

YUGOSLAV CONFLICT AND NATO: HUMANITARIAN ALTRUISM OR GLOBALIZATION INCENTIVE IN KOSOVO?

Graeme Lavrence

The conflict in the former-Yugoslavian province of Kosovo and the subsequent North Atlantic Trade Organization (NATO) intervention is a complicated issue with numerous legal, ethical, and political interpretations. Marking a “paradigmatic shift” in international politics and law, NATO’s intervention, dubbed Operation Allied Force, has had significant ramifications (Ristić and Satjukow 191). Central to the discussion of this operation was the question of “whether it was legitimate to cause harm in order to prevent greater suffering” (Ristić and Satjukow 191). Involved in the discussion are conceptions of humanitarian intervention and of globalization, with arguments that paint the NATO intervention under either light; some allude to instances of globalization which have been disguised under the justifications of foreign aid and humanitarian intervention (Ayoob 100). Within the context of this paper, humanitarian intervention can be understood as “the impartial, independent and neutral provision of aid to those in immediate danger” (Rysaback-Smith par. 2), whereas globalization will be understood as the spread of global homogeneity within an economic, cultural, political, or institutional context (Ritzer and Ryan 57-58). Oftentimes, international administration—wherein foreign states or institutions that act as the governmental body of a state—is a consequence of humanitarian intervention in Third World countries

(Ayoob 100). This is especially true in instances wherein the intervention transpires without United Nations Security Council (UNSC) authorization and is carried out by major powers, like the United States (Ayoob 100). In this way, some forms of humanitarian intervention are seen by many as a threat to state sovereignty, and as “a revival of the “standard of civilization” that was used in the nineteenth century to justify colonial subjugation” (Ayoob 101). Furthermore, the concept of humanitarianism is one which is based on understandings of human rights and liberal world order that are founded upon Western cultural values (van Leeuwen 10-11). This establishment of hegemonic norms through globalization can allow for the proliferation of a Western world order (van Leeuwen 10-12). As the globe progresses further towards a homogenized society wherein international laws and standards are circumvented by militaristic superpowers, it is crucial to remain aware of potential instances of globalization and the different forms in which globalization may present itself. Through an analysis of the historical context, the varying humanitarian and globalization perspectives, and the political, legal, and moral aspects of the intervention, as well as its execution, I will prove the following: *The NATO intervention in the Kosovo conflict was influenced simultaneously by a humanitarian imperative and an incentive for globalization. While this intervention*

was not legally justified and may not have been altruistic—or even entirely successful—it was still necessary on moral grounds.

The history of the NATO intervention is preceded by the longstanding historical significance that the autonomous Kosovo province has held for both Albanians and Serbs (Human Rights Watch, “Under Orders” 19). This shared interest resulted in frequent clashes between the groups throughout history, with mutual accusations of atrocities (Human Rights Watch, “Under Orders” 19). Since its post-WWII constitution, Yugoslavia, and specifically Kosovo, has been subject to economic depression and ethnic divisions that have consistently threatened the stability of the state (Human Rights Watch, “Under Orders” 20). The ethnic Albanian population in Kosovo has long-striven for independence as an ethnicity-based nation (Human Rights Watch, “Under Orders” 20). Widespread poverty and a power vacuum allowed for the rise of nationalism, fueling these ethnic divisions (Human Rights Watch, “Under Orders” 20; Kaufman). Slobodan Milošević, a nationalist Serb who weaponized ethnic divisions, was elected Serbian President in May of 1989 (Human Rights Watch, “Under Orders” 22-26). Following this, populism and anti-Albanian sentiment became commonplace (Human Rights Watch, “Under Orders” 22-26). Subsequently, in March of 1989, constitutional changes revoked Kosovo’s autonomous status and returned control of the region to Belgrade, the capital of Serbia (Human Rights Watch, “Under Orders” 22-27; Kaufman). This was a turning point in Kosovo’s political history and was succeeded by numerous substantial changes, including the suppression of

Albanian state employees, and the dissolution of the Kosovar assembly (Kaufman). In 1990, the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) carried out terrorist attacks against Serbs, which contributed to Serbian opposition to the Kosovar people (Human Rights Watch, “Under Orders” 27; O’Connell 74-75).

The situation worsened with Milošević’s election as Yugoslavian President in July of 1997, which coincided with a rise in attacks by the KLA and subsequent Serb police retaliation (O’Connell 75). This conflict escalated into full blown war in 1998, which prompted the U.S. and NATO to threaten involvement (Gromes 4; Kaufman; O’Connell 75-76; Ristić and Satjukow 190). Regardless, expulsions and massacres continued (Ristić and Satjukow 190). After further failed negotiations and ceasefire agreements, NATO began an entirely air-based militaristic intervention on March 24th, 1999, dubbed Operation Allied Force (Ristić and Satjukow 189-190). This Operation was the most intense and sustained military operation in Europe since the end of WWII and was the first combat operation for a humanitarian objective against a state committing atrocities within its own borders (Lambeth 219). The Kumanovo peace treaty took place on June 9th, 1999, and was accompanied by the withdrawal of Serbian troops from Kosovo (Ristić and Satjukow 190). Operation Allied Force lasted for 78 days, and officially ended on June 10th, 1999 (Gromes 6). The NATO-led Kosovo International Security Force (KFOR) was deployed in Kosovo as a peacekeeping group (Gromes 5; Ristić and Satjukow 193). Moreover, the UNSC adopted Resolution 1244, which authorized an international security presence in Kosovo, and would install

an interim UN administration (Gromes 6). On the 19th of June, the conflict ended, KFOR was deployed, and KLA demilitarization followed suit (Gromes 6). Although this marked the end of the Kosovo conflict and NATO's direct involvement, it was not the end of the conflict within Kosovo, as violence continued against non-Albanians in the region as retribution for the decade of ethnic cleansing that predicated the 1999 intervention (Ristić and Satjukow 192-193).

There is a significant amount of academic literature which supports understandings of NATO's intervention as an act of humanitarianism (Henkin 826; O'Connell 80). Humanitarianism is predicated on the notion of universal human rights regardless of one's political affiliation, with "[p]roponents of humanitarian intervention suggest[ing] that a state forfeits its right to sovereignty if it fails to protect its own citizens from human rights abuses" (van Leeuwen 10). With this in mind, the humanitarian crisis in Kosovo demanded a response, as the NATO intervention was intended to help civilians suffering from horrendous human rights violations and crimes against humanity (Henkin 826), including ethnic cleansing and expulsion inflicted upon Kosovar ethnic-Albanians (Goldstone 143). Greenwood writes that humanitarian intervention is necessary in instances wherein a substantial portion of a state's population is threatened with either death or widespread suffering because of the actions of the state's government (34). These circumstances are certainly true with respect to the Kosovo conflict; Serb police and the Yugoslav army committed a plethora of atrocities against the Kosovar Albanians over a

a decade of repression (Human Rights Watch, "FRY Abuses"; Human Rights Watch, "Under Orders" 4-8). Some of these atrocities include civilian massacres, biological warfare, torture, rapes, mass killings, and arbitrary detentions, along with the destruction of homes, mosques, and civilian property (Human Rights Watch, "Under Orders" 4-8). Part of the meticulous expulsion campaign was identity cleansing, which involved the destruction of personal documentation and identification papers to prevent re-entry (Human Rights Watch, "Under Orders" 6). Through the efforts of the Yugoslav government, over 80% of Kosovo's population and 90% of all Kosovar Albanians were displaced (Human Rights Watch, "Under Orders" 4). In September of 1999, the Independent International Commission on Kosovo (IICK) held meetings to analyze the Kosovo crisis. This commission found that NATO's intervention was politically and morally legitimate due to the "egregious oppression and violations of the human rights of the Kosovar Albanians by their Serb rulers" (Goldstone 143). Surely, these circumstances warrant the humanitarian intervention carried out by NATO. To sum up using the words of Václav Havel, president of the Czech Republic, in regard to the Kosovo intervention: "If one can say of any war that it is ethical, or that it is being waged for ethical reasons, then it is true of this war" (qtd. in Ristić and Satjukow 192).

While there are many proponents of the humanitarian aspect to the NATO intervention, the globalization perspective is upheld by many throughout the literature. The rationale for this argument is two-pronged: the NATO bombardment was motivated by

the pursuit of a hegemonic economic system and/or for the purposes of resource extraction and geostrategic interests (Bellamy 338; Talbot 102-106). As previously explained, the spread of a hegemonic world view has been cemented by globalization (van Leeuwen 11). In this process, the triumph of liberal values is often followed by humanitarian intervention with the aim of asserting a certain world order, which is subsequently followed by—and in some ways is a form of—globalization (van Leeuwen 11). This world order is Westernized and emphasizes democracy, free trade, and human rights (van Leeuwen 11). In the 1990's, the United Nations increasingly labelled humanitarian emergencies from across the globe as threats to international peace and security, which instilled ideals that the international norms of state sovereignty were subordinate to norms—and Western conceptions—of human rights (van Leeuwen 12). These norms have often been upheld by international institutions like the UN, European Union (EU) and NATO (van Leeuwen 12). From a Gramscian perspective, this consensus can be seen as an expansion of Western hegemonic power, which illustrates the dangers that come from underestimating the dimensions of power which can seemingly underlie uncontroversial values, such as human rights (van Leeuwen 14). Both Talbot and van Leeuwen comment on the mediatization of the conflict, insisting that it created both an intense demonization of Serbs—which suited NATO interests—while simultaneously reaffirming the humanitarian norms utilized by NATO in Kosovo (Talbot 94-95; van Leeuwen 13). Furthermore, some commentary suggests that the Yugoslav conflicts received a disproportionate amount of international

media coverage when compared to similar crises of the same time, which contributed to media and public pressure against NATO to intervene (van Leeuwen 13). Moreover, van Leeuwen argues that the media emphasis placed upon the human rights violations in Kosovo served to reaffirm the importance of humanitarianism and human rights in Western minds, ultimately reaffirming the “humanitarian norms and values that NATO professed to defend in Kosovo” (13). To this point, van Leeuwen notes White House press briefings from the period, in which reporters failed to question “the validity of standing up for human rights” in the region (13).

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A further dimension of globalization is that of international administration,

which usually serves as a by-product of some forms of humanitarian intervention (Ayoob 100). The threat of international administration often contributes to the reluctance of many Third World countries to allow for foreign aid or intervention, especially in instances wherein the intervening entity is operating without United Nations authorization (Ayoob 100). As previously explained, NATO and UNSC humanitarian missions often allow for a continuation of neocolonial rule in the form of international administration (Ayoob 100-101). Often, Western bodies such as NATO make decisions on the identification of targets deemed suitable for intervention based on their own interests (Ayoob 101). It is not uncommon for dominant international coalitions to obstruct humanitarian action when it does not suit their interests and promote such action when it is suitable (Ayoob 103, 109).

Further, van Leeuwen notes that the Liberal world order of the 1990’s was neither complete nor unchallenged, something which institutions like the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and nations like the U.S. wished to change (14). Notably, after the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (SFRY) split from the Communist Bloc, the nation held its own form of government called self-managing socialism, and largely resisted the “Liberal world order” of the Western powers (Kunitz 1901; Talbot 105). Changes to the international system, the accumulation of foreign debt, and a global economic recession in the 1980s disadvantaged the SFRY’s economy (Kaufman). Due to this foreign debt, economic reforms—such as the privatization of public sector, wage freezes, and the introduction of new devalued currency

(Talbot 105-106)—were imposed by the IMF (Kaufman). Dubbed Structural Adjustment Programs (SAPs), these reforms had to be met for the SFRY to qualify for foreign aid (Talbot 109). Yugoslavia was largely unable to meet these reforms, partly due to workers strikes and government opposition to privatization and a free market system (Talbot 104). Spurred by Yugoslav inability and unwillingness to dismantle the welfare state, the U.S. imposed sanctions in the form of the 1990 Foreign Operations Appropriations Law (Kaufman; Talbot 105-106). These sanctions cut off all foreign aid, credit, and loans from the U.S. to Yugoslavia, causing further damage to the economy—which politicians used to fuel ethnic strife and right-wing nationalism (Talbot 104). One could understand the decline of the SFRY's economy as bearing the symptoms of a phenomenon described by Bellamy, wherein Western states and institutions—like the (IMF)—contribute to poverty in the Third World through “patrimonial politics” which are often the root cause of humanitarian emergencies (Bellamy 330).

These efforts from the U.S. display attempts to transition post-Cold War Eastern European countries into market-oriented economies (Talbot 104). This is reflected in a 1984 U.S. Policy Directive towards Yugoslavia which advocated for “expanded efforts to promote a ‘quiet revolution’ to overthrow communist government and parties,” in the aim of instituting a capitalist system (qtd. in Talbot 104). Furthermore, prior to any indications in the media or politics of conflict within Kosovo, the CIA released a report in which they predicted “that the federated Yugoslavia will break apart most prob-

ably in the next 18 months and that civil war is highly likely” (qtd. in Talbot 104). These instances contribute to a perspective which illustrates nefarious intentions present in NATO's involvement in Kosovo (Talbot 104). For Talbot, the U.S. sanctions and NATO intervention send a message to nations of the entire world—especially those on the oil-rich Eurasian crescent—that, if they do succumb to U.S. bidding, they could be subject to divide-and-conquer tactics and “balkanized” (Talbot 102). This push is further reflected in the post-intervention agreements which called for the privatization of Kosovo's economy (Talbot 105).

Elsewhere, scholars point towards resources and interests within the Kosovo (and greater-Serbia) region and insist that economic and political motivators for U.S.-led globalization were plentiful (Ristić and Satjukow 192). Firstly, Serbia is rich in minerals, with Kosovo having the highest concentration of mineral resources in all of Europe west of Russia (Talbot 104-105). At the epicenter of this was the state-owned Trepca mining complex. Dubbed by the New York Times as “the most valuable piece of real estate in the Balkans,” (qtd. in Talbot 105) this complex was worth at least \$5 billion USD (Talbot 105). Furthermore, the complex was rich in a plethora of valuable minerals and generated tens of millions of annual profits (Talbot 105). Beyond this, Kosovo had 17 billion tons of coal reserves on its territory, not to mention oil reserves in Kosovo and Serbia-proper (Talbot 105). Secondly, on the subject of oil, this region of the Balkans was strategically important for the transshipment of oil and gas to Europe and abroad—utilizing shipping

canals and waterways like the Danube River—while also containing pipelines, railways, and transportation corridors that ran from Russia, through Serbia, and into Central Europe (Talbot 109). Furthermore, in the north of Serbia, the province of Vojvodina was plentiful with extremely fertile soil and was a major “breadbasket” (Talbot 105) for Europe (Talbot 104-105). Lastly, at the time of the NATO intervention, Kosovo was rich with inexpensive workers which could easily be exploited as cheap labor by Western corporations (Talbot 104-105). Overall, it is clear that a great number of valuable resource opportunities existed with Kosovo and its neighbors at the time of the NATO intervention.

It is worth taking note of discrepancies of the NATO involvement, in comparison to both similar conflicts with greater-Yugoslavia and abroad. For example, in Croatia in 1995, hundreds of thousands of Serbs were expelled in what was characterized by some as the largest ethnic cleansing during the Yugoslav conflict (Talbot 95). Considering this conflict and violence against Serbs, questions arise about NATO’s failure to intervene, and of mediatization which predominantly focused on Serb atrocities (Talbot 95). For Talbot, the former can be construed as the U.S. pursuing expansion in its post-Cold War global role through NATO, whereas the latter can be attributed to Western disinformation campaigns to conceal the true motives of NATO (Talbot 94-96). Elsewhere, as in Rwanda, Mozambique, El Salvador, Sierra Leone, and Palestine, human rights crimes and atrocities were being committed with a lack of intervention from NATO (Ayoob 103; Mandelbaum 6; Talbot 96). This prompts some susp-

icions about the motivations behind NATO’s involvement (Ayoob 103). Furthermore, NATO’s neglect of humanitarian crises in African states, largely due to a lack of strategic significance, adds to a perceived—and perhaps actual—lack of concern over the lives of Africans in contrast to the lives of Europeans (Ayoob 110). This ‘selective humanitarianism’ cements perceptions that most interventions are “a deliberate ploy on the part of the major powers to gain legitimacy for actions undertaken to enhance their own strategic and economic interests” (Ayoob 110). To sum up the globalization argument, Bellamy has written that “the use of humanitarian claims to legitimise armed intervention are crocodile tears shed by the very states and institutions that caused the problem in the first place” (332).

Regarding the legality of Operation Allied Storm, the consensus is that it lacked legitimate legal justification under international law. According to O’Connell, this intervention was carried out without UNSC authorization, was not justified by the UN Charter or by prior Security Council Conduct and was done without formal statements from either NATO or the United States which provided concrete legal justifications (O’Connell 57, 73, 80; Ristić and Satjukow 189-190). Primarily, the United Nations Charter, in Chapter 1, Article 2(4), prohibits the use of force within international relations in most instances, while allowing three exceptions to this rule (O’Connell, 58). The exceptions are as follows: Firstly, Chapter VII, Article 42 states that the Security Council may use force in order to “maintain or restore international peace and security” (qtd. in O’Connell 58). Secondly, Chapter VII, Article 51,

permits the use of force as a means of collective self-defence for UN member states (O'Connell, 58). Finally, Chapter VIII, Article 53, states that the UNSC is permitted to use regional arrangements to govern the use of force, or to authorize regional arrangements to use force (O'Connell, 58). However, Chapter VIII, Article 53 contains the caveat that "no enforcement action shall be taken under regional arrangements ... without the authorization of the Security Council" (qtd. in O'Connell 62-63). Indeed, NATO's intervention in Kosovo fails to qualify under any of the above exceptions (O'Connell 62-63, 67, 69). For example, collective self-defence can only pertain to instances wherein the 'victim' state has expressly called for outside intervention, which the SFRY had not done (Matheson 301; O'Connell 59). Further, as the exceptions in Chapter VII, Article 42 and Chapter VIII, Article 53 specify UNSC authorization—which NATO did not have—they fail to justify the intervention (O'Connell 58-59). Beyond this, there are some attempts to justify NATO actions in relation to prior UNSC Resolutions, yet none of those resolutions explicitly authorize use of force (Bellamy 325; O'Connell 77-78; Henkin 825; van Leeuwen 12). Conclusively, NATO acted without UNSC authorization—in the face of multiple vetoes from permanent members—with no legal precedent or justification under the UN Charter (Ayoob 109-110; Goldstone 143; Henkin 825-826; O'Connell 82; Kritsiotis 348,358; van Leeuwen 12). It would not be an over-exaggeration to say that NATO's actions intentionally circumvented and therefore violated international law, which complicates the question of both moral necessity and justification for NATO's intervention.

Another point of contention in the academic literature surrounding the Kosovo intervention is whether it was successful in preventing suffering and in bringing stability to the region. Indeed, it can be argued that NATO failed in those goals (Mandelbaum 2-5). Firstly, Kosovar casualties during the NATO intervention skyrocketed, both because of NATO's bombing and because of Serb and Yugoslav forces who increased ethnic cleansing (Ristić and Satjukow 193). The numbers vary, but scholars agree that NATO directly killed an estimated 495-758 Yugoslav civilians, with a total of 9,426 killed during the 78-day period—most of whom were ethnic-Albanians killed by the Yugoslav forces (Gromes 7; Ristić and Satjukow 190-193). Additionally, a total of 1.4 million people were displaced during the conflict (Mandelbaum 3; Ristić and Satjukow 193).

At the beginning of the conflict, NATO's targets included air defenses, surveillance systems, military headquarters, and military facilities, among others (Gromes 5). However, throughout the conflict, NATO—both intentionally and unintentionally—targeted infrastructure that was close to civilian targets or was crucial for civilian survival (Kritsiotis 355-357; Lambeth 240-242; Mandelbaum 6; Mertus 311; Ristić and Satjukow 190-193; Talbot 95). Some examples include Serbian news stations; electrical grids; water filtration systems; residential areas; busses, trains, and other vehicles containing civilians; public infrastructure like bridges; hospitals; historical monuments; churches; schools; senior residences; factories—the destruction of which released toxic chemicals into the environment; multiple refugee convoys; and the Chinese emb-

assy in Belgrade (Kritsiotis 355-357; Lambeth 240-242; Mandelbaum 6; Ristić and Satjukow 190-193; Talbot 95). The release of toxic chemicals coupled with NATO's use of radioactive munitions contributed to long term health problems and environmental degradation (Ristić and Satjukow 190-193; Talbot 95). This destruction of non-military targets is forbidden under international law (Mertus 311). Furthermore, Article 14 of the 1977 Protocol to the Geneva Convention (1949), states that attacks are prohibited if they target "objects indispensable to the survival of the civilian population" (qtd. in Mandelbaum 6). With this in mind, it is understandable how one would condemn NATO's actions in Kosovo as war crimes (Lambeth 240).

Unfortunately, the end of the NATO-led Operation did not signify the end of conflict in Kosovo (Ristić and Satjukow 193). Once Serbia withdrew its troops from the region, KFOR entered the region to maintain peace (Ristić and Satjukow 193). However, KFOR was ill-equipped to prevent further suffering (Human Rights Watch, "FRY Abuses"; Talbot 97). Ethnic-Albanians and KLA members caused a mass exodus of Serbs, Roma, and other non-ethnic-Albanians from Kosovo (Gromes 7-8; Human Rights Watch, "FRY Abuses"; Ristić and Satjukow 193; Talbot 96-97). In this post-Operation period, the following crimes were reported: massacres; rapes; destruction of homes and schools; burning and looting; attacks on mosques, monasteries, and Orthodox churches; decapitations of elderly residents; as well as beatings, abductions, torture, and illegal imprisonment (Gromes 7-8; Human Rights Watch, "FRY Abuses"; Ristić and Satjukow 193; Talbot 96-97). Over-

all, the quality of life for residents was poor in the post-NATO Yugoslavia, with continuing ethnic clashes and unemployment (Lambeth 225; Talbot 96).

Moreover, the NATO intervention—and Kosovo conflict as a whole—significantly deteriorated regional stability. Many of the wider political consequences of the intervention were opposite to NATO's original intentions, with "virtually all the major political effects [being] unplanned, unanticipated, and unwelcome" (Mandelbaum 2). The crux of the Albanian struggle was the pursuit of independence and the right to national self-determination, while Serbia fought to maintain Kosovo within Yugoslavia, in the name of the inviolability of pre-existing borders, yet NATO supported only the latter—in fact, in the post-conflict international landscape, NATO policy actively opposed the establishment of an independent Kosovo (Mandelbaum 5). Therefore, NATO had intervened in a civil war yet had embraced the position of their enemy (Mandelbaum 5). For the most part, the people of the Balkans emerged worse off than they had been prior to the war, with the entirety of the Balkans rendered less stable due to infrastructure damage and the influx of refugees in neighbouring states (Mandelbaum 2-3). NATO failed to prevent wider suffering and conflict within Kosovo and Serbia-proper, which raises concerns over the moral justifications—or lack thereof—and efficacy of NATO's intervention. These concerns are the next subject of dissection along with an analysis of the moral imperative for any such intervention.

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that the argument here is not one which claims NATO's intervention is morally justified, but rather morally necessary. There exists an important distinction between the two. While the former entails that NATO's actions in Kosovo were justified on moral grounds and therefore excusable, the latter attests that there was a moral imperative for NATO to act. The argument being put forward is not one which aims to justify NATO's actions as a morally successful operation or one that should be construed as a 'just war' in the realm of moral philosophy. Briefly on this subject, many scholars critique the NATO 'humanitarian intervention' as not fulfilling the principles of a 'just war' (Elshtain; Fixdal and Smith; Reitan). The failure of the NATO intervention to fulfill the principles of the 'just war' can be attributed to the notions of *ius ad bellum* and *ius in bellum* (Fixdal and Smith 286). The former, *ius ad bellum*, can be understood as justice in the resort to war, which the 1999 NATO intervention did not meet, considering it was not legitimate in its authority to declare war, and was not easily justifiable as motivated entirely by just cause (Fixdal and Smith 286). Whereas the latter, *ius in bellum*, refers to justice in the conduct of war, which was violated by the NATO intervention, given that noncombatants did not receive protection from discrimination, and since the war was not proportional in its causing of harm in proportion to good (Fixdal and Smith 286). This is echoed elsewhere in the literature and reflected above, as the actions of NATO increased the suffering of the people of Kosovo both through NATO bombardment and through a provocation of Milošević (Elshtain 6-9). Furthermore, it is argued by Shinoda

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that humanitarian intervention encompasses a duty not to damage the conditions of the population and to respect civil, political, social, cultural, and economic rights of the people, which may not apply to the situation of Kosovo (530). However, to fully ascertain whether NATO's involvement was morally justified is not within the scope of this paper.

Rather, the argument being presented is that due to the gross human rights violations of the time, it was morally necessary for NATO to act. In other words, someone had to do something, as crimes against humanity and genocide were taking place and no other actions by a state or collection of states had yet proven effective. It is widely accepted by scholars, expressed by some NATO members, and supported by many non-NATO states, that there was a clear humanitarian imperative in the Kosovo conflict (O'Connell 70,80-82; Goldstone 143; Henkin 824-826; Kritsiotis 358; Ristić and Satjukow 191). Furthermore, the humanitarian catastrophe, threat to neighbouring states, as well as the violations of international humanitarian law and human rights all warranted involvement (Henkin 824-826; O'Connell 80). Others have argued that this humanitarian catastrophe justified the bombing through an appeal to saving innocent lives at the expense of a nation's sovereignty (Ristić and Satjukow 191). This principle inherently violates the fundamentals of state sovereignty and is only applicable in instances wherein the state is "unwilling or unable to prevent such mass atrocities"—which is undoubtedly true for Kosovo (Henkin 824; Ristić and Satjukow 191). Through this, "proponents of humanitarian intervention suggest that a state forfeits its

right to sovereignty if it fails to protect its own citizens from human rights abuses” (van Leeuwen 10). Elsewhere, it is argued that state-sovereignty should not be held above human rights, and that crimes against humanity hold greater importance than principles of international sovereignty (Henkin 824-826). Subsequently, there exists collective responsibility to intervene in instances wherein human rights are violated, and the use of force can therefore be legitimate to uphold society’s moral purpose (Bellamy 324). On this, Bellamy writes that: “Sovereignty ... is not a veil that human rights abusers can hide behind ... extreme cases of human suffering constitute a legitimate exception to the rule of non-intervention” (Bellamy 325). Following the NATO intervention, it has been acknowledged by some scholars that military enforcement without UNSC authorization is permissible to safeguard human rights (O’Connell 70). However, O’Connell states that at the time of the NATO intervention, no existing treaties allowed for violation of state-sovereignty based on humanitarian intervention, and there is a lack of evidence to support legal obligations to support humanitarian intervention (O’Connell 70).

Overall, it is argued that from a moral standpoint, the use of armed force was justified in terms of a moral imperative to act, even if NATO was acting in contradiction of international law (Kritsiotis 352). This raises questions over the disjoint between morality and legality on the international stage, and the potential need to rework understandings of international law as it pertains to humanitarianism. However, these critiques and subsequent solutions are not within the aim of this paper.

Furthermore, some attempts have been made to suggest whether the kind of intervention utilized in this instance is the most suitable for solving humanitarian crises. Perhaps if substantial and unified action had taken place earlier in the conflict, using cohesive economic and political measures, then the outcome would have been more beneficial for the people of Kosovo.

To conclude, the Kosovo conflict and subsequent NATO intervention is a multi-faceted issue, with multiple equally compelling narratives. Rather than suggest that the drive behind Operation Allied Force was strictly humanitarianism or globalization, it is instead clear that both factors were at play; it may be that humanitarian outcomes were possible, even if motivations weren’t primarily humanitarian. As previously established, there was a compelling need for intervention on humanitarian grounds due to atrocities and ethnic cleansing; I argue that there existed a moral imperative for someone to intervene. While some argue that NATO was obligated to act—largely due to foreign economic meddling by NATO members with predisposed the state to collapse—I believe that some NATO members (the United States, for example) utilized the humanitarian crisis for economic purposes like resource extraction, strongarming the Alliance to act. This is emphasized by the numerous geostrategic and political interests within the region that surely played a factor in NATO’s actions. Operation Allied Force was clearly unjustifiable under international law, and far from successful in preventing further suffering as originally intended. Moreover, for those same reasons, it

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may not even be justifiable on moral grounds, as it actively caused further devastation for Kosovo. Nonetheless, even though the motivations and execution may have been less-than-altruistic for some—or all—NATO members, it was still pertinent that someone had to intervene in the conflict. Now, whether this moral imperative is squandered by the beneficial economic opportunities available in the region is a different question and not my intention to answer. The conclusions that can be pulled from this conflict and the overall

perspective I have provided allow for a comprehensive understanding of the ways in which globalization is executed in recent times. This instance alludes to a troubling trend wherein global superpowers intervene in humanitarian crises—which they may or may not be implicated in—at their own discretion for the spread of power and for economic pursuits. One might hope that being aware of these instances can allow for vigilance and resistance to subjugation at the hands of these major powers.

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