state sovereignty is subordinate to the norm of universal human rights.

In press briefings, reporters repeatedly questioned the decision to limit the campaign to air strikes. From

80 'Statement by the President to the nation' March 24, 1999
81 'Remarks at Millennium evening. The perils of indifference: lessons learned from a violent century' April 12, 1999
82 'Remarks by the President to air base personnel' Spangdahlem Air Base, Germany, May 5, 1999
83 'Press briefing by National Security Advisor Sandy Berger' March 25, 1999
84 *Ibid*
85 Stephen Garrett, *Doing good and doing well: an examination of humanitarian intervention* (1999), 181

the very beginning, President Clinton and his aides stressed that they had no intention of putting ground troops in a combat situation. Ground troops would only be used in a 'permissive environment', in other words, if Milosevic agreed to allow NATO troops into Kosovo for peacekeeping purposes. The air campaign was intended to persuade him to do so. However, many questioned whether air strikes would be sufficient to achieve the administration's stated objectives: to protect the Kosovars from Serbian aggression and restore the autonomy of Kosovo. Press Secretary Joe Lockhart repeatedly evaded questions to this effect, stating that the administration believed air strikes to be sufficient to achieve the military objectives, which were to limit Milosevic's ability to wage war on the Kosovar people and declining to comment on military operations.[86] One reporter concluded that a disjuncture existed between the administration's portrayal of the war as a 'battle between dictatorship and democracy, a battle between good and evil, that the future of Europe is at stake, etc' and its 'extraordinary aversion to risk.'[87] This is a disjuncture which will be discussed in more detail below.

While the press briefings were dominated by questions on the military campaign and its objectives, a large number of official statements and communiques focused on humanitarian relief efforts. On April 2, April 19 and May 18, funds were appropriated for humanitarian aid to Kosovar Albanian refugees, bringing the total sum of American aid to over $200 million. These announcements were accompanied by press briefings by officials from the Department of State, FEMA and USAID. Joe Lockhart also paid attention to them in his daily press briefings.[88] The First Lady visited Kosovar refugees in Macedonia in May 1999. In a briefing on May 18, she drew attention to the work of governmental and non-governmental aid agencies and emphasised that the administration was committed to addressing the needs of all the refugees who had been forced to flee their homes.[89]

What is striking about this brief summary of the Clinton administration's rhetoric on Kosovo, is that it emphasised national interests at least as much or even more than values. The two were usually presented alongside each other, with a threat to American values being described as a threat to American interests. Critical reporters sometimes questioned the legitimacy of either these motives, but never asked whether there was a conflict between the two or which was the decisive factor. Evidently, the White House believed the American people would be more likely to support military action in a country far away if they believed it could have a direct impact on their own lives than simply out of sympathy for a people in need. This is also reflected in the decision to limit the campaign to air strikes and not to commit ground troops to combat. As we saw in the first chapter, Congress was split right down the middle on the bombing campaign and pre-emptively voted against sending ground troops before this option was even on the table. The public and Congress alike were hostile to the idea of risking American lives for the Kosovar people. And so the White House argued that a human rights crisis in a distant country represented a legitimate threat to American national interests and required a forceful response. The following section will analyse this argument in more detail.

86 'Press briefing by Joe Lockhart' March 25, 1999, March 26, 1999, April 5, 1999, April 21, 1999
87 'Press briefing by Joe Lockhart' April 23, 1999
88 'Remarks by the President on unemployment numbers and on the situation in Kosovo' April 2, 1999, 'US humanitarian relief efforts for Kosovar Albanians' April 2, 1999 (+ press briefing), 'Additional US humanitarian relief for Kosovar Albanians' April 5, 1999 (+ press briefing), 'Press briefing by FEMA director James Lee Witt, Deputy Administrator of Aid Hattie Babbitt, and Senior Director for Multilateral Affairs Eric Schwarz' April 16, 1999, 'Kosovo emergency funding package' April 19, 1999, 'Press briefing by USAID administrator Brian Atwood and Assistant Secretary of State for Population, Refugees and and Migration Julia Taft' May 5, 1999, 'First lady Hillary Rodham Clinton announces new US initiatives to assist Kosovar refugees' May 18, 1999
89 'Remarks by the first lady on briefing on her trip to the Balkans' May 18, 1999

Defining the national interest

From a constructivist perspective, the White House's rhetoric is significant because it reveals the normative context, the beliefs and expectations shared by politicians and the public. The normative context sets the parameters for how politicians can and cannot act and shapes their conceptions of interests. In the case of Kosovo, official rhetoric suggests that standing up to human rights abuses was in the American national interest and therefore an intervention was warranted. Had this always been the case, or was Clinton advancing a new norm, a new understanding of the national interest? Clinton's perception and presentation of the national interest was influenced by two fundamental notions which the American public shared. The first was the Weinberger doctrine, which outlined the conditions under which it was deemed legitimate to go to war. The second was the belief in the vital importance of American commitment to Europe and can be traced back to World War II and earlier conflicts in the Balkans.

In 1984, in a speech entitled 'the uses of military force,' Secretary of Defense Caspar Weinberger outlined the conditions under which the United States could commit troops to a military intervention. These were as follows: first, vital national interests must be at stake, second, commitment must be wholehearted with the 'intention of winning', third, political and military objectives must be clearly defined, fourth, the forces committed must be sufficient to achieve these objectives, fifth, support of the public and Congress must be assured and sixth, committing combat troops must be a last resort.[90] Weinberger's doctrine, as it came to be known, was heavily influenced by his interpretation of why the US lost in Vietnam. It was intended to prevent the US from ever again getting involved in a war that could not be won. Like Clinton, however, he fails to specify exactly what constitutes the national interest. Cori Dauber has argued that the Weinberger doctrine had a significant and lasting influence on the debate over the use of military force in the United States, to the extent that it has achieved 'hegemonic' status, whereby it is accepted as common sense by most of the American public. An important event here was Operation Desert Storm against Iraq in 1991, which met Weinberger's criteria and was widely regarded as a success, the binary opposite of Vietnam. Dauber points out that during the 1990s, even armed interventions that did not meet Weinberger's criteria, like the ones in Bosnia and Haiti were nevertheless presented in the language of the Weinberger doctrine to suggest that they did.[91]

Dauber's argument is strongly supported by the analysis of the Clinton administration's rhetoric above. When we measure the Kosovo intervention against the Weinberger doctrine, the results are mixed. In their public statements, officials repeatedly stressed that Kosovo was of vital importance to US national interests and explained why this was the case. However, by including human rights in these interests, they probably adopted a much broader understanding of the national interest than Weinberger envisioned. They also highlighted that negotiations had led nowhere and that Milosevic would not yield to anything but a strong display of force. This was clearly part of a conscious campaign to explain and defend the war to the American public. On other counts of the Weinberger doctrine, they did not measure up so well. This is revealed by the critical questions posed by journalists. These focused on whether the administration had a clear exit strategy and whether the chosen means were sufficient to achieve this.

90 'The uses of military power' Caspar Weinberger, November 28, 1984 http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/military/force/weinberger.html

91 Cori Dauber, 'Implications of the Weinberger doctrine for American military intervention in the post-Desert Storm age' in: *Contemporary security policy* 22:3 (2001), 72

The decision to limit the war to air strikes relates to the fifth condition set out by Weinberger. In Vietnam, public support for the war was severely undermined by images of American soldiers returning in body bags. Minimising the number of casualties was one way to make the war acceptable to the American public.

The administration's rhetoric on Kosovo could be seen as a half-hearted attempt to address the Weinberger doctrine, but the important point is that politicians and journalists alike consistently appealed to elements of the doctrine. This reveals a conviction on how and under what conditions wars should be fought that is deeply rooted in American society and can be traced back to the traumatic experience of the Vietnam war.[92] Dauber noted that the Weinberger doctrine essentially 'collapses into a demand for public support.'[93] But it did more than just influence how the war was presented, it also influenced how it was *fought*. Many contemporary observers pointed out that the means chosen were not optimal for the achievement of the stated objectives. As we saw earlier, the fact that politicians and military strategists believed that the war in Kosovo could be won by air power alone may have been a crucial factor in the decision to intervene at all. A more difficult and costly intervention might not have even been considered, a notion which is reinforced by the Clinton administration's failure to intervene in Rwanda earlier. The decision to rely on air power, then, was a crucial one, but it was not the product of a rational cost-benefit analysis. Instead, it can be traced back to shared convictions on under what conditions it is acceptable to risk American lives in a distant war. While appealing to the general principles of the Weinberger doctrine, however, the Clinton administration was also advancing a broader interpretation of it by including human rights in the values that defined American interests. They had to advance cautiously, however, because this idea had yet to enjoy broad public support.

Like the Weinberger doctrine, the memory of the Second World War had left a strong impression on American consciousness. This is clear from the repeated references to the war in President Clinton's speeches. Two themes particularly stand out: the atrocities of the Holocaust and the failure of the international community to prevent it, and the importance of American commitment to peace and stability in Europe. Vice President Al Gore stated that 'when the people of Europe are at war, or divided, or enslaved, then our own freedom, security, and prosperity are at risk.'[94] World War I and World War II were the ultimate examples of what would happen if America isolated itself from European affairs, and in both cases, acting later made the cost much greater. Clinton and his officials also repeatedly stressed Milosevic's previous record of brutality in Croatia and Bosnia. 'Bosnia taught us a lesson,' Clinton said in his February 13 radio address. 'In this volatile region, violence we fail to oppose leads to even greater violence we will have to oppose later at greater cost.'[95] It also taught them another lesson, which may have been misguided: that an air campaign would be sufficient to bring Milosevic to his knees.

References to previous wars in Europe and the Balkans reveal how American perceptions of norms and interests were shaped by these experiences. Firstly, it reveals a belief that humanitarian disaster can and should be prevented by forceful intervention and that the US has a moral responsibility to act in the face of ethnic conflict. The fact that these motives were repeatedly stressed indicates that they were accepted

92 Richard A. Melanson, *American foreign policy since the Vietnam war: the search for consensus from Nixon to Clinton* (1996), 33
93 Dauber, 'Implications of the Weinberger doctrine', 75
94 'Remarks by Vice President Al Gore on the 50th anniversary of NATO' April 21, 1999
95 'Radio address by the President to the nation' February 13, 1999

as legitimate by a large part of the general public. Secondly, it reveals a strong conviction on the necessity of American commitment to Europe. The argument that violence in Kosovo could spill over into the region, create instability in Southeastern Europe, endanger the peace and prosperity of Europe as a whole and thereby threaten American national interests rests on a number of assumptions. The most important one is the notion, whether real or rhetorical, that Europe is the cornerstone of American security. To what extent this is a legitimate conviction is another discussion, the point here is that it is firmly rooted in the American collective memory. In the same way that Vietnam and the Weinberger Doctrine influenced the way in which wars were fought and presented, the memory of the Second World War and the previous conflicts in the Balkans influenced American perceptions of interests and norms. As journalist David Rieff put it in his book on the genocide in Bosnia: 'to have intervened on the side of Bosnia would have been self-defense, not charity (…) Freedom cannot be asserted, it must be defended.'[96] Rieff believed that the United States and Europe were jeopardising their own future as multicultural and multiethnic societies by failing to defend these values in their own backyard.

Kosovo was one of the first instances where the United States intervened in a conflict explicitly for humanitarian purposes. In doing so, President Clinton was advancing a new norm. Drawing on existing notions about the conditions under which armed intervention is legitimate, and about the nature of American strategic interests, he was also expanding the definition of the national interest to include standing up to human rights abuses. In order to do so, he had to convince the domestic and international public of the legitimacy of this norm. The quest for legitimacy meant that no American plane took off before all diplomatic options had been exhausted. Holbrooke's mission and the negotiations at Rambouillet all served to show the world and the American public that the only way to bring peace to Kosovo and avoid a wider regional conflict was by confronting Milosevic with military force. In this sense, Clinton was acting as a norm entrepreneur. This argument can also be reversed, by claiming that human rights came to be seen as national interests because of public pressure to this end. Kosovo, then, would be Clinton proving to the American public that he was committed to protecting and promoting human rights.[97] There is certainly some validity to this argument, however, the administration's campaign to win public approval for their actions, described above, suggests that they were the ones convincing the public, not the other way around.

At the beginning of this chapter, attention was drawn to social facts, facts which do not exist materially or objectively but which are agreed upon by humans and exist only in human consciousness. An analysis of the normative context reveals that some of the core assumptions underlying the decisions that were taken in regards to Kosovo can be traced back to social, not material, facts. The Weinberger doctrine and World War II not only influenced the way the war was presented and explained to the public, but also how and why it was conducted. The Weinberger doctrine resulted in the campaign being designed in such a way so as to minimise the risk of casualties. The collective memory of the Second World War shaped American perceptions of interests and their commitment to Europe. But the most important observation, from a constructivist point of view, is that there was a normative shift occurring. By making human rights a matter of national interest and advocating military action to protect them, Clinton was expanding the definition of the national interest. The following section will examine these norms in more detail and

96 David Rieff, *Slaughterhouse: Bosnia and the failure of the West* (1995), 10
97 Joseph Nye, 'Redefining the national interest' in: *Foreign affairs* 78:4 (1999), 23

attempt to determine their position in the norm life cycle, as described by Finnemore and Sikkink.

Advancing humanitarian norms

If states are social actors and their identities socially constructed, their behaviour is not only guided by material interests but also by norms and ideas. These norms are articulated and negotiated domestically and on the international scene. The legitimacy of a norm is not determined by power or capabilities but by the degree of consensus, the number of actors that share this value. In the case of Kosovo, we have seen that the Clinton administration advanced a new norm by emphasising the importance of defending values like human rights. The emergence of humanitarian norms can be traced back to the first Geneva Convention in 1864 and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1949. While there is much controversy over the legitimacy of armed intervention on humanitarian grounds, there is much less controversy over the principle of universal human rights. This indicates that there is a growing consensus on humanitarian norms. So how did these norms influence the decision to intervene in Kosovo, and the way in which the intervention was carried out?

Various authors have argued that key members of the Clinton administration had personal motives for wanting to act on Kosovo. When asked by a reporter about his 'pent-up feelings about what is happening in the Balkans,' Bill Clinton stated that he was personally motivated by the desire to prevent another Bosnia from taking place.[98] Al Gore had previously been very critical of George H.W. Bush's cautiousness in the Balkans and was determined to reverse this. Madeline Albright had narrowly escaped the Nazis and lost a number of family members in the Holocaust.[99] She repeatedly drew parallels between Kosovo and the Holocaust and stated that she would not allow such a thing to happen on her watch. Her vocal endorsement of intervention in Kosovo on personal grounds gave rise to the campaign being referred to as 'Madeline's war.'[100] Both Clinton and Albright stated personal motives while connecting them to universally shared norms, such as the responsibility to prevent ethnic violence and protect innocent civilians and the necessity to prevent history from repeating itself. The same argument has been made for NATO as a whole. Adam Roberts wrote that 'the NATO states were united by a sense of shame that, in the first four years of atrocious wars in the former Yugoslavia, they had failed, individually and collectively, to devise coherent policies and engage in decisive actions.'[101]

It is impossible to determine to what extent these moral considerations directly influenced the decision to intervene in Kosovo. However, the fact that they were articulated reveals shared understandings between politicians and the public on what constitutes appropriate behaviour. In this narrative, humanitarian norms were permissive norms because they constituted generally accepted principles and beliefs which lend legitimacy to the decision to intervene. The fact that human rights were such a key part of the official rhetoric reveals the degree of consensus on this norm. No reporter questioned the validity of the concept of human rights or humanitarian objectives. They only questioned to what extent these were legitimate grounds to go to war against a sovereign nation, and whether the means chosen corresponded to these objectives. This is where Clinton acted as a norm entrepreneur. By arguing that human rights

98 'Interview of the President by Dan Rather, CBS' March 31, 1999
99 John Dumbrell, *Clinton's foreign policy: Between the Bushes, 1992-2000* (2010), 14, 16
100 George C. Herring, 'Analogies at war: the United States, the conflict in Kosovo and the uses of history' in: Schnabel & Thakur (eds.), *Kosovo and the challenge of humanitarian intervention*, 349
101 A. Roberts, 'NATO's 'humanitarian war' over Kosovo' in: *Survival* 41:3 (1999), 104

violations in Kosovo represented a threat to American national interests, he advanced the norm of humanitarian intervention.

Once articulated as a cause for action, norms and values influenced the way the campaign was fought. As we have seen above, Quentin Skinner stated that when a politician articulates certain ideas and principles as motives for his actions, he then has to act in a way that is compatible with those motives. The Clinton administration claimed that its objective was to stop the killing and end the humanitarian crisis in Kosovo. Doing so was both a moral obligation and served national interests. The NATO campaign had to reflect these motives. Many critics questioned whether an air campaign could do anything to protect the Kosovar people. This was a strategic decision based on other considerations, as we have seen above. But, anxious to prove that it was indeed addressing the humanitarian crisis, the Clinton administration put out a large volume of statements on various humanitarian relief efforts and undertook various efforts to appropriate the funds necessary to support this.

Skinner also believed that an 'innovative ideologist' can manipulate the normative context to justify his actions, and if he succeeds in this his actions become a precedent. If the intervention in Kosovo was accepted as legitimate by the public and by the international community, it would lower the threshold for similar interventions. So did Kosovo trigger a normative shift? In the aftermath of the war, debates over the legitimacy of humanitarian intervention were given a new impulse. UN Secretary General Kofi Annan challenged the 54th session of the General Assembly to reach a consensus on the issue of humanitarian intervention. This ultimately responded in a prescriptive framework called the Right to Protect (R2P). Cristina Badescu argues that R2P represented a normative shift in order to move the discourse away from discussions on the principles of sovereignty and non-intervention and focus more on the protection of human rights.[102]

In 1999, the concept of human rights, and their universality, appear to have been internalised in Western society. But the doctrine of humanitarian intervention certainly was not, and this norm faced many obstacles: most notably its conflict with another fundamental norm in international society, the norm of state sovereignty, but also because it was not widely accepted by the American public as a legitimate cause to go to war. In this sense Clinton can be considered a norm entrepreneur, though in many ways a reluctant one. He endorsed the humanitarian objectives of the campaign but stopped short of risking American lives, and was careful to note that American 'cannot, and should not, do everything or be everywhere.' In this regard he was more cautious than his British colleague Tony Blair, who was much more aggressive in promoting the new norm and did not shy away from committing ground troops and risking British lives in the conflict.[103] In addition to this, NATO's intervention in Kosovo was certainly not uncontroversial. In the US, Congress and the public were divided on the legitimacy of the intervention. It was carried out in the margins of what the international community deemed acceptable, with two permanent members of the Security Council, Russia and China, opposing it. But it did help to challenge the dominant discourse on humanitarian intervention. In that sense, the norms and values championed by the United States and NATO to justify their intervention in Kosovo had a large impact precisely

102 Cristina G. Badescu, *Humanitarian intervention and the Responsibility to Protect: security and human rights* (2011), 4
103 Tony Blair has continued to endorse interventionism to this day, as shown by his recent defence of the Iraq invasion. See 'Tony Blair: 'we didn't cause Iraq crisis'' BBC, 15 June 2014 http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-27852832

because it was so controversial. There was certainly a normative shift occurring, but it was far from evident that a 'norm cascade' was on the way.

Conclusion

The constructivist perspective reveals that the Clinton administration did not act on the basis of objective material interests. Instead, its behaviour was shaped by social facts, like shared notions about the grounds on which it is legitimate to carry out a military intervention, and norms of behaviour, like human rights. These perceptions were informed by social facts, like the Weinberger doctrine, the memory of the two World Wars, the national trauma of Vietnam, and the images of bloodshed in the Balkans which had dominated American television screens over the previous decade. What is most striking about Clinton's rhetoric is his expansion of understandings about what constitutes the national interest to include standing up to human rights abuses. Humanitarian norms, widely shared but seldom accepted as grounds for war, were increasingly incorporated into the justification of an armed intervention. It is in this sense that Clinton was advancing a new norm. This norm in turn did not only influence the way in which the war was presented and defended, but also the way it was fought.

The role of norms and values then, was not to act as a 'Trojan Horse,'[104] designed and constructed to disguise more sinister motives. Instead, norms influenced identities and informed understandings of the national interest among politicians and the public. The Clinton administration did not always act on objectively defined interests, but on perceptions of interests. Understandings about what does and does not constitute the national interest vary and can change overtime. This was clearly the case in the decision to go to war over Kosovo. However, one way in which both President Clinton and the constructivist narrative fall short is in explaining exactly why it is in the national interest to stand up to human rights abuses in a country far away. This is where Gramsci comes in. The next chapter will draw on Gramscian insights to elaborate on the relationship between values and interests.

104 S. Dixon, 'Humanitarian intervention: a novel constructivist analysis of norms and behaviour' in: *Journal of politics and international studies* 9 (2013), 159

III. Hegemony: a Gramscian analysis

As the previous chapters have made clear, the need to achieve consensus was a driving force in the decision to intervene in Kosovo. There was consensus in the international community that what was happening in Kosovo was bad, consensus (however fragile) among NATO members that an intervention was warranted and a forceful campaign for domestic consensus on the campaign by the Clinton administration. This chapter draws on Gramscian insights to investigate the meaning of this consensus, and especially to what extent it serves American interests. Is consensus just another word for American hegemony? Were human rights part of a broader ideological agenda which was being pushed by the US and its allies, one which served the material interests of the economic elites? Like the previous chapter, it starts by introducing the theoretical framework. It then moves on to a Gramscian analysis of what we have learned in the previous two chapters.

Gramsci, the neo-Gramscians and the issue of humanitarian intervention

Antonio Gramsci was an early twentieth century Italian Marxist. In order to understand why the working classes failed to rise up against the bourgeoisie, Gramsci developed the concept of hegemony. He made an important distinction between ruling by coercion and ruling by consent. Coercion is represented by the state or political society, consent by civil society. He believed the bourgeoisie were able to dominate the working classes by establishing a hegemonic culture which dictated the norms and values in society. By propagating this as the common good, they were able to secure the consent of the working classes with the social order they had created. This is what Gramsci calls the 'common sense of an epoch', a tacit acceptance of the existing social order.

While Gramsci developed his thinking in relation to class struggle in Italy, his ideas have recently been applied to international relations and international political economy. The neo-Gramscian school originated in two articles published by Robert Cox in 1981 and 1983. The first article, entitled 'Social forces, states and world orders: beyond international relations theory', argued along Gramscian lines against the ahistorical problem-solving approach which characterised the realist school, and for the adoption of a historical critical theory approach which seeks to understand how the existing international order has come about.[105] He proposed a historical structure with three interrelated levels: ideas, material capabilities and institutions, or social forces (based on the organisation of production), forms of state (state-society complexes) and world orders. He then used this to explain the relative stability of certain world orders, or hegemonies, such as the Pax Britannica of the mid-nineteenth century and the Pax Americana of the mid-twentieth century. British hegemony was founded firstly on naval superiority and secondly on broad acceptance of norms of free trade. American hegemony after the Second World War rested on a set of alliances and an international economic order, the Bretton-Woods system, strengthened by institutions like NATO, the UN, the IMF and the World Bank. Hegemony, Cox writes, consists of 'a fit between power, ideas and institutions.'[106]

Robert Cox developed these ideas further in his 1983 article 'Gramsci, hegemony and international

105 Robert W. Cox, 'Social forces, states and world orders: beyond international relations theory' in: *Millennium – journal of international studies* (1981), 129

106 Ibid, 140

relations: an essay in method.' He observed that Gramsci believed that social relations form the basis of international relations. For example, expansions in state power, like that of the US and the Soviet Union, followed significant social and economic transformations within these countries.[107] He then went on to identify the conditions for a hegemonic world order. He wrote that 'historically, to become hegemonic, a state would have to found and protect a world order which was universal in conception (…) an order which most other states could find compatible with their interests (…) a globally conceived civil society.'[108] This hegemony was supported by international organisations and institutions, and especially economic arrangements. With these observations, Cox established a broad framework for the application of Gramsci's ideas to the field of international relations.

It is important here to distinguish clearly between the Gramscian notion of hegemony and the conventional understanding of hegemony in international relations. The term hegemony is often used to describe one state's dominance over other, less powerful states. For the Gramscians, simple dominance based on power is not enough to achieve hegemony. It has to be supplemented by a broad cultural and ideological consensus on the 'structure of values and understandings about the nature of order that permeates a whole system of states and non-state entities.' These values and understandings have to be internalised to the degree that they 'appear to most actors as the natural order.'[109] Hegemony, therefore, is not about the ability to impose one's will on other states. It is about the ability to determine the set of values and understandings that form the basis of world order. Hegemonic power, then, is normative power, that is, the ability to determine what is right and what is wrong and achieve consensus on this.

After Cox, a number of other scholars followed. In 1993, Stephen Gill published *Gramsci, historical materialism and international relations*, a collection of articles and essays which applied Gramscian perspectives to international relations. In the introduction, Gill made several suggestions for a Gramscian research agenda. This included 'the concrete historical study of the emerging world order, in terms of its economic, political and socio-cultural dimensions,' including processes of globalisation and the social basis of international relations.[110] To this day, most of the neo-Gramscian research has focused on the political and economic implications of hegemony, although some work has also been done on the cultural and ideological dimensions.[111] Some of the socio-cultural implications of hegemony will be discussed in more detail below.

Gill's collection included a number of fundamental contributions to the field of study. While Cox had mainly focused on Gramsci's historical materialist critical theory approach and the concept of hegemony, other scholars delved deeper into Gramsci's insights. Enrico Augelli and Craig Murphy drew more attention to how hegemony is attained by what Gramsci called an historical bloc, a term he borrowed from earlier Marxist thinker Georges Sorel. In order to achieve hegemony, a group must have a critical self-understanding (awareness of position in the mode of production and the potential this creates), form alliances with intellectuals (who supply moral and intellectual support), capture the ideological realm and

107 Robert W. Cox, 'Gramsci, hegemony and international relations: an essay in method' in: *Millennium – journal of international studies* (1983), 169-70
108 *Ibid*, 171
109 Robert W. Cox, 'Towards a posthegemonic characterization of world order' in: Cox, *Approaches to world order* (1996), 151
110 Stephen Gill, 'Gramsci and global politics: towards a post-hegemonic research agenda' in: Gill (ed.), *Gramsci, historical materialism and international relations* (Cambridge 1993), 16
111 See for example Giles Scott-Smith, *The politics of apolitical culture: the Congress for Cultural Freedom, the CIA and post-war American hegemony* (2002)

assure economic development to satisfy allies. The alliance that achieves hegemony is called an historical bloc.[112] Augelli and Craig then went on to apply these insights to US policy towards the Third World during the 1980s. US hegemony was established partly by the use of force, but also by working through international civil society (such as economic assistance) and through international organisations. This was demonstrated by the support of the UN for the Gulf War in 1990.[113] This framework for understanding foreign policy interventions can be usefully applied to military interventions where clear material interests are at stake, but it also sheds light on humanitarian interventions like the one in Kosovo where material or strategic interests coincide with humanitarian motives.

So far, it may seem like neo-Gramscians trace all state actions back to economic interests. However, it is not quite so simple. In the same collection, Mark Rupert elaborated on the internal relation between coercion and consent and the corresponding relation between political society and civil society. Civil society transcends class divisions. Rupert makes the important observation that Gramsci did not believe all political and cultural practices can be reduced to economic interests. Instead, 'a necessary condition for the attainment of hegemony by a class or class fraction is the supersession of their narrow economic interests by a more universal social vision or ideology.'[114] In other words, an historical bloc may have its position in the relations of production as its power base, but that does not mean that all of its actions are motivated by socio-economic interests. Rupert believed that globalisation was creating a global civil society under the hegemony of international capital.[115] This concept of a global civil society is particularly relevant to the study of humanitarian intervention, because it draws attention to universally shared norms and values, and their origin in social relations. Mark Rupert has written a number of other articles which relate the concepts of hegemony and counter-hegemony to globalisation and anti-globalisation movements.[116]

Stephen Gill further developed Gramscian insights into world order in a later study entitled *Power and resistance in the New World Order*. This book explored the post-Cold War world order which left the United States as the only superpower in an overwhelmingly neoliberal world with few viable challengers. While the 1980s had seen a preoccupation with the decline of US power, the challenge of the 1990s was to address the role of the US in the new world order and 'the wider implications of US dominance, imperialism and hegemony in an era of intensified globalisation.'[117] Like Rupert, Gill draws attention to the central role of global civil society in a global hegemony. In the post-Second World War American hegemony, this involved the promotion of mass consumption capitalism and the creation of global institutions, and the claim that US leadership was in a universal interest.[118] This claim to universality is important because it echoes Gramsci's 'common sense of an epoch' which draws attention to the role of culture and ideology in a hegemony. Likewise, a hegemonic global liberal order requires a coherent ideology, with basic principles which most if not all of its constituents can underline.

112 Enrico Augelli & Craig Murphy, 'Gramsci and international relations: a general perspective with examples from recent US policy towards the Third World' in: Gill, *Gramsci, historical materialism and international relations*, 130-2
113 *Ibid*, 135-6
114 Mark Rupert, 'Alienation, capitalism and the inter-state system: towards a Marxian/Gramscian critique' in: Gill, *Gramsci, historical materialism and international relations*, 80
115 *Ibid*, 88
116 Mark Rupert, 'Globalisation and American common sense: struggling to make sense of a post-hegemonic world' in: *New political economy 2:1* (1997), pp. 105-116, and 'Globalising common sense: a Marxian-Gramscian (re-)vision of the politics of governance/resistance' in: *Review of international studies 29:1* (2003), pp. 181-198
117 Stephen Gill, *Power and resistance in the New World Order* (2002), 73
118 *Ibid*, 58-9

This concept of global civil society is not without its problems, however. In a 1998 article, Randall Germain and Michael Kenny criticised a number of the claims made by the neo-Gramscian school. One related to their failure to sufficiently historicise Gramsci's ideas, a criticism which has been addressed in a number of articles by Adam Morton.[119] The other relates to Gramsci's understanding of the relationship between civil society and the state, as expressed in the simple equation: state = political society + civil society. Germain and Kenny argue that it is impossible to speak of a global civil society in the absence of a transnational political society as its counterpart. However, they do acknowledge that Robert Cox addresses this problem to some extent with his notion of the 'internationalisation of the state' to correspond to the internationalisation of production. An important aspect of this is the broad ideological consensus of mulilateral organisations and key government agencies of the most important economies. Cox believes the 'international state' that corresponds with global civil society is not so much a supranational entity as a broad ideological consensus.[120] Although Germain and Kenny are not quite convinced by this argument, it is quite sufficient for our purposes here.

So far, little mention has been made of human rights in relation to the neo-Gramscian school of thought. However, a number of concepts have been introduced that can be fruitfully applied to the study of human rights and humanitarian intervention. To begin with, Gramsci's notion of hegemony challenges the realist understanding of hegemony as dominance, as a simple expression of coercive power. Instead, Gramscian hegemony has a normative quality, in that it requires the promotion and widespread acceptance of certain norms and values. In this sense, the neo-Gramscians agree with constructivists that norms are essentially socially constructed, although the Gramscians strictly trace this process back to the relations of production. The relationship between political society and civil society is also important, because it rejects the notion that the state can be divorced from social and cultural forces. A number of neo-Gramscian scholars have drawn attention to the possibility of a global civil society which would entail increasing consensus on morals, values and rights. This could be the key to understanding the notion of universal human rights and the legitimacy of using armed force against a sovereign state to enforce them.

The various neo-Gramscian scholars discussed here have created a theoretical framework for international relations that challenges some of the key notions of rationalist and constructivist theory. By adopting a historical critical theory approach, they create room to question the international order and how it came about, particularly using the concept of hegemony to understand issues of US dominance and globalisation. The neo-Gramscian school firmly roots hegemony in socio-economic forces, tracing it back to the dominant players in the mode of production. Yet they all acknowledge the central role of culture in creating consensus on a certain world order. Some Gramscian scholars have studied the implications of this in the cultural and ideological realm, but the role of human rights and humanitarian intervention in this world order has yet to be addressed. A deeper analysis of these issues from a Gramscian perspective may yield important new insights. From this viewpoint, the idea of universal human rights is essentially a byproduct of globalisation and the spread of a set of norms and values

119 Adam Morton, 'On Gramsci' in: *Politics 19:1* (1999), pp. 1-8 and 'Historicising Gramsci: situating ideas in and beyond their own context' in: *Review of international political economy 10:1* (2003), pp. 118-146

120 Randall Germain & Michael Kenny, 'Engaging Gramsci: international relations theory and the new Gramscians' in: *Review of international studies 24:1* (1998), 14

originating in Western civilisation. The search of consensus in international politics plays a key role in neo-Gramscian thought, and this is certainly a useful tool to apply to cases of humanitarian intervention, which almost always involve an appeal to the international community to legitimise unilateral action.

A Gramscian analysis of Kosovo

So was NATO's intervention in Kosovo an expression of American hegemony? And if so, what does this tell us about the meaning of norms and values in the decision to intervene? The above summary has given us a number of guidelines for a Gramscian analysis of the events. The first is to identify the world order which Cox wrote about. What did it consist of, and to what extent was it supported by universal consensus? And what is the place of humanitarian intervention within this world order? The second step is to uncover the mechanics and instruments of this hegemony. This involves an analysis of the role of international organisations and international civil society, and the norms and values that they articulate and defend to achieve consensus. Finally, a Gramscian analysis would not be complete without identifying the winners, that is, who actually benefited from the world order that was being promoted. That is what the final section of this chapter will address.

'A world order which was universal in conception?'

On December 2 and 3, 1989, US President George H.W. Bush and Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev met in Malta and announced the demise of the Cold War order. Bush stated that 'we stand at the threshold of a brand new era of U.S.-Soviet relations' and Gorbachev declared that 'the world is leaving one epoch and entering another. We are at the beginning of a long road to a lasting, peaceful era.'[121] Was this the beginning of a new world order based on universally shared values and beliefs? Not quite. In a conversation with Pope John Paul II, Gorbachev expressed his frustration at those who wanted to renew Europe 'only on the basis of Western values.'[122] Meanwhile, in a private conversation, Bush and German Chancellor Helmut Kohl agreed that Gorbachev knew little about Western values.[123] Evidently, there was still some way to go before the world's superpowers would agree on the shape of the world to come.

Yet by all appearances, the 1990s saw the triumph of Western values. Many observers interpreted the end of the Cold War as the triumph of liberalism.[124] Bush and his Secretary of State James Baker stated that it was now time to build a 'democratic peace' characterised by political and economic reform in Russia and the other newly independent states. The increasingly popular notion was that war is very unlikely among free and democratic states.[125] The Clinton administration coined the phrase 'democratic enlargement' to summarise its foreign policy goals: to promote democracy and free trade and contain regimes that represented a threat to these values. This started in Central and Eastern Europe. In his first term, Clinton also provided $4.3 billion in aid to Boris Yeltsin's Russia to stimulate economic reform. Russian properties were rapidly privatised and trade between Russia and the US grew at a high rate.[126] Rather than retreating into isolationism, successive presidents George H.W. Bush and Bill Clinton both

121 'Bush and Gorbachev hail new cooperation' *Washington Post*, 4-12-1989 http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/inatl/longterm/summit/archive/dec89.htm
122 'Record of conversation of M.S. Gorbachev and Pope John Paul II' 01-12-1989. The National Security Archive http://www2.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/NSAEBB/NSAEBB298/Document%208.pdf
123 'Memorandum of conversation of George H.W. Bush, John Sununu, Brent Scowcroft and Helmut Kohl' 03-12-1989. The National Security Archive http://www2.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/NSAEBB/NSAEBB296/doc04.pdf
124 Chris Brown, 'History ends, worlds collide' in: *Review of international studies* 25:5 (1999), 42
125 Bruce Russett, *Grasping the democratic peace: principles for a post-Cold War world* (Princeton 1993), 129
126 Douglas Brinkley, 'Democratic enlargement: the Clinton doctrine' in: *Foreign policy* 106 (1997), 125-126

showcased a firm commitment to internationalism and to reshaping the world according to American values.

In 1987, the Soviet negotiator Georgi Arbatov had told his American counterparts: 'we are going to do a terrible thing to you- we are going to deprive you of an enemy.'[127] He was not alone in questioning whether the US could maintain its position in the world without an obvious enemy like the Soviet Union. Many observers were surprised at the general durability of American dominance after the end of the Cold War. In response to this, John G. Ikenberry argues that the United States established two orders after the end of World War II. One was the containment order, designed to counter the threat of communism. The other was the liberal order, which was a response to problems internal to Western society and economy. The liberal order did not only survive the end of the Cold War, it actually thrived. The 1990s saw the expansion of the liberal order into Eastern Europe and increasing acceptance of the values on which it was based in parts of the world that were formerly in the Soviet sphere of influence. Ikenberry believed that the hegemony of the United States was becoming more stable, firstly, because it exercised restraint and genuinely facilitated international cooperation, and secondly, because it 'has become institutionalised and path-dependent, that is, more and more people will have to disrupt their lives if the order is to radically change.'[128] Ikenberry is not a Gramscian, but his depiction of US hegemony is not a far cry from how Gramsci understood it. Like Gramsci, Ikenberry's hegemony does not just rely on power but also on the ability to determine the structures and values that govern international politics with the voluntary acquiescence of less powerful states.

Another way to understand the post-Cold War world order is by the concept of *regulative peace*. According to Ian Clark, the regulative peace consisted of an extension of Western values and institutions to include the vanquished states. This included the promotion of democratisation and free trade, mentioned above, but also multilateralism, through the expansion of the EU and NATO, and human rights. Clark argues that there was an increasingly explicit assertion of liberal values like human rights as universal values. These were, however, distinctly Western values and were inextricably tied to Western power.[129] The victory of liberalism, then, was mostly an American victory. Liberalism became a prescriptive model for states, regulating not just international behaviour, but 'the nature of states themselves.'[130] James Richardson pointed out that the liberal order also had a strong normative component: 'those who do not conform with prevailing norms are presented as culturally and historically retarded, their norms and values outmoded and not worthy of preservation.'[131] All of these scholars, then, believe that the post-Cold War order was firmly based on Western values and that the United States took an active role in promoting the spread of these values. But the extent to which these values were internalised can be debated. Certainly the bloody conflict in the Balkans demonstrated that this process was hardly complete.

The importance of American power in the post-Cold War order can hardly be overestimated. Various authors have pointed out that unilateralism, not multilateralism, was the defining characteristic of the

127 John Dumbrell, *Clinton's foreign policy: between the Bushes, 1992-2000* (2010), 22
128 G. John Ikenberry, 'Liberal hegemony and the future of the American postwar order' in: T.V. Paul & John A. Hall, *International order and the future of world politics* (1999), 123
129 Ian Clark, *The post-Cold War order: the spoils of peace* (Oxford 2001), 221-222
130 *Ibid*, 236
131 James L. Richardson, 'The end of history?' in: Greg Fry & Jacinta O'Hagan, *Contending images of world politics* (2000), 25

post-Cold War order. American industrial and military power was unrivaled and the concept of multilateralism was more rhetorical than real. The Gulf War illustrated the dominance of the US very clearly. Krauthammer stated that the US essentially 'acted alone' while 'still worshiping at the shrine of collective security.'[132] Ikenberry has also pointed out the potential destabilising effect of American unilateralism on the new world order. He wrote that the post-Cold War order was 'built on a contradictory, shifting and unstable mix of international norms, great power interests and American military predominance.'[133]

So how did human rights figure in the new world order? The Universal Declaration of Human Rights was adopted in 1948. The claim to universality was present from the beginning, but it began to be asserted more aggressively after the end of the Cold War. One explanation for this is that human rights were part of the broader set of liberal values which Western nations sought to promote.[134] Another explanation is that the matter gained more urgency in the new world order. During the Cold War, the United States and the Soviet Union had supported a large number of regimes in unstable countries. The end of the Cold War meant that the superpowers withdrew their support from many of these regimes, leading to a breakdown of authority, creating political vacuums and resulting in humanitarian emergencies. During the 1990s, the UN increasingly labeled such humanitarian emergencies as threats to international peace and security and increasingly began to accept that in some cases, the international norm of state sovereignty might be subordinate to the norm of human rights.[135] The previous chapter already noted that there was a normative shift occurring which increasingly made sovereignty contingent on how states treated their own citizens. From a Gramscian perspective, however, this represents something bigger: increasing consensus on a set of values with a distinctly Western origin. This consensus was not accidental, it was pioneered by international institutions and NGOs, increasingly embedded in international agreements like the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and backed up by western military power. From this perspective, the intervention in Kosovo was really an international police mission, carried out to enforce the rule of law. This was not a law that was encoded in international agreements, but a set of norms and values which were advanced by the most powerful country on earth.

The new world order, then, had many characteristics of a new American hegemony. It is clear that the successive Bush and Clinton administrations sought to determine the conditions for a new world order, based on the core values of democracy, free trade and human rights. The 1990s saw the willing adoption of these values by a large number of former Soviet states. This does point to increasing consensus on this world order. However, it is important to note that these changes took place in the face of overwhelming American power. The United States did not use coercion to win over its former enemies, but it was the realisation that the Cold War could not be won that heralded the end of the Soviet Union. Therefore it is very much the question whether these values were really internalised to the degree that Gramsci described. The bloody wars in the Balkans that lasted throughout the 1990s were transgressions against this world order, demonstrating that it was still a work in progress. For this world order to become

132 Krauthammer, 'The unipolar moment', 25
133 G. John Ikenberry, 'The costs of victory: American power and the use of force in the contemporary order' in: Albrecht Schnabel & Ramesh Thakur, *Kosovo and the challenge of humanitarian intervention: selective indignation, collective action and international citizenship* (2000), 85
134 Clark, *The post-Cold War order*, 219
135 Nicholas Wheeler, 'Introduction: the political and moral limits of Western military intervention to protect civilians in danger' in: *Contemporary security policy* 22:3 (2001), 2-3

'universal in conception', an internalisation of these values would have to take place, much like they arguably did in Western Europe in the years following World War II. This is the nature of hegemony. It is not a stationary state of being, it is constantly being constructed and negotiated.

The mechanics of hegemony

As we have seen, the most important instruments of hegemony are international institutions and international civil society. International institutions include organisations like the UN and its various organs, the EU, and NATO as well as international agreements like the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and, on the economic side, the IMF, the World Bank and aid organisations like USAID. International civil society is represented by NGOs and individual activists. All of these played a role in NATO's intervention in Kosovo.

Although NATO ultimately acted on its own initative, the role of the UN should not be underestimated. In March 1998, Security Council Resolution 1160 condemned the violence in Kosovo in general terms and called on both Yugoslav and Kosovar leaders to cease hostilities. Significantly, by invoking Chapter VII of the UN charter, it identified the conflict as a a threat to international peace and stability.[136] Six months later, Resolution 1199 was worded more firmly and placed the blame much more squarely on Milosevic's government.[137] Both resolutions were adopted unanimously by the Security Council, with only China abstaining. NATO members argued that the two resolutions gave them a firm mandate for acting in Kosovo, because they identified the conflict as a threat to international peace and stability and condemned human rights violations.[138] This was despite the Russian insistence that they only supported the resolutions on the understanding that they would not be used to justify military action. They also pointed to statements by UN Secretary General Kofi Annan which strongly condemned the violence. On his part, Annan was careful not to offend the NATO allies but he did point out that the mandate for the use of force belonged to the Security Council.[139]

After the bombing began, Russia, Belarus and India proposed a resolution to the Security Council condemning NATO's actions and demanding an immediate end to the campaign. The resolution was defeated, however, by 12 votes to 3. Only Russia, China and Namibia voted for the resolution. The list of those who voted against included the five NATO members and friendly nations like Argentina and Brazil as well as less likely allies such as Malaysia and Gambia.[140] This was a significant event because for the first time in history, a majority in the Security Council 'either legitimated or acquiesced with the use of force justified on humanitarian grounds in a context where there was no express Council authorisation.'[141] For NATO, this reaffirmed the legitimacy of their actions. From a Gramscian perspective, it is evidence of the inability of counter-hegemonic forces to successfully challenge the emerging norm.

The NATO countries were not confident enough to risk proposing their own resolution supporting their

136 S/RES/1160, 31-03-1998 http://unscr.com/en/resolutions/doc/1160
137 S/RES/1199, 23-09-1998 http://unscr.com/en/resolutions/doc/1199
138 Nicholas Wheeler, *Saving strangers: humanitarian intervention in international society* (2002), 262, 265
139 Nicola Butler, 'NATO: from collective defense to peace enforcement' in: Albrecht Schnabel & Ramesh Thakur, *Kosovo and the challenge of humanitarian intervention: selective indignation, collective intervention and international citizenship* (2000), 281
140 S/PV.3989, 26-3-1999 http://www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BFCF9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/kos%20SPV3989.pdf
141 Nicholas Wheeler, 'Reflections on the legality and legitimacy of NATO's intervention in Kosovo' in: *The international journal of human rights* 4:3-4 (2000), 158

actions to the Security Council or the General Assembly. In the Security Council, such a resolution would inevitably be vetoed by China and Russia, but in the General Assembly it could have been passed if a two thirds majority voted in favour.[142] Nonetheless, the proceedings in the Security Council demonstrated that the actions of NATO could be supported by a relatively large international consensus. The unanimous adoption of resolutions 1160 and 1199 reflect an international consensus that Milosevic had crossed the line in Kosovo. This included not only NATO and its allies, but also Russia and other strongly anti-interventionist countries. As we have seen, for Russia the fear of being isolated internationally played a key role in their decision not to mount strong opposition against NATO. This may well have played a role for other countries as well. The actual intervention went a step further but still only a few countries protested. Evidently, the UN was a major factor in constructing international consensus, at least on paper, on the gravity of the situation in Kosovo and the legitimacy of using armed force to punish the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.

International institutions did not just address political aspects of the conflict, they were also concerned with the economic implications. In April 1999, the IMF published a paper entitled 'The economic consequences of the Kosovo crisis' which made a preliminary assessment of the effect of the crisis on neighboring countries (the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia was not a member of the IMF or the World Bank). The report expressed concern at the possible impact of the crisis on the region, especially the destabilising effect of refugees, damage to trade and investment and postponement of economic reforms. Its recommendations mainly consisted of financial and humanitarian assistance to the countries impacted.[143] Representatives of 33 countries and 7 international agencies met on April 27, 1999, while the bombing was still under way, to discuss the report. The representatives agreed to provide financial assistance to the countries involved in the short term, but also addressed measures to be taken to ensure the stability of the region in the longer run. These measures would take into account 'the political and humanitarian as well as economic and social factors, including plans for post-conflict reconstruction and recovery needed to ensure stability in the region in the medium term.'[144]

Plans for the reconstruction of Kosovo and the region were quickly put into action. On June 10, 1999, the day the air campaign was suspended, the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe was created at the initiative of the EU. Partners included all regional countries except Milosevic's Yugoslavia, international insitutions like the EU, the UN, NATO, the IMF, the World Bank, and a host of other regional and international organisations. The Pact was designed to promote the stability of the region, stimulate economic reconstruction and facilitate eventual integration in the EU.[145] The Stability Pact did not originate in the Kosovo crisis, plans for an initiative of this kind had existed for some time. It does, however, demonstrate the role of financial institutions in the international order. From a Gramscian perspective, the involvement of the international community in dictating the economic future of the region is a clear expression of hegemony. Indeed, it does not take a large stretch of the imagination to draw parallels to the economic reconstruction of Western Europe and the introduction of the Bretton

142 Wheeler, 'Reflections on the legality and legitimacy of NATO's intervention in Kosovo', 159
143 IMF and World Bank, 'The economic consequences of the Kosovo crisis: a preliminary assessment of external financing needs and the role of the Fund and the World Bank in the international response' 16-04-1999, http://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/kosovo/041699.htm
144 IMF press release, 'International community responds to the Kosovo crisis' 27-4-1999 http://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/kosovo/stm.htm
145 'Stability Pact for Southeastern Europe' SCSP, Cologne, 10-06-1999 http://www.stabilitypact.org/constituent/990610-cologne.asp

Woods system after World War II. Back in Washington, reporters did not hesitate to ask whether a Marshall Plan for Southeast Europe was on the table.[146] Clearly, international involvement with Kosovo and the Balkans was not limited to defending human rights, it was also a prescriptive vision for the political and economic future of the region. It was to be integrated into the hegemonic American system which had first expanded into Western Europe after World War II and was now steadily advancing into Eastern Europe.

As we have seen, a key element of neo-Gramscian theory is international civil society. Gramscians like Mark Rupert have studied globalisation and the degree to which this was creating a global civil society. Robert Cox emphasised that a hegemonic world order must not only consist of inter-state relations but also of a civil society that shares and promotes its values. In the case of Kosovo, the role of civil society is exemplified by the work of NGOs. Various NGOs were established in Kosovo during the 1990s to draw attention to the plight of the Kosovar Albanians under Serbian government. They worked with international NGOs to gain an audience outside of Kosovo. Human rights organisations like Human Rights Watch (HRW) and Amnesty International led the way in calling for international engagement with Kosovo. Their activism helped to inform the public and put pressure on politicians to act. The presence of NGOs on the ground in Kosovo meant that massacres like the ones at Gornje Obrinje and Racak were quickly investigated and reported, forcing the international community to pay attention to Kosovo.[147]

NGOs that engaged with Kosovo differed in their opinions on how the crisis should be dealt with. A few NGOs, like the Physicians for Human Rights (PHR) actively called for a military intervention, believing this was the only way to protect the Kosovar Albanians from Serbian atrocities. The majority, like HRW and Amnesty International stopped short of condoning a military intervention.[148] However, they did pave the way for a more conditional understanding of the norm of sovereignty, making this increasingly contingent on a state's respect for the human rights of its own citizens. Human rights organisations 'have been at the forefront of international efforts that have changed the world order so that the norm of sovereignty is not immutable or unyielding.'[149] NGOs and human rights activists actively promoted human rights as a norm so that it became increasingly internalised in international society.

Another important component of civil society is the media. Much has been written about the 'CNN effect,' the influence of real-time media on political decisions. Instant television coverage of foreign and domestic policy problems can put pressure on politicians to act faster or make decisions they otherwise might not have made. This is particularly relevant for humanitarian crises abroad, where televised images of people suffering from hunger, disease or violence can generate high public pressure on politicians. Steven Livingston studied the role of the media during the Kosovo crisis, focusing on CNN. Throughout the 1990s, the Yugoslavian wars received a disproportionate share of media attention compared to other humanitarian emergencies. The crisis in Kosovo received a huge amount of attention on all the main American television networks, starting in January 1999 and peaking in April during the first weeks of the bombing campaign, after which media attention steadily decreased. The overwhelming majority of stories

146 'Press briefing by Secretary of State Madeline Albright, Secretary of Defense William Cohen and National Security Advisor Sandy Berger' 20-4-1999, 'Remarks by the President in media round table' 6-5-1999, 'Press briefing by Joe Lockhart' 13-5-1999
147 Gaer, 'NGOs and the enforcement of norms' in: Schnabel & Thakur, *Kosovo and the challenge of humanitarian intervention*, 387, 393
148 *Ibid*, 393-8
149 *Ibid*, 395

dealt with politics and negotiations, in second place were refugees, followed closely by the bombing campaign.[150]

As we have seen in the previous chapter, White House reporters did not shy away from asking critical questions about the limited military means employed and the insufficiency of NATO's tactics in achieving the stated goal of reversing the humanitarian crisis. They also did not refrain from reporting on civilian casualties which were victims of NATO's air strikes. Yet in the press room, the Western media were generally supportive of the humanitarian objectives of the campaign. As we mentioned earlier, no reporter questioned the validity of standing up for human rights, even though some questioned the legitimacy of using armed force or whether the chosen means corresponded to the stated objectives. Moreover, coverage of the mistakes of the Kosovo campaign did not significantly influence public support for the campaign.[151] On the whole, we can say that the media reaffirmed the humanitarian norms and values which NATO professed to defend in Kosovo, and held their governments accountable to these norms. Like the NGOs, then, the American media reflected a general consensus on the validity of humanitarian norms.

NATO actions were supported by a relatively strong, though incomplete, consensus among international organisations and international civil society. International political and financial institutions were deeply involved both in the decision to intervene in Kosovo and in the subsequent effort to rebuild the region after a decade of war. An important observation is that elements of civil society, like the NGOs and the media did not necessarily support the NATO campaign itself but did support the general humanitarian objectives. In other words, there was consensus on the norms and values but not on the means employed. The same was really true for the Security Council. This is why there was unanimous support for resolutions 1160 and 1199 condemning Milosevic's actions but not for NATO's actions to punish Milosevic. It was not the values but the means that were a matter of debate. Of course, the means cannot be viewed entirely separate from the values they were based on, since the debate was really about whether these values legitimated a response that violated the fundamental norms of sovereignty. Here again, liberal values were clearly on the rise but it stopped short of a complete consensus.

The winners?

As a Marxist, Gramsci did not see hegemony as something accidental or the product of simple power relations, but as an instrument that served the material interests of the bourgeoisie. The dominant position of the bourgeoisie in the modes of production formed the basis for the emergence of a historical bloc. In a hegemonic world order, the historical bloc would have to include the international economic elites as its power base, politicians who translated their interests into law and governance and intellectuals who supplied the ideological basis. Like neorealism, then, neo-Gramscianism is a materialist theory which traces state actions back to material interests. This is what most clearly distinguishes it from constructivism. So what interests were at stake in the Kosovo crisis, and who benefited from NATO's hegemonic behaviour? Who were ultimately the winners? The answer to this question is not so straightforward.

150 Steven Livingston, 'Media coverage of the war' in: Schnabel & Thakur, *Kosovo and the challenge of humanitarian intervention*, 368-369, 372
151 *Ibid*, 379

Some scholars, like Noam Chomsky, have attempted to identify the direct material interests that were at stake in Kosovo. Chomsky immediately rejected the notion that the US and NATO were acting in the name of humanitarian values, pointing to their inaction in the face of other human rights abuses by NATO allies like Turkey's oppression of the Kurds and Indonesia's state-sanctioned violence in East Timor. Kosovo was different, not because of the scale of Milosevic's atrocities, but because of the strategic location of the Balkans for the US. Contrary to other humanitarian crises, this one was taking place at NATO's doorstep in a region strategically placed between Europe and the Middle East. Instability in the Balkans was 'an unwelcome impediment to Washington's efforts to complete its substantial takeover of Europe.'[152] John Dumbrell agreed with Chomsky that the Balkans were of importance to the US only because of their location. The region had little economic value and had no natural resources like oil. In the end, however, Dumbrell rejected the notion that the Clinton administration acted on the basis of interests. Instead, the intervention was 'a product of second term hegemonic confidence.'[153] This confidence was far from complete, but Kosovo was certainly a building block to a more assertive foreign policy.

Rather than acting on the basis of objective material interests, NATO acted to defend the liberal world order. NATO was the guarantor of peace and stability in this order. Milosevic's actions, first in Croatia and Bosnia, and then in Kosovo, represented a violation of the values on which this world order was founded. While he may not have represented a very tangible threat to the United States, there was a danger that Milosevic was the 'rotten apple that would spoil the barrel,'[154] endangering the stability and security of the entire region, which in turn would present a threat to Europe. Furthermore, the credibility of NATO was at stake. As we have seen in the previous chapter, these arguments were voiced by the Clinton administration to demonstrate that the crisis in Kosovo presented a threat to US security. From a Gramscian perspective, however, it was not just about regional stability or about the credibility of NATO, but about the stability and credibility of the hegemonic world order. This was why NATO had no choice but to intervene.

Conclusion

The end of the Cold War did not bring about the demise of American hegemony. By all appearances, during the 1990s the values of the liberal world order, democracy, free trade and human rights, were gaining ground in many parts of the world. This was not the case in the Balkans, and NATO acted forcefully to bring this region into the liberal world order. In doing so, it was supported by multilateral organisations like the UN, the EU, the IMF and the World Bank. The liberal order was not complete, nor was it unchallenged. But there was no effective counter-hegemonic force, as demonstrated most clearly by the failure of Russia and China to effectively mount international opposition to NATO's actions. Moreover, the liberal order did have fundamentally hegemonic elements. It carried a strong normative quality, determining the rules and conditions under which international politics were to be carried out. It was a world order which actively sought and promoted shared values and understandings about the structure of the international community. This was clearly visible in the continuing debate over the

152 Chomsky, *The new military humanism*,137
153 Dumbrell, *Clinton's foreign policy*, 82, 98
154 Chomsky, *The new military humanism*, 136

universality of human rights and the legitimacy of humanitarian intervention.

By intervening in Kosovo, NATO acted to defend a fragile consensus that Milosevic's aggression represented a threat to the values that govern the international order. It was consensus because in both political and civil society, there was general agreement on the fact that it was wrong for a government to engage in large-scale human rights abuses against its own citizens. This is reflected in political society by the unanimous adoption of resolutions 1160 and 1199 in the Security Council, and in civil society by the uncritical acceptance by the media and NGOs of the humanitarian values that NATO claimed to uphold. It was a fragile consensus because, while condemning the violence in Kosovo, it was clear from the outset that the Security Council would stop short of recommending an intervention to end the violence. It was also fragile because as it turned out, it was not enough to articulate these values, it had to be backed up by force. From a Gramscian viewpoint, force is not necessarily a sign of weakness, because even the most stable state requires law enforcement agencies. However, the necessity of staging a military intervention does denote that the limits of consensus are in sight.

The important observation here is that hegemony, even when it is still under construction, is still worth studying. The liberal world order of the 1990s was not 'universal in conception' but its ambitions were arguably hegemonic. There was increasing acquiescence, if not yet complete consensus, on the legitimacy of armed intervention to defend universal humanitarian values. The claim to universality is the key to uncovering hegemonic ambitions. The world order of the 1990s was one that was under construction, and one that, with the defeat of one of its main adversaries, communism, had significant hegemonic potential. The conflict in Kosovo may not have directly threatened the material interests of the western elites, but it did represent a transgression against the values of the world order they had created and which was supported by their material power base. By launching a military intervention, NATO enforced these values in Kosovo and sent a clear message to the rest of the world.

Conclusion

Why did NATO intervene in Kosovo? To what extent did they act on humanitarian motives, and to what extent did they act on their own interests? How did norms and values influence the way the war was fought and presented? And how significant were human rights? The constructivist and Gramscian perspectives both acknowledge that the defense of a set of values played a central role in the decision to intervene. Both would argue against a more straightforward depiction of the decision as one that was based on objective interests or a rational cost-benefit analysis. Both theories agree that norms and values are essentially socially constructed and that they influence the behaviour of states on the international scene. But they draw very different conclusions from this fact.

For the constructivists, the decision to intervene in Kosovo reflected changing perceptions of the national interest and foreign policy priorities. The end of the Cold War ushered in an era where human rights became an increasingly pressing international concern. The constructivist analysis revealed that the decision to intervene in Kosovo was ultimately based on social, not material facts. While Clinton claimed to act in the national interest, and undoubtedly believed this himself, his perception and presentation of the national interest was not necessarily based on objective facts. It was the product of a set of beliefs that was shaped by historical experiences, like the two World Wars and Vietnam and by collective indignation at earlier offenses by Milosevic. It was also shaped by considerations of legitimacy, in particular on what conditions it was justifiable to risk American lives in war. And it was based on a shared understanding about what constitutes human rights, and the increasingly influential belief that these rights applied to all people irrespective of whether their governments respected them or not.

President Clinton acted as a norm entrepreneur by expanding perceptions of the national interest to include standing up to human rights. Concern for human rights was on the rise during the 1990s, but never before had a state or an alliance of states explicitly justified an armed intervention against a sovereign state on humanitarian grounds. There was a normative shift taking place, not so much in the general belief in universal human rights, which at this point was hardly controversial anymore. What was shifting was the importance that was attached to the norm of human rights relative to the international norm of state sovereignty. More than ever before, the right to state sovereignty was presented as being contingent on a government's respect for the human rights of its citizens. Clinton and his NATO allies, especially Blair, took the lead in explaining to the world that an inexcusable breach of human rights like the ones Milosevic committed meant that he forfeited his right to sovereignty. Meanwhile, the Clinton administration had to explain to the domestic audience why it was important to stand up for the democratic and liberal values they enjoyed at home in a country far away.

The norm of humanitarian intervention was advanced by NATO's war over Kosovo. It was a small step, however. The war over Kosovo was fought because it could be done with limited means and minimal loss of American lives, and Clinton was careful to point out that this did not mean the the US would commit itself to similar conflicts all over the world. On the international scene, the war, which many observers believed to be legitimate but illegal because of the absence of a Security Council Mandate, led to intense international debates on how to better deal with such crises. One of the most tangible products of this

was the R2P framework. In 1999, it may well have seemed that a norm cascade was imminent. But in 2003 the United States invaded Iraq. The Bush administration stated many reasons to go to war against Iraq, including the alleged presence of Weapons of Mass Destruction and Saddam Hussein's support for terrorists, but the fact that the invasion was additionally and unconvincingly portrayed as a humanitarian intervention was a setback for the advancing norm. Today, the prospect of a norm cascade in favour of humanitarian intervention does not seem likely in the near future. So while the decision to intervene in Kosovo represented a normative shift, it was slight and by no means irreversible.

The Gramscian analysis sheds a slightly different light on the Kosovo intervention. For the Gramscians, the intervention in Kosovo was a police mission designed to enforce the values on which the hegemony of the US was based. The demise of the Soviet Union ushered in an era of American unilateralism, which gave the United States unprecedented power to shape the international order. It did so not by establishing a simple dominance of other states based on its overwhelming military and economic power. Instead, it propagated a world order which was based on liberal values like democracy, free trade and human rights. These values formed the basis of western society and of its wealth. This world order was a prescriptive vision for how states should be structured and governed, and what fundamental rules they had to adhere to on the international scene. Milosevic's actions, first in Bosnia and then in Kosovo, were a transgression against the values on which this world order was based. NATO's intervention was designed to bring the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia back into the fold. It was supported not just by armed force, but also by international organisations like the UN, the EU, the IMF and the World Bank which helped to lend legitimacy to NATO's actions and ensure that after the war, Southeastern Europe would be rebuilt and restructured based on western values. It was also supported by an expanding international civil society, which pioneered the norm of human rights.

What makes hegemony work is the combination of coercive force and ideological consensus. Coercive force was guaranteed by NATO's military power, and ideological consensus was clearly expanding during the 1990s. It was not complete, but such is the nature of hegemony. It is constantly being constructed and negotiated. What is important is that there was no effective counter-hegemony. In particular Russia failed to mount serious opposition to the war. In the end, it even turned out to be instrumental in bringing Milosevic to the negotiating table, because this was the only meaningful role it could play in the conflict. From a Gramscian perspective, the normative shift identified above represented an expansion of ideological consensus and thereby an expansion of American power. NATO's decision to intervene in Kosovo was based on values, but these values were not incidental. They were part of an ideological consensus which formed the basis of the world order that served the material interests of the elites. In this sense, the Gramscians reconcile realist and constructivist thought by recognizing the constructivist notion that state behavior can be traced back to social processes and identities, while rooting this firmly in material interests like the realists do.

In the end, this analysis reveals that NATO's insistence that it acted to defend a set of values is a credible argument. Values were important, whether it was because they created legitimacy in the eyes of the public and the international community, or because they underpinned the world order on which American prosperity and security was based. Norms and values influenced the decision to intervene and the way the intervention was carried out. They were more than just rhetorical tools designed to disguise more

sinister motives. They informed politicians' perceptions of interests and set the parameters for state action. The world order that was being created during the 1990s was, more than ever before, or arguably since, one that was based on a set of values. These were distinctly western values and the constructivists and the Gramscians disagree on what purpose the proliferation of these values ultimately served. But they agree on their fundamental importance in influencing state behaviour.

The constructivist and Gramscian perspectives have proven to be useful here because of their ability to go beyond a simple understanding of values and interests as binary opposites. It is all too easy to fall into the trap of depicting these two categories as mutually exclusive. We ask ourselves whether a state or politician acts on the basis of material interests or on the basis of genuine convictions, without acknowledging the that the two may very well be related. The constructivist perspective has shown that perceptions of interests are very much shaped by shared beliefs and understandings, by norms and values. It effectively traces interests back to social processes, and this proved helpful to understand why the Clinton administration made human rights a matter of national interest, and how this brought about the intervention in Kosovo. Its weakness is that it fails to recognise that the reverse may also be true, that material interests can shape norms and values. This is where the Gramscian perspective comes in useful. It shows that ideology has a power dimension, that it is based on material facts. In the case of Kosovo, human rights were a powerful norm because they were supported by American military and economic power. Constructivists believe that norms, values and ideas *define* interests, Gramscians believe that they ultimately *serve* interests.

Another point of divergence for the two theories is that constructivism emphasizes change while Gramscianism is more interested in continuity. From a constructivist perspective, state behavior is based on social facts which are, by nature, fluid and continually changing. The developing norm of humanitarian intervention was evidence of this. For the Gramscians, the basic characteristics of the international order do not change, they continue to favour the strong over the weak. This brings out a weakness in Gramscian theory: it tends to place everything in a grand narrative about the dominance of the economic elites. To be fair, Gramscian scholars like Mark Rupert address this weakness by pointing out that for a hegemony to be effective, the narrow material interests of the elites must be superseded by a more universal ideology. Human rights therefore do not necessarily bear a direct relation to the material interests of the elites, but are one component of the wider world view that is being propagated. The events in Kosovo support this understanding of hegemony better than a more narrow reading of Gramsci.

This exercise in the use of constructivist and Gramscian insights to NATO's intervention in Kosovo reveals both the values and the inherent danger of applying broader theoretical perspectives to historical events. When applying theory to a historical event, there is always the risk of adopting the facts to fit the preconceived notions that are present in the theoretical framework. This is more evident in the Gramscian analysis, with its insistence on a Marxian grand narrative. However, selecting and organising facts is a necessary component of all historical research. The same historical methods for judging and interpreting the facts apply when applying theoretical perspectives. Theory is valuable when applied critically, because it allows us to consider the facts from different viewpoints. If this analysis has succeeded in revealing different ways of looking at and thinking about the facts, then it has been a fruitful exercise.

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