

## Beyond independence: Anti-Americanism and the Serb resistance in Kosova

Përparim GUTAJ

### Abstract

*This paper examines the Serb resistance in northern Kosova. A number of studies, over the last decade, have been performed that scrutinize the case of Kosova and look into the strained relations between Kosova Albanians and Kosova Serbs. Yet, no study has been carried out to explain the Serb resistance, and more importantly, its nature and its underpinning mechanisms. This paper intends to just that. The central argument it makes is that the Serb resistance in northern Kosova is a Serbian elite construct, made of and crammed with anti-Americanism sentiments. This Serb anti-Americanism is a recent phenomenon, constructed as a consequence of specific developments that are occurring in Kosova and the region, such as the stationing of the American troops in Kosova, the American policy towards the region, and the American political and diplomatic support for the new state. To formulate this argument, the paper adopts the framework of anti-Americanism as its foundation while comparing it with the socio-biological, cultural, and rationalist approaches to resistance. The paper supports the gist of the argument by drawing on recent scholarship and analyzing official documents, executive statements, and intellectual observations.*

**Keywords:** American Power, Anti-Americanism, Kosova, Power and Resistance, Serb Resistance

Speaking to the parliament of the Republic of Kosova, on May 21, 2009, the U.S. Vice President Joseph Biden reiterated Washington's official stance, saying that Kosova's "independence

is irreversible – absolutely irreversible.”<sup>1</sup> Biden went even further to claim that the success of an independent Kosova is a priority for the Obama administration. On September 10, 2012, when the International Steering Group (ISG) announced the end of Kosova’s supervised independence, the U.S. President Barack Obama stated that he welcomes and strongly supports the decision of ISG. Obama congratulated the government, parliament and the people of Kosova on what he called the “historic milestone,” in which Kosova takes another important step toward its rightful place in free, whole and peaceful Europe.<sup>2</sup> To Balkan observers, policy makers and scholars alike, the Biden and Obama statements concurrently with the fact that, to date, Kosova is internationally recognized, as sovereign entity, by the majority of the UN member states<sup>3</sup> hint at the necessity to shift the intellectual and academic discussion and analyses *beyond independence*. That is, the ‘status question’ should no longer be central to the debate and allowed to hinder further analytical developments and correct understanding of contemporary issues facing Kosova. To put it bluntly, we must move *beyond independence* if we yearn for better understanding the case dynamics and proper policy recommendations. While such a shift is sure to open new intellectual and research venues, it does not, per se, resolve the different and manifold problems facing the new state. One of these problems, the Serb resistance in northern Kosova, is subject to scrutiny in the pages that follow.

The northern part of Kosova is inhabited by Serb<sup>4</sup> majority that rejects the authority and the legitimacy of the newest state in Europe.<sup>5</sup> These 46,000 or so Serbs<sup>6</sup> still consider that territory as part of Serbian sovereignty and, on the whole, they refuse to cooperate with the international civilian and security

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<sup>1</sup> New Kosova Report, “U.S. Vice President: Kosovo independence is irreversible,” <http://www.newkosovareport.com/200905221797/Views-and-Analysis/us-vice-president-kosovo-independence-is-irreversible.html> (accessed December 19, 2012).

<sup>2</sup> See, The White House Press, “Statement by the President on the End of Kosovo’s Supervised Independence,” <http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2012/09/10/statement-president-end-kosovo-s-supervised-independence> (accessed September 10, 2012)

<sup>3</sup> As of today, Jan. 24, 2013, the Republic of Kosova is recognized by 98 UN member states, that is a total of 50.8 % of the UN member. For further information, please see: [www.kosovo-thankyou.com](http://www.kosovo-thankyou.com)

<sup>4</sup> Throughout this paper the term ‘Serbs’ is applied to the people from the northern part of Kosova, those who are of Serb national origin and identity. When referring to Serbs in other parts of Kosova, the paper will make it clear as appropriate. Moreover, the term ‘Serbian’ is applied to someone who is born and currently lives in the state of Serbia.

<sup>5</sup> On Feb. 17, 2008 the Parliament in Prishtina declared Kosova an independent and sovereign Republic. Following this act, Kosova received the epithet of the newest state in Europe.

<sup>6</sup> This is an estimated number that was provided by the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) in 2006. Given that Serbs in northern Kosova rejected the 2011 census, this remains the most accurate public estimation.

personnel there, especially with Americans who are regarded occupiers.<sup>7</sup> The Serb unwillingness to cooperate and their determination to resist have been applauded and supported by political elites in Belgrade. With the intellectual and financial assistance from Serbia, the Serbs in this part of the country have successfully established illegal parallel institutions in various sectors, such as those in security, education, and health.<sup>8</sup> While these parallel illegal institutions are effective and play a critical role in resisting state and international actors, their existence begs a number of questions. What is Belgrade's *raison d'être* for supporting these illegal parallel structures? Why is Belgrade resolute to support the Serb resistance? What explains the Serb resistance in northern Kosova?

The answers to the questions above and the Serb impetus for resistance, can be formulated and depicted using different theoretical frameworks, e.g. via historical ethnic hatreds,<sup>9</sup> civilization clash,<sup>10</sup> or democracy's dark side,<sup>11</sup> nevertheless this paper offers alternative answers and intends to provide an explanation for the Serb resistance in northern Kosova. It intends to do so for three main reasons: a) because no study, up to date, has made such an effort to explain the nature and the causal mechanisms of the resistance; b) to fill the gap in the literature pertaining to the case of Kosova and more broadly anti-Americanism, and c) because better understanding of the Serb resistance can lead to more effective and efficient policies concerning this decisive political matter. The central argument the paper makes is that the Serb resistance in northern Kosova is a Serbian elite construct, made of and crammed with anti-Americanism sentiments. This Serb anti-Americanism is a recent phenomenon constructed as a consequence of specific developments that are occurring in Kosova and the region, such as the stationing of the American troops in

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<sup>7</sup> See John Catalinotto and Sara Flounders, eds., *Hidden Agenda: U.S./NATO Takeover of Yugoslavia* (New York, NY: International Action Center, 2002); William Engdahl, "Kosovo's 'Mafia State' and Camp Bondsteel: Towards a Permanent US Military Presence in Southeast Europe," *The Center for Global Research*, <http://www.globalresearch.ca/kosovo-s-mafia-state-and-camp-bondsteel-towards-a-permanent-us-military-presence-in-southeast-europe/30262> (accessed December 13, 2012); John Catalinotto (trans.), "'Interview with Krsljanin: Serbia is an occupied country,'" *Workers World*, [http://www.workers.org/2010/world/serbia\\_1021/](http://www.workers.org/2010/world/serbia_1021/) (accessed December 18, 2012).

<sup>8</sup> For a complete list of the illegal institutions in northern Kosova, see Ylber Hysa, Amir Haziri and Gynen Venhari, *Raporti mbi Institucionet Paralele ne Veri te Kosoves*, Zyra e Kordinatorit per Strategjine e Veriut (Prishtine: May 2011).

<sup>9</sup> Robert D. Kaplan, *The Balkans Ghosts: A Journey Through History* (New York, NY: Vintage, 1994).

<sup>10</sup> Samuel P. Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order* (New York, NY: Simon & Schuster, 1996).

<sup>11</sup> Michael Mann, *The Dark Side of Democracy: Explaining Ethnic Cleansing* (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2005).

Kosova, the American policy towards the region, and the American political and diplomatic support for the new state. As it will become more obvious in the following pages, these three specific developments are perceived as the principal causal variables that are being constructed into a larger concept of Serb anti-Americanism which considerably shape the Serb resistance. Although anti-Americanism “can be measured through the answers individuals give to survey items,” it should also “be recognized that anti-Americanism as a mass popular phenomenon can also manifest itself in forms other than the attitudes revealed in opinion polls.”<sup>12</sup> As Giacomo Chiozza rightly argued in 2009, anti-Americanism can take the form of contentious political behavior, such as demonstrations, protests, resistance, riots, and other violent acts against American people, policies, property, or symbols.<sup>13</sup> The manifestation of Anti-Americanism in the form of contentious political behavior informs the methodology adopted in this paper.

A number of recent studies have looked into the case of Kosova, by adopting different perspectives and theoretical frameworks. These studies have focused on a number of matters, such as security issues,<sup>14</sup> peace-building and regime change,<sup>15</sup> legal issues,<sup>16</sup> and the interplay of religion and politics.<sup>17</sup> What has not

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<sup>12</sup> Giacomo Chiozza, *Anti-Americanism and the American World Order* (Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2009), p. 37.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid

<sup>14</sup> Ted G Carpenter, “A New Era of Turbulence in the Balkans?” *Mediterranean Quarterly*, 19, no. 3 (2008): 6-22; Adem Beha and Gezim Visoka, “Human Security as ‘Ethnic Security’ in Kosovo,” *Human Security Perspectives* 7, no. 1 (2010): 83-101; Mark A Wolfgram, “When the Men with Guns Rule: Explaining Human Rights Failures in Kosovo since 1999,” *Political Science Quarterly* 123 no. 3 (2008): 461-484.

<sup>15</sup> Gordon N Bardos, “Containing Kosovo,” *Mediterranean Quarterly*, 16 no. 3 (2005): 17-43; Florian Bieber and Soren Keil, “Power-Sharing Revisited: Lessons Learned in the Balkans?” *Review of Central & East European Law* 34, no. 4 (2009): 337-360; Elizabeth Pond, “Kosovo and Serbia after the French Non,” *Washington Quarterly* 28, no. 4 (2005): 19-36; Gezim Visoka and Grace Bolton, “The Complex Nature and Implications of International Engagement after Kosovo's Independence,” *Civil Wars* 13, no.2 (2011): 189-214; Oisin Tansey, “Kosovo: Independence and Tutelage,” *Journal of Democracy* 20, no. 2 (2009): 153-166.

<sup>16</sup> James Ker-Lindsay, “Not Such as a ‘Sui Generis’ Case After All: Assessing the ICJ Opinion on Kosovo,” *Nationalities Papers* 39, no. 1 (2011): 1-11; Charles A Kupchan, “Independence for Kosovo,” *Foreign Affairs* 84, no. 6 (2005): 14-20; Robert Muharremi, “Kosovo's Declaration of Independence: Self-Determination and Sovereignty Revisited,” *Review of Central & East European Law* 33, no. 4 (2008): 401-435; Marc Weller, “Kosovo's Final Status,” *International Affairs* 84, no. 6 (2008a): 1223-1243; Marc Weller, “The Vienna Negotiations on the Final Status for Kosovo,” *International Affairs* 84, no. 4 (2008b): 659-681; Marc Weller, *Contested Statehood: Kosovo's Struggle for Independence* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2009); Marc Weller, “Modesty Can Be a Virtue: Judicial Economy in the ICJ Kosovo Opinion?” *Leiden Journal of International Law* 24, no. 1 (2011): 127-147.

been examined and explained is the Serb resistance in northern Kosova. To put it more precisely, the nature and the causal mechanisms of the resistance need to be explained, so that better understanding of the phenomenon could come into view. In the following pages, this paper intends to do just that by looking at a number of complex and clashing relationships among Serbian political and religious elites, the Serb masses in northern Kosova, and the American policies and power in the area.

The American policies and power have encountered different forms and scope of resistance globally. Like the American power which is known for its array of forces, so too is the resistance to that power. In the post-Cold War world, resistance to American policies and power has been further diversified, ranging from those who take to the streets and the media campaign against America to those who are willing to kill and die in order to harm it.<sup>18</sup> As it will become more apparent in the subsequent pages, the Serb resistance in northern Kosova lies somewhere in-between these two different forms of anti-Americanisms, and a potential 'aspirant' to radicalize itself. Another important facet of the resistance and a significant ingredient of this study are the Serb masses in northern Kosova. As it will be illustrated below, Serbian political and religious elites have succeeded in manipulating and turning the Serb masses in this part of Kosova into their 'political instrument.' In the last fourteen years, Belgrade has been very conscious to use the Serb population in Kosova as a source that can be manipulated at any time for domestic or/and foreign policy purposes. While Belgrade's strategy is working well for the elites in Belgrade, the Serbs in northern Kosova have turned themselves into "prisoners in their own land."<sup>19</sup>

Explaining the Serb resistance is important for a number of reasons. First, the resistance shapes the political environment in which politics and policy are developed. Not only state, institutions, and legislation are affected by the resistance, but also the private stakeholders who operate and interact with or influence the system. Moreover, the resistance also affects the political culture in Kosova. It affects popular participation in democratic processes like elections and civic engagement. Second, the resistance complicates the integration processes of both Kosova and Serbia into regional and international

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<sup>17</sup> Gezim Krasniqi, "The 'Forbidden Fruit': Islam and Politics of Identity in Kosovo and Macedonia," *Journal of Southeast European & Black Sea Studies* 11, no. 2(2011: 191-207; Robert J Pranger, "The Milosevic and Islamization Factors: Writing Contemporary History in the Balkans," *Mediterranean Quarterly* 22, no.1 (2011): 1-14.

<sup>18</sup> Ivan Krastev, "The Anti-American Century?" *Journal of Democracy* 15, no. 2 (2004), p. 5.

<sup>19</sup> Benjamin Schett, "Prisoners in their own Land: The Struggle and Resistance of Serbs in Kosova." *The Center for Global Research*, <http://www.globalresearch.ca/prisoners-in-their-own-land-the-struggle-and-resistance-of-serbs-in-kosovo/28178> (accessed December 10, 2012).

institutions. Serbia's attempt to prevent the integration of Kosova into international mechanisms, by supporting the resistance which undermines Kosova's international image in the global arena, has proven costly, especially in regards to its EU perspective. Third, the resistance taints how the rest of the world (mis)understands what is happening in northern Kosova. Frequently, when outside observers write on or comment about what is going on in northern Kosova, ethnic rivalry, historical animosity, and religious antagonism dominate in their explanations. For an unidentified reason, anti-Americanism, as an explanation for the resistance, has been completely rejected up to now. Finally, the Serb resistance is important because it has implications for the broader debate on anti-Americanisms. In 2007, Peter Katzenstein and Robert Keohane argued that the most interesting cases of anti-Americanism are those in which more than one form of anti-Americanism is at work.<sup>20</sup> The subsequent pages will illustrate how the Serb resistance in northern Kosova is composed of more than one form of anti-Americanism.

The paper is organized as follows. In the first part, the resistance theory and its central tenets are reviewed before the Serb resistance in northern Kosova is situated within the broader theoretical context. The section that follows, reviews three alternative approaches, socio-biological, culturalist and rationalist, and makes an effort to understand the strengths and weaknesses of these approaches as they are tested against the Serbs resistance in northern Kosova. The third part of this paper explores the concept of anti-Americanism and elaborates how anti-Americanism in Kosova was constructed through the three phases of development. In the fourth part, the nature and the causal mechanisms of the resistance are laid out. In conclusion, the paper reviews the central argument and makes some final observations about the Serbs resistance in northern Kosova.

### **1. Resistance Theory and Serb Resistance in Kosova**

Resistance theory has its early roots on Roman, canon (church), and medieval law. When carefully reviewed, these early systems and historical periods are characterized by two governing concepts: authority and freedom. As a rule, individual or group violent defense against aggression was justified under the Roman law, but the same was not true under the canon and medieval law. Under the latter two systems, at best, individuals were allowed to hold a contract with their ruler, thus their life and property could be secured. In centuries that followed these historical periods, individual and group freedom became further limited as power significantly shifted toward authority/ruler.

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<sup>20</sup> Peter J. Katzenstein and Robert O Keohane (eds.), *Anti-Americanisms in World Politics* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2007), p. 29.

Resistance theory gained considerable significance in the century leading to the Peace of Westphalia of 1648. Hugo Grotius, in his work *De Jure Belli ac Pacis* recognized the individual's right to resist injustice, but also reasoned that the right of individual and group resistance could be limited if the destruction and harm to the state is greater. In what is considered a counter-balance argument, John Locke, in his *The Second Treatise of Civil Government* makes the argument in favor of popular resistance. Locke even claims that people should be able to restore their ruler/authority if the power given by them is misused. The arguments advanced by Grotius and Locke serve as the 'building blocks' for our modern understanding of the resistance theory and the relationship between power and resistance.

More recently, the concepts of power and resistance became central to the works of a number of influential scholars, including Michel Foucault, Stephen Gill and David Chandler.<sup>21</sup> To Foucault, resistance is the "odd element within power relations. Resistance is what eludes power, and power targets resistance as its adversary. Resistance is what threatens power; hence it stands against power as an adversary."<sup>22</sup> Although Foucault realized that power, nearly in all instances, is much more encompassing and spread than resistance, he insisted that resistance is still preferable to submission. To Foucault, power and resistance are very much in a permanent antagonistic relationship. Foucault's idea of resistance and his understanding of power as a form of social control have been widely influential in both academic and policy circles. A number of recent studies,<sup>23</sup> as well as conceptions underlying the Serb resistance in northern Kosova appear to be directly or indirectly influenced by Foucault's ideas and his understanding of the relationship between power and resistance.

Relying on Foucault's framework, this paper comprehends the Serb resistance in northern Kosova, primarily, as a resistance against power. That is, a resistance against the four sources of American power: ideological, economic, military, and political.<sup>24</sup> This abundance of American power in Kosova has been constructed, by the Serbian political and religious elites in Belgrade, and inculcated in the minds of Serbs as a threat to the Kosova Serb identity and to the Serbian nation at large. Such construction affects and shapes the local

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<sup>21</sup> Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality: An Introduction* (New York, NY: Vintage, 1990); Stephen Gill, *Power and Resistance in the New World Order*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008); David Chandler, *Hollow Hegemony: Rethinking Global Politics, Power and Resistance* (New York, NY: Pluto Press, 2009).

<sup>22</sup> See, Brent L Pickett, "Foucault and the Politics of Resistance," *Polity* 28, no. 4 (1996): 445-466.

<sup>23</sup> Andrew Ross and Kristin Ross (eds.), *Anti-Americanism* (New York, NY: New York University Press, 2004); Russell A Berman, *Anti-Americanism in Europe: A Cultural Problem* (Stanford, CA: Hoover Institution Press, 2004); Chiozza, *Anti-Americanism and the American World Order*.

<sup>24</sup> For more on these sources of power, see Michael Mann, *The Dark Side of Democracy*, pp. 30-33

political calculations and the dynamics of the resistance. However, the abundance of American power and the Serb will to resist should not imply that the historical relations between Kosova Serbs and Kosova Albanians, which are well covered and sufficiently articulated by a number of studies,<sup>25</sup> are no longer relevant. To put it frankly, these four sources of American power have been constructed, by the Serbian elites, in a way that overwhelm almost any past or present actor, concern, or relationship. The American 'threat' transcends historical disputes, religious antagonism, and civilization clashes. This 'threat' is constructed in a way that is understood as the greatest contemporary threat to Serb survival, culture, identity, and socio-economic welfare, and something that must be resisted at all costs.

While the Serb resistance in northern Kosova is a recent construct (as it will be shown later), the Serb/ian tradition of resistance is not. Over the centuries, they have been known for their resistance and uprisings against Ottoman authority, as well as more recently against European powers that ruled the area in early 20<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>26</sup> Since the end of the Cold War, particularly with the increased American involvement in the Balkans during the 1990s and the American-led NATO bombardment of former Yugoslavia in 1999, anti-Americanism has become increasingly popular among Serb/ians. Different rationales can be applied to explain this rising anti-Americanism. For example, one can argue that Serb/ians hate America and its power because Americans used NATO as a 'tool' to bombard Yugoslavia in 1999. Or, one could assert that America and its policies are becoming increasingly hated after the so called engineered coup led by American agencies to overthrow government in Belgrade in 2000.<sup>27</sup> Recently, Ivan Krastev came up with an interesting conclusion for why America is hated in the Balkans. Krastev argued that in the case of Balkans, America is hated for being pro-Albanian.<sup>28</sup> Krastev's claim leads us toward the assumption that anti-Americanism in northern Kosova

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<sup>25</sup> For examples, see Noel Malcolm, *Kosovo: A Short History* (New York, NY: New York University Press, 1998); Miranda Vickers, *Between Serb and Albanian: A History of Kosovo* (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 1998); Miranda Vickers, *The Albanians: A Modern History* (New York, NY: I. B. Tauris, 2001); James Pettifer, *Kosovo Express: A Journey in Wartime* (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 2005); Tim Judah, *Kosovo: What Everyone Needs to Know* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2008); Paul Mojzes, *Balkan Genocides: Holocaust and Ethnic Cleansing in the Twentieth Century* (New York, NY: Rowman & Littlefield, 2011); James Pettifer, *The Kosova Liberation Army: Underground War to Balkan Insurgency, 1948-2001* (London: Hurst, 2012).

<sup>26</sup> Mark Biondich, *The Balkans: Revolution, War, and Political Violence since 1878* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2011), especially chapters 1-3.

<sup>27</sup> See, John Catalinotto (trans.), "'Interview with Krsljanin.'"

<sup>28</sup> Krastev, "Anti-American Century?" p. 6



might be more complex than just a resistance to American ideals, policies, and power.

Indeed, as the following pages will elaborate, the Serb resistance in northern Kosova is a complex puzzle, composed of various and conflicting goals, ideas, sentiments, and directed against multiple potential opponents. This complex characterization of the resistance makes its nature vague and erratic, which necessitates the need to consider other alternative approaches that can account for explaining different potential aspects of the resistance. Although, the three alternatives, socio-biological, cultural and rationalist approaches to resistance offer significant insights into the mechanisms underpinning the resistance, this paper relies on the framework of anti-Americanism to provide the most logical and plausible explanation for the Serb resistance in northern Kosova. Now, the paper turns its attention to the three alternatives.

## **2. Alternatives: Socio-Biological, Cultural and Rationalist**

### **2.1 The Socio-Biological Approach: The Genes of Resistance**

Central to the Darwinian classical theory is the concept of individual selection. The socio-biological approach, however, places greater emphasis on the collective level and on what Robert Wallace called the “reproductive imperative.”<sup>29</sup> In this approach, the principle of kin selection and the idea of inclusive fitness appear to be of special importance. Relying on that idea and the biological principles that underpin social issues, a number of scholars have effectively articulated social behavior in various settings.<sup>30</sup> According to this perspective, the ultimate goal of any organism, including humans, is to survive and reproduce. Therefore, all behavior is selfish, or at least pragmatic, at its most fundamental level. One loves its own kind and resists domination by others because that is the most effective means to maintain effective reproduction.

Two concepts - domination and selfishness - stand out when reviewing this perspective. When contextualizing the Serb resistance within this viewpoint, the following arguments are formulated. First, the Serb genes and their basic need to survive are the explanations for the resistance. In this view, the local Serbs in northern Kosova are resisting because their kin and race are threatened with elimination. To survive and be able to reproduce, the Serbs must resist the threat coming from both the Kosova Albanians and the American power, which are manifested in the forms of ethnic, economic, ideological, and political

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<sup>29</sup> Robert Wallace, *The Genesis Factor* (New York, NY: Morrow & Co, 1979).

<sup>30</sup> For example, see Richard Dawkins, *The Selfish Gene* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1989); Pierre Van der Berghe, “Does Race Matter?” *Nations and Nationalism* 1, no. 3 (1995): 357-68; Azar Gat, *War in Human Civilization* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2006).

domination. Dusan Batakovic is the most prominent scholar who represents this viewpoint.<sup>31</sup> To him, the Albanian-led government in Kosova is using, what he calls, the Albanian 'war concept' to govern the country, which aims at making life impossible for Serbs and reducing the number of Serbs, so they could no longer represent a tangible threat to the whole strategy of exclusive ethnic domination. According to Batakovic, the Albanian majority in Kosova (supported by Americans) are involved in a campaign that complicates and prevents the Serb reproduction. Based on this viewpoint, the Serb resistance, that we are current witnessing in northern Kosova, is justified as an act against this domination campaign.

Second, the Serbs are resisting because it is in their self-interest to do so. On the one hand, Serb survival is best assured when they have control over the scarce resources, territory, and the level of interaction with their kin in Serbia. Resistance is seen as the most effective mechanism to stop those who run counter to those interests. Being in such position, Serbs can easily manage and utilize these possessions in the most appropriate way that assures their survival and reproduction. On the other hand, being in charge of these assets allows them to refuse access to 'the other' (i.e. Kosova Albanians and Americans) over the same resources. That, Serbs argue, strengthens their relative position and keeps the 'occupiers' at distance. To those well informed with the current events in northern Kosova, roadblocks and barricades are the living testimonies of this phenomenon.

Finally, the Serbs are resisting because they have been victimized in the recent past and are trying to prevent such acts from recurring against them. With the help from Belgrade, Serb leaders in northern Kosova have successfully constructed their identity based on 'suffering' and 'injustices' done to them, especially since 1999. Nowadays, Serbs have been insistent to narrate the Serb identity as victim identity. They believe that the suffering and the injustices they have gone through bestow them a special right to any form and scope of resistance. Moreover, based on this constructed identity of victimhood and suffering, they have been firm to reject Kosova institutions and retain strong stand against the American power in Kosova.

While this perspective deserves some credit for trying to explain the Serb resistance, there are three main problems with it. First, this viewpoint cannot sufficiently explain the Serb resistance as a social action. Not everyone involved

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<sup>31</sup> Dusan Batakovic, "Kosovo: From Separation to Integration," *Serbian Studies: Journal of the North American Society for Serbian Studies* 18, no. 2 (2004): 311-20; Dusan Batakovic, "The Kosovo Dilemma: Albanian War Concept vs. Serbian Peaceful Compromise," *Serbian Studies: Journal of the North American Society for Serbian Studies* 20, no. 2 (2006): 213-29; Dusan Batakovic, "Surviving in Ghetto-like Enclaves: The Serbs of Kosovo and Metohija 1999-2007," in *Kosovo and Metohija: Living in the Enclaves* (Belgrade, Serbia: Institute for Balkan Studies, 2007), pp. 239-263.

in the resistance is driven by 'natural aggression.' Rational and instrumental actions are just as common, if not more ordinary, among those who resist. Most of the protests, roadblocks, and barricades in northern Kosova are actually initiated or installed by local businessmen and entrepreneurs<sup>32</sup> who are dissatisfied with tax and transportation laws, and regulations between their country of residence (Kosova) and their mother country (Serbia). In short, the Serb level of sociality is much more complex than just the basic need to survive. Serbs are involved, daily, in a complex web of social actions and interactions, and have integrated themselves into the illegal institutions and organizations in northern Kosova that are able to generate and re-generate new social dynamics.

Second, by reducing the resistance to the biological level, this viewpoint misses on the social action, mobilization, systematic use of mechanisms and coordination that is required for the resistance. Social action and the mobilization of the local Serbs have been feasible only with the financial and human support from Belgrade. The financial and human resources are critical not only for mobilization, but also because they serve as systematic mechanisms feeding the resistance. For example, the chief mechanism that coordinates the resistance actions in northern Kosova is the director of the Serbian government office for Kosova (currently, Aleksandar Vulin). The illegal involvement of Serbia into the internal affairs of its southern neighbor best speaks of how the resistance is a social construct that is perhaps created at a biological level, but soon becomes a force for particular political purpose.

Third, the capabilities to organize large scale resistance have little to do with Serb 'natural aggression' and a great deal to do with political institutions, modern nation-state, ideological doctrine, and geopolitics. Using different methods and mechanisms, Serbia successfully installed its illegal institutions in northern Kosova and convinced the local Serbs to accept and utilize them. Moreover, the concept of nation-state and the Serb nationalist ideology came to define not only the institutions but also the resistance. And finally, Serbia has been prudent and persistent to depict itself, among Serbs, as the natural ally of Russia, implying that the Serb resistance to American power is not only in their favor but also vital to the brotherly Russo-Serbian alliance. Among the many and various political and religious symbols that one finds within the resistance, are Vladimir Putin's portrait and the Russian flag. Vladimir Putin has even been declared an 'honorary citizen of Kosovo' by Serbs.<sup>33</sup> With confidence, we

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<sup>32</sup> See "Northern Kosovo businessmen announce new protests," *Tanjug*, <http://www.tanjug.rs/news/70561/northern-kosovo-businessmen-announce-new-protests.htm> (accessed December 23, 2012).

<sup>33</sup> See "'Kosovar Serbs Declare Putin 'Honorary Citizen of Kosovo,'" *Radio Free Europe*, [http://www.rferl.org/content/kosovar\\_serbs\\_putin\\_honorary\\_citizen/2339418.html](http://www.rferl.org/content/kosovar_serbs_putin_honorary_citizen/2339418.html) (accessed December 25, 2012).

can conclude that the Serb resistance is much more a social and anti-imperial phenomenon than a biological fact.

## 2.2 The Cultural Approach: Religion, Symbols, and Myths

From the early work of Arnold Toynbee<sup>34</sup> to more recent studies of Samuel Huntington<sup>35</sup> and Marc Ross,<sup>36</sup> cultural explanations of phenomena such as war, violence, and resistance have gained a great deal of popularity. The Balkan wars of 1990s, the September 11 terrorist attacks, and the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq have all been subject to cultural scrutiny. Virtually all cultural explanations, regardless of the fact that they accentuate differences in cultural practices, religious beliefs or civilization clashes, perceive human beings as norm-driven and their actions as norm-centered. That is, cultural norms guide behavior of people within social groups as well as their actions in any give situation. In the context of this paper, then, the Serb culture is understood as the 'fabric' whereas the Serb resistance as a product that derives from it. This paper identifies three cultural features through which the Serb resistance in northern Kosovo can be best delineated: religion, symbolism, and mythology.

According to the religious trait of this approach, the Serbs are morally and divinely obligated to resist, what they call, the foreign occupation of the cradle of their civilization. Indoctrinated by the Serbian Orthodox Church, the Serbs perceive themselves as God's 'chosen people' and in 'covenant' with God,<sup>37</sup> making them the "defender of the faith."<sup>38</sup> These ideas and sentiments lead to a sense of collectivity and solidarity which facilitate the organization and execution of resistance acts. Both, the Serbian Orthodox Church and Serbian state have been very resolute to support not only the Serb resistance in northern Kosovo, as a moral and divine duty, but also the protection of the territory of Kosovo from 'occupiers'. Just recently, Patriarch Irinej pledged the support to the Serbian state over Kosovo, claiming that "we [the church] are doing all we

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<sup>34</sup> Arnold J Toynbee, *War and Civilization: Selections from a Study of History* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1950).

<sup>35</sup> Samuel P Huntington, "The Clash of Civilizations?" *Foreign Affairs* 72, no. 3 (1993): 22-50; Samuel P. Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations*.

<sup>36</sup> Marc Ross, "The Political Psychology of Competing Narratives: September 11 and Beyond," in *Understanding September 11*, eds. Craig Calhoun, Paul Pierce and Ashley Timmer (New York, NY: The New Press, 2002); Marc Ross, *Cultural Contestation in Ethnic Conflict* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007).

<sup>37</sup> For more on these concepts, see Anthony D. Smith, *Myths and Memories of the Nations* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1999); Anthony D. Smith, *Chosen Peoples: Sacred Sources of National Identity* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2003).

<sup>38</sup> On this concept, see Michael Mann, *The Dark Side of Democracy*, p. 42.

can to continue defending, and defend Kosovo.”<sup>39</sup> It is this official position of the Serbian Orthodox Church that feeds the governmental sentiments in Belgrade as well as the Serb resistance in the ground, and creates a situation where religious and cultural symbols become subject to manipulation and politicization.

Among the many symbols that have been extremely politicized and manipulated, by Serbian politicians and religious leaders, is the idea of Kosova. Belgrade has been quite successful in reconstructing Kosova as the historical ‘symbol’ of Serb resistance and a national-religious asset that must be fully preserved at all costs.<sup>40</sup> Frequently, Kosova is depicted as a symbol of Serb identity, language, culture, and the guardian of Christianity and Europe. More grippingly, Kosova is depicted as a symbol of suffering and struggle against the barbarians and of cultural survival against the odds.<sup>41</sup> By reconstructing Kosova in that fashion, political and religious leaders have effectively connected the past with the present, and instilled historical and cultural dimensions in the Serb resistance. This has been possible only through the use of Serbian mythology, which was formed in the nineteenth century<sup>42</sup> to cope with Ottoman occupation and the hardships of peasant life.

The Kosova myth has been a critical part of the Serb collective psyche and historical consciousness. The mythologies surrounding Kosova are the foundations for the Serbian cultural identity and a prism through which Serbs view and interpret their past, present, and future. Former American ambassador to Yugoslavia, Warren Zimmerman, argued that the defining historical event for all Serbs is the battle of Kosova (1389) and that event defines their nationhood, their Christianity against the infidel, and their self-styled role as Europe’s protectors.<sup>43</sup> More recently, the historian Melissa Bokovoy, describing the passion that Serbs have for Kosova, argued that Serbs have a pathological desire to give up their livelihoods and lives to defend it.<sup>44</sup> And the

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<sup>39</sup> See “Patriarch Pledges Support to State over Kosovo,” *B92*, [http://www.b92.net/eng/news/society-article.php?yyyy=2012&mm=11&dd=19&nav\\_id=83235](http://www.b92.net/eng/news/society-article.php?yyyy=2012&mm=11&dd=19&nav_id=83235) (accessed January 2, 2013).

<sup>40</sup> See “Kostunica: Kosovo Has No Price,” *B92*, [http://www.b92.net/eng/news/politics-article.php?yyyy=2008&mm=02&dd=09&nav\\_id=47591](http://www.b92.net/eng/news/politics-article.php?yyyy=2008&mm=02&dd=09&nav_id=47591) (accessed January 9, 2013).

<sup>41</sup> For instance, see Stevan Pavlowitch, *Serbia: The History of an Idea* (New York, NY: New York University Press, 2002); John K Cox, *The History of Serbia* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2002).

<sup>42</sup> Noel Malcolm, *Kosovo*, p. 79

<sup>43</sup> Warren Zimmerman, *Origins of a Catastrophe: Yugoslavia and Its Destroyers* (New York, NY: Times Books, 1996), p. 11.

<sup>44</sup> Melissa Bokovoy, “Scattered Graves, Ordered Cemeteries – Commemorating Serbia’s Wars of National Liberation, 1912-1918,” in *Staging the Past: The Politics of Commemoration in Habsburg Central Europe, 1848 to Present*, ed. Maria Bacur (West Lafayette, IN: Purdue University Press, 2001).

late political scientist Alex Dragnich argued that Kosova illustrates to Serbs the need to struggle, sacrifice, and maintain liberty, and is considered one of the cornerstones of Serb consciousness.<sup>45</sup> Just as the claims above point out, Kosova myth is one significant mechanism that has been reconstructed and aimed at making the Serb resistance experience socially and politically meaningful. Just like any war or violence, the Serb resistance in northern Kosova also requires coherent and believable narratives, and disparate binary codes that separate the sacred from the profane, good from evil, and the rational from the irrational.<sup>46</sup> Zimmerman rightly asserted that, "Their [Serbian] defect is an obsession with their own history; their hearts are in the past, not in the future."<sup>47</sup>

While there is much to praise in the cultural approach, this viewpoint is unable to explain how culture, when separated from politics, is a causal force for the resistance. Cultural codes and symbols, collective interpretation, and public expression certainly make the resistance smoother and meaningful, but they do not themselves create resistance. Materiality, rationality, and power calculations are important aspects of life in northern Kosova; thus, rather than being a causal force, culture is an important supplement to politically initiated actions. Finally, reducing resistance to culture, as this approach does, is misleading and dangerous. It is misleading because it depicts multiculturalism and multi-religious coexistence in Kosova as unfeasible. The peaceful coexistence between Kosova Albanians and other cultural groups (e.g. Roma, Bosniaks, Turks, and Serbs in other parts of Kosova) invalidates such an argument that multiculturalism is impractical in the new state. Reducing resistance to culture is dangerous because it can easily radicalize to violence and potentially war. The recent developments in Egypt, Libya, and Syria best speak for such a possible radicalization.

### **2.3 The Rationalist Approach: A Resource Struggle**

The underlying assumption of this approach is rationality. Individuals make decisions or take actions based on utility maximization. That is, individuals want more than less of a good. As such, the approach is often associated with neoclassical economic model in which individuals (like firms) are understood as rational and egoistic. However, as Margaret Levi shows, rational approach "derives from but is decidedly not neoclassical economics" and it has "a richer

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<sup>45</sup> Alex Dragnich, *Serbia's Historical Heritage* (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 1994), p. 30.

<sup>46</sup> See Anthony D. Smith, *Nationalism and Modernism* (New York, NY: Routledge, 1998).

<sup>47</sup> Warren Zimmerman, "The Last Ambassador: A Memoir of the Collapse of Yugoslavia." *Foreign Affairs* 74, no. 2 (1995), p. 3.

conception of reasoned choice, interactions, and constrains.”<sup>48</sup> Thus, the rational approach is a framework that helps us understand both economic and social behavior. Moreover, the approach is not limited to one basic unit of analysis: individuals. As Mark Pollack rightly demonstrated in 2006, rational approach can, for example, take individuals, organizations or states as their basic unit of analysis. It can adopt a ‘thick’ conception of rationality, in which actors are assumed to be narrowly self-interested, or a ‘thin’ conception, in which rational actors may be self-interested or altruistic and may seek a variety of goals such as wealth and power.<sup>49</sup> Pollack’s ‘thin’ conception of rationality appears useful for our purposes given that we are seeking to explore and understand the role the state (Serbia), the organization (i.e. Serbian Orthodox Church), and the group (i.e. Serb leaders) play in political and social developments, such as the Serb resistance in northern Kosova.

To provide a rational explanation of the Serb resistance we must seriously take into consideration at least four actors: the Serbian government, Serbian Orthodox Church, the Serb leaders, and Serb masses in northern Kosova; and their different goals, motivations and preferences. According to this viewpoint, the support for the Serb resistance from the Serbian government officials is motivated by two goals: to stay in power, and maintain political and economic control over as much territory as possible. By supporting and assisting the resistance, via various channels (e.g. nationalistic statements, financial assets), the politicians in Belgrade gain political credibility which is likely to help them hold on to power. Economically, it is rational for the state of Serbia to support the resistance because it allows her to maintain full access to the market in northern Kosova. By doing so, Serbian politicians not only satisfy their political needs but also the Serbian investors and firms; at the same time denying access to the Kosova government and American investors.

The support for the resistance, by the Serbian Orthodox Church, is motivated by two goals: preserving its ‘control power’ over Serbian culture and heritage in Kosova, and dominating Serb souls. Here, the ‘goods’ (‘control power’ and domination) are not defined in pure economic sense, rather they are considered as ‘religious goods’ and very much spiritual. In this context, the church is acting rationally in supporting the resistance because it brings her more than less of those goods. That is, the support for the resistance assures the church more ‘control power’ over Serbian cultural and traditional sites in

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<sup>48</sup> Margaret Levi, “Reconsiderations of Rational Choice in Comparative and Historical Analysis,” in *Comparative Politics: Rationality, Culture, and Structure*, eds. Mark I Lichbach and Alan S Zuckerman, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), p. 117.

<sup>49</sup> Mark Pollack, “Rational Choice and EU Politics,” in *Handbook of European Union Politics*, eds. Knud Erik Jorgensen, Mark Pollack and Ben Rosamond (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2006), p. 33.

Kosova, as well as over the Serb souls in the new state. Just as Pollack rightly asserted, the goals of the actors need not necessarily be defined in terms of wealth. Thus, the case of the Serbian Orthodox Church illustrates that goals can differ from wealth.

Another group that supports the resistance, and is a vital part of it, is the Serb leaders. This group, composed mainly of local business-leaders and entrepreneurs, is motivated by the economic and political opportunities that have been created as a result of the status quo in northern Kosova. Economically, they are in an ideal position to maximize their wealth. For example, all goods (below 3.5 tons of weight) that enter from and leave to Serbia from northern Kosova are subject to no customs clearance. Moreover, they are subject to no customs clearance even when transporting in or trading with other parts of Kosova, and no subject to taxation from the central government. This state of economic affairs allows them, at very low cost, to support the status quo, while maximizing the benefits. This group has also benefited politically from supporting the resistance. Many of the business elites have now taken additional political roles in northern Kosova<sup>50</sup> and have been firm to resist not only alterations to the status quo but also anyone threatening the current state of affairs.

Finally, the Serb masses are also going after their benefits. Their main goal is access to power and resources, through which they can maximize their utility. Because of the connections with and the dependence on the Serb elites, the masses are subject to a great number of constrains. While the true intentions for participating in the resistance, for some within the masses, may be questioned, the rational is that they are acting according to their economic gains and supposedly are making individual economic gains. Their support for and participation in the resistance also makes sense in rational terms when considering that under the Kosova government the Serbs are only a minority and they will face the problem of 'credible commitment'.<sup>51</sup> According to this problem, Serbs are escaping the unsure full representation and protection that they would have under the government in Kosova. As a consequence individual Serbs in the north decide that it is more rational to resist rather than wait and see whether their rights will be respected.

The actions and the behavior of the four rational actors reflect their choices as they try to maximize their benefits and minimize the costs. The Serbian state

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<sup>50</sup> See Anita McKinna, "Who's Who among Northern Kosovo's Political Actors," *Balkan Analysis*, <http://www.balkananalysis.com/kosovo/2012/09/18/whos-who-among-northern-kosovos-political-actors/> (accessed January 2, 2013).

<sup>51</sup> For more on this concept, see James Fearon, "Domestic Political Audiences and the Escalation of International Disputes," *The American Political Science Review* 88, no. 3 (1994): 577-592.



supports the resistance because it is in its political, economic and security interest to do so. While the costs for supporting the resistance are moderate, the benefits are perceived to be enormously high for Serbian political elites. The Serbian Orthodox Church, on the other hand, may not be able to extract wealth by supporting the resistance, but certainly can increase its 'control power' and gain social prestige. The group that is, arguably, benefiting the most from the status quo, with almost no costs involved, is the Serb elites in northern Kosova. Finally, the masses are acting rationally because of constraints they are subject to, as well as the fact that they are better off being a majority in a contested area than being a minority under Kosova government.

This approach seems useful if one is looking to predict the future actions of actors involved in the resistance. However, this viewpoint has a hard time explaining the resistance as a social action which is much messier and complex than simple individual/group rationality. First, by reducing the resistance to the simple benefit maximization, the approach does not tell us much about the nature and the character of the resistance. How and when did the resistance come into being? What is the validity of actors' motivations? What is the nature of the resistance? Is there a correlation between the Serb resistance and the American presence in Kosova and region? Second, the resistance is a dynamic, interactive, and complex process. It cannot be reduced to a simple matrix of individual rationality. The Serb resistance, when carefully examined, is richer and messier. Just like the first two approaches, the rational perspective also seems to have a hard time explaining the Serb resistance in a logical and plausible fashion. Having reviewed the socio-biological, culturalist, and rational approaches, the paper will now turn attention to the next section.

### **3. Anti-Americanism and the Serb Resistance in Northern Kosova**

The central argument this paper makes is that the Serb resistance in northern Kosova is a Serbian elite construct, made of and crammed with Anti-Americanism sentiments. Recently, anti-Americanism has received a great deal of attention from academics, journalists, and think tanks;<sup>52</sup> however, no

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<sup>52</sup> Paul Hollander, *Anti-Americanism: Critiques at Home and Abroad, 1965-1990* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1992); Paul Hollander (ed.), *Understanding Anti-Americanism: Its Origins and Impact at Home and Abroad* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2004); ; Chiozza, *Anti-Americanism and the American World Order*; Tony Judt, "Anti-Americanism Abroad," *The New York Review of Books*, <http://www.nybooks.com/articles/archives/2003/may/01/anti-americans-abroad/?pagination=false> (May 1, 2003); Brendon O'Connor (ed.), *Anti-Americanism: History, Causes, Themes* (Westport, CT: Greenwood, 2007); Jan Ross, "How Anti-Americanism Is Conquering the World," *Atlantic Community*, [http://www.atlantic-community.org/index/articles/view/How\\_Anti-Americanism\\_Is\\_Conquering\\_the\\_World](http://www.atlantic-community.org/index/articles/view/How_Anti-Americanism_Is_Conquering_the_World) (accessed December 16, 2013).

universal definition of the concept exists. For example, Paul Hollander uses the term anti-Americanism "to denote a particular mind-set, an attitude of distaste, aversion, or intense hostility the roots of which may be found in matters unrelated to the actual qualities or attributes of American society or the foreign policies of the United States."<sup>53</sup> For Jan Ross, anti-Americanism is the new global ideology that runs deeper than mere policy disputes.<sup>54</sup> And according to Peter Katzenstein and Robert Keohane, anti-Americanism is "a psychological tendency to hold negative views of the United States and of American society in general."<sup>55</sup> More recently, Giacomo Chiozza has defined anti-Americanism as "the opposition to America, its name, its ideals, and its actions."<sup>56</sup> If America's ideals and actions are to be realized through its foreign policy, as Makdisi suggests that they are,<sup>57</sup> then a synthesis of Chiozza's definition with Makdisi's suggestion appear useful and workable for our purposes.

Anti-Americanism, as the opposition to the name America, its ideals, and its actions, in northern Kosova is a recent phenomenon. It was 'born' on March 24, 1999. It very much developed through three phases, with the third phase still under progress. When American-led NATO launched an air campaign to halt the humanitarian catastrophe that was then unfolding in Kosova, Serbian political and religious elites (led by Slobodan Milosevic) were furious to condemn the campaign, label it an attack on their nation, and start planting the seeds of this anti-Americanism. The years from 1999 to 2008 define the first phase of development of anti-Americanism among Serbs in Kosova. Even though Milosevic himself, arguably, became an anti-American in the early years of 1990s, his anti-Americanism ideas did not fully spread to and internalized by Kosova Serbs until 1999. In an article that was published in *Foreign Affairs*, Warren Zimmermann wrote about his conversations with Milosevic and provided us with a good description of his personality and what was probably circulating in his mind.<sup>58</sup> Zimmermann, first and foremost, characterized him as someone with the syndrome of malignant narcissism, and cynic about Western democratic values and institutions. Moreover, Zimmerman also described him as a dishonest man, someone that always

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<sup>53</sup> See Paul Hollander, *Anti-Americanism*, p. viii

<sup>54</sup> Jan Ross, "How Anti-Americanism is Conquering the World."

<sup>55</sup> Katzenstein and Keohane, *Anti-Americanisms*, p. 12.

<sup>56</sup> Giacomo Chiozza, "Disaggregating Anti-Americanism: An Analysis of Individual Attitudes toward the United States," in *Anti-Americanisms*, Katzenstein and Keohane, p. 93.

<sup>57</sup> Ussama Makdisi, "'Anti-Americanism' in the Arab World: An Interpretation of a Brief History," *The Journal of American History* 89, no. 2 (2002), p 538.

<sup>58</sup> Zimmerman, "The Last Ambassador."

avoided personal responsibilities.<sup>59</sup> Enraged by the American-led NATO campaign and other adverse events taking place in Kosova, Serbs by and large sympathized and began to internalize Milosevic's ideas, his cynicism about Western democratic values, and his hatred towards American power and policies. Although Milosevic was sent to The Hague to stand trial for charges of war crimes and crimes against humanity, and died there on March of 2006, his successors continued in his tradition of accusing the West, especially America, for all the instability and insecurity in Kosova and the region. Just recently, the current Serbian president Tomislav Nikolic, former ally of Milosevic, in an attempt to reassure the Serbs that he is following the steps of Milosevic (i.e. opposing the 'occupation' of Kosova by America) and depict the status quo in Kosova as absolutely insecure, claimed that he believes that Serbs in Kosova are living under the threat of genocide.<sup>60</sup> Such statements are not only misleading, politically regressive and perilous, but also alimentary for the resistance. In brief, the seeds of anti-Americanism which were planted by Milosevic, fourteen years ago, continue to be cultivated and re-constructed by his successors, and have come to play a key role in the Serb resistance in northern Kosova.

Anti-Americanism in northern Kosova gained further momentum and robustness on February 17, 2008. When Kosova declared its independence, Serbian political elites, including then-President Boris Tadic and then-Prime Minister Vojislav Kostunica, condemned the act, called Kosova a "false" state, and argued that "Kosovo was propped up unlawfully by the United States."<sup>61</sup> This was the beginning of the second phase of development of Serb anti-Americanism in northern Kosova. Shortly after Kosova's declaration of independence, groups of people took the street in Serbia, set the American embassy in Belgrade on fire, burned down the American flags, and broke into a McDonald's to destroy all its interior. These violent acts were all carried in the name of the hate against America, its ideals, policies, property, and symbols. Moreover, speaking to the crowd in Belgrade, Kostunica reassured the Serb/ians once again that "As long as we [Serb/ians] live, Kosovo is Serbia," and that "We [Serb/ians] are not alone in our fight, President Putin is with

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<sup>59</sup> See Aubrey Immelman, "Inside the Mind of Milosevic," *Unit for the Study of Personality in Politics*, <http://www1.csbsju.edu/uspp/Milosevic/Milosevic.html> (accessed January 14, 2013).

<sup>60</sup> See Julian Borger, "Serbian president Nikolic warns of Kosovo genocide," *The Guardian*, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2012/jul/29/serbian-president-nikolic-kosovo-genocide> (accessed January 4, 2013).

<sup>61</sup> See Dan Bilefsky, "Kosovo Declares Its Independence from Serbia," *The New York Times*, [http://www.nytimes.com/2008/02/18/world/europe/18kosovo.html?pagewanted=all&\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2008/02/18/world/europe/18kosovo.html?pagewanted=all&_r=0) (accessed January 11, 2013).

us.”<sup>62</sup> Kostunica did not mention America directly, but his reference to Putin indirectly suggests that he is rather expressing his anti-Americanism and conveying the Americans that he is in fight against them. Not long after all this, a number of outside intellectual observers (e.g. Sara Flounders, Nebojsa Malic, and Srdja Trifkovic) joined Kostunica and other Serbian leaders in laying the blame on America for what was happening in the area. Both politicians and intellectual observers alike, started accusing America for supporting a state that is led by radical Muslims,<sup>63</sup> linked to organized crime,<sup>64</sup> led by bandits,<sup>65</sup> and was stolen from Serbia.<sup>66</sup> Sara Flounders even accused America for what she calls the direct colonization of Kosova.<sup>67</sup> While these political statements and intellectual observations about the ‘new reality’<sup>68</sup> are far from the actuality in the ground, they have nevertheless been significantly influential and stimulating for political and religious elites in Belgrade and in northern Kosova. Influenced and motivated by such intellectual and political statements, elites in Belgrade have succeeded in constructing the Serb resistance in northern Kosova, first and foremost, as a resistance against American power and policies in the area.

The third phase of development of anti-Americanism among Serbs in northern Kosova is under progress. It started on July 22, 2010 when the International Court of Justice (ICJ) declared that Kosova’s declaration of independence did not violate general international law.<sup>69</sup> While the ICJ decision confirmed the legality of the new state, to Serbian political and religious elites

<sup>62</sup> See Dan Bilefsky and Bostjan Videmsek, “Protesters Attack U.S. Embassy in Belgrade,” *The New York Times*, <http://www.nytimes.com/2008/02/22/world/europe/22kosovo.html> (accessed January 11, 2013)

<sup>63</sup> See Cliff Kincaid, “McCain Supports Radical Muslims in Kosovo,” *American Council for Kosovo*, <http://www.savekosovo.org/?p=4&sp=490> (accessed December 28, 2012).

<sup>64</sup> See Michel Chossudovsky, “Kosovo: The US and the EU support a Political Process linked to Organized Crime,” *The Center for Global Research*, <http://www.globalresearch.ca/kosovo-the-us-and-the-eu-support-a-political-process-linked-to-organized-crime/8055> (accessed January 2, 2013).

<sup>65</sup> See Nebojsa Malic, “In Death Ground,” *Anti War*, <http://original.antiwar.com/malic/2012/09/20/in-death-ground/> (accessed January 2, 2013)

<sup>66</sup> See “Kosovo was stolen from Serbia,” *B92*, [http://www.b92.net/eng/news/politics-article.php?yyyy=2012&mm=11&dd=25&nav\\_id=83339](http://www.b92.net/eng/news/politics-article.php?yyyy=2012&mm=11&dd=25&nav_id=83339) (accessed January 11, 2013).

<sup>67</sup> Sara Flounders, “Mass resistance to U.S. NATO role,” *Workers World*, [http://www.workers.org/2008/world/serbia\\_0306/](http://www.workers.org/2008/world/serbia_0306/) (accessed January 4, 2013)

<sup>68</sup> This term is adopted to suggest that with the independence of Kosova, the opinion of the International Court of Justice (ICJ), and with the end of supervised independence of Kosova we are living a new reality in the area.

<sup>69</sup> International Court of Justice, “*Accordance with international law of the unilateral declaration of independence in respect of Kosova*,” International Court of Justice, <http://www.icj-cij.org/docket/files/141/16010.pdf> (accessed January 5, 2013)

this was yet another unjust and deadly imperial attack on Serbian sovereignty. To most Serb/ian observers the legal proceeding in the ICJ was simply a 'battle' between Serbia and American power. After few consecutive diplomatic and legal defeats, since 1999,<sup>70</sup> Serbian political elites are now beginning to understand that no realistic legal, military and political chance of bringing Kosova back under Serbian sovereignty exists.<sup>71</sup> Hence, the only chance to maintain influence over northern Kosova is by supporting the resistance. The American policy to support democracy and the inclusive institutions of the new state has further accelerated the Serb resistance and the Serbian determination for support. The resistance against Serb integration into Kosova has been constructed in a way that depicts the American support for Kosova institutions as an imperialist attempt to enslave the Serbs. It is these anti-American beliefs and sentiments that notably inform the contentious political behavior in northern Kosova. Contentious political behavior, protesting, resisting, and acting violently, among Serbs in the north has now been internalized and become an ordinary receipt for the local population.

Anti-Americanism in northern Kosova is under progress and unpredictable. The phenomenon should be a concern to both policy-makers and scholars alike. The resistance can take a radical turn if not properly and seriously governed. Although the main purpose of this paper is not to offer policy recommendations, one obvious policy step to take in that direction is to try and bring to an end the political intrusiveness from Belgrade, and create the conditions for suitable integration of the north into Kosova. The next part of the paper examines the nature and the causal mechanisms of the resistance in more detail. It stresses how the resistance is constructed around the three specific developments in the region and within Kosova, and as a phenomenon against American power, policies, and ideals.

#### **4. Conceptualizing Anti-Americanism in Northern Kosova**

Anti-Americanism is heterogeneous and multidimensional.<sup>72</sup> That is, it has multiple aspects and is diverse in character or content, and varies among countries. Katzenstein and Keohane convincingly identify four different types of anti-Americanisms: liberal anti-Americanism, social anti-Americanism,

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<sup>70</sup> For instance: losing control over Kosova in 1999, Kosova Status Process from 2005 - 2008, Kosova's declaration of independence (2008), the ICJ ruling (2010), and lastly the end of supervised independence (2012).

<sup>71</sup> See Daniel McLaughlin, "Serb PM Calls for acknowledgment that control of Kosovo has been lost," *The Irish Times*, <http://www.irishtimes.com/newspaper/world/2013/0115/1224328851555.html> (accessed January 6, 2013).

<sup>72</sup> Katzenstein and Keohane, *Anti-Americanisms*, p. 11.

sovereign-nationalist anti-Americanism, and radical anti-Americanism.<sup>73</sup> While the liberal and radical anti-Americanisms are the two ends in the spectrum (the former almost completely innocuous and the latter much more violent), social anti-Americanism and sovereign-nationalist anti-Americanism are concerned with, what Foucault identified as, social and political control. In the case under study, the two forms of anti-Americanisms, social and sovereign-nationalist, seem to be at play simultaneously, making the case not only interesting but also implicative for the broader literature on anti-Americanism. The Serb resistance is based on social values conflict equally as it is based on political values conflict.

In order to appropriately conceptualize the nature of and the mechanisms underpinning the Serb resistance in northern Kosova we must understand how and via what concepts and ideals is the phenomenon constructed. As this paper argues, at the center of the resistance lay the Serbian elite antagonism towards American policy and power; hence, the construction of the resistance as a social and political phenomenon against Americanism. Serbian political elites (from Milosevic to Nikolic), joint by Serbian Orthodox Church leaders, have been cognizant to construct the resistance in objection to American power, policies, and ideals. For example, the idea of unarmed (but at times violent) resistance by means of blockades, cordons and roadblocks are understood as opposition to the American military domination. The economic 'isolation'<sup>74</sup> of the Serbs in the northern Kosova is understood as a resistance to the American attempts to encourage and spread economic liberal values. Finally, the attempts to keep the northern Kosova homogenous, by not letting or threatening other nationalities to return to their homes<sup>75</sup> the resistance is an objection to the American liberal and social ideals (e.g. human rights, minority rights, multiculturalism, and alike). In short, Serbian elite antagonism towards American ideals, policies and power are the nature of the resistance; and blockades, roadblocks, cordons, economic 'isolation', and homogeneity are the mechanisms underpinning it.

The evolution and construction of the resistance are better understood when looking at the three specific developments that are occurring in the region and within Kosova: the stationing of the American troops in Kosova, the American policy towards the region, and the American political and diplomatic support for the new state. First, Serb anti-Americanism can be directly associated with

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<sup>73</sup> Ibid, pp. 28-34

<sup>74</sup> The fact that nearly all of the trade that the Serbs in northern Kosova do is with Serbia, makes them almost completely an 'isolated' economic unit. It must be noted here that this 'isolationism' is not due to some external or structural force, rather it is a political decision influenced by Belgrade and made locally.

<sup>75</sup> Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, *Kosovo Communities Profiles* (Prishtina: OSCE, 2010), pp. 6-10. Accessible, <http://www.osce.org/kosovo/75450>

the American power used during NATO bombings (1999), and their current presence in Kosova. When American troops entered Kosova, in the framework of NATO, to stop extreme and criminally irresponsible policies of Milosevic against hundreds of thousands of civilians in Kosova,<sup>76</sup> some commentators started to argue that this was an American attack on Serbian people and as such violating not only the international rules of the principle of sovereignty, but also human rights codes. Observers, such as Nebojsa Malic and Sara Flounders continue to argue that American-led forces in Kosova used NATO as a 'tool' to establish their imperial presence in Kosova for geopolitical reasons, and to back the ethnic Albanian leadership in Kosova; just so that Serbia (Russia' natural ally) could be weakened.<sup>77</sup>

American policies and power in Kosova have also been accused for and linked to a number of other matters. In 2008, Sara Flounders accused America for 'stealing' Kosova from Serbia in an imperialistic fashion, just so it could have a free hand to station its troops and military equipment in Kosova, in Camp Bondsteel.<sup>78</sup> According to Flounders, America planned to build the military camp in Kosova even before NATO intervened there, because the location is a strategic one as is closely located to vital oil pipelines and energy corridors that are now under construction, such as the American sponsored Trans-Balkan oil pipeline and what is known as energy Corridor 8.<sup>79</sup> Another matter that Americans have been accused at is that of causing ethnic cleansing in post-war Kosova against Serbs and other national groups; as these minorities felt unsafe under American domination.<sup>80</sup>

Although the observations by Batakovic, Flounders, and Malic play a significant role informing the political elites in Serbia, fourteen years on, we can see the payoff from the American presence in the Balkans. Wars and ethnic cleansing that claimed thousands of dead and hundreds of thousands forced out of their homes is over. The American military presence has significantly contributed to the stability of the region and has proved wrong the argument that support for the new state "will prove to be destabilizing not only for the region, but for the international system as a whole."<sup>81</sup>

Second, besides contributing to peace, Americans have made numerous attempts to assist Balkan states with economic and social reforms required to move them forward and potentially integrate them into the EU and NATO

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<sup>76</sup> North Atlantic Treaty Organization, "The Aims of the Air Campaign," *NATO*, <http://www.nato.int/kosovo/repo2000/aims.htm> (accessed January 6, 2013)

<sup>77</sup> Sara Flounders, "Mass resistance to U.S. NATO role"; Nebojsa Malic, "In Death Ground"

<sup>78</sup> Sara Flounders, "Mass resistance to U.S. NATO role"

<sup>79</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>80</sup> Batakovic, "The Kosovo Dilemma."

<sup>81</sup> Nikolas Gvosdev, "Kosovo and Its Discontents," *Foreign Affairs* 85, no. 1 (2006): 169 - 170.

structures. In this context, American officials, working jointly with the EU, have also asked the Balkan political leaders to be more proactive and successful in fighting the organized crime and corruption, enforcing the rule of law, and bringing criminals to justice.<sup>82</sup> While majority of states in the area have worked with dedication to attain these reforms and comply with these demands, Serbia has been sluggish, especially on matters having to do with bringing criminals to justice. Because such compliance is highly unpopular and controversial, Serbian political elites have adopted a slow and ignorant approach. When genocide suspect Ratko Mladic was arrested in 2011, thousands of people took the streets in protest against what looked like as yet another humiliation, by Serbian enemies, to destroy the Serbian nation on every way.<sup>83</sup> Among these Serbian 'enemies', America was depicted as the one performing the chief role.

For some years now, American policies and priorities in the Balkans have been to have functional and sustainable governments in place and prepare them for integration into EU and NATO institutions. While Serbia has officially applied for EU membership in 2009, the current Serbian president Nikolic has already made it clear that "Serbia will never become a member of NATO."<sup>84</sup> At least four rationales appear to explain this official position. First, NATO is an American 'dominated' organization. As such, the Serbian perception is that, Serbia will also be dominated under such organization by America. Second, the independence of Kosova is "NATO's doing."<sup>85</sup> Why, then, Serbia join an organization that has occupied part of her 'territory'? Third, the Serbian economic, political, and spiritual ties with Russia. The Russo-Serbian relationship clearly rests on long traditional ties, but the importance of geopolitics cannot and should not be underestimated. Lastly, American policies in the area are also seen in the context of globalization or 'Americanization'. Serb/ians see the role of American power and policies in the service of particular interests and not as a cosmopolitan good.<sup>86</sup> The American military presence in Kosova and the American policies towards the region, concurrently with the fact that Serbia has no realistic chance to bring Kosova back under its sovereignty, can help answer the questions posed at the beginning of the paper;

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<sup>82</sup> Steven Woehrel, *Kosovo: Current Issues and U.S. Policy*, (Washington DC: Congressional Research Services, 2011), accessible at <http://www.dtic.mil/cgi-bin/GetTRDoc?AD=ADA544307>

<sup>83</sup> See Nic Robertson, "Clashes break out as Serbian nationalists protest arrest of Mladic," *CNN*, <http://www.cnn.com/2011/WORLD/europe/05/29/serbia.ratko.mladic/index.html> (accessed January 6, 2013).

<sup>84</sup> See Robert Bridge, "Serbia says 'nyet' to NATO membership," *Russia Today*, <http://rt.com/politics/serbia-russia-nato-eu-crisis-377/> (accessed January 7, 2013).

<sup>85</sup> Global Research, "Serbia will Never Join NATO," *The Center for Global Research*, <http://www.globalresearch.ca/serbia-will-never-join-nato/16912> (accessed January 6, 2013).

<sup>86</sup> For more on these concepts, see Stephen D Krasner, "Structural Causes and Regime Consequences: Regimes as Intervening Variables," *International Organization* 36, no. 2 (1982): 185-205.



what is Belgrade's reason *d'être* for supporting the illegal parallel structures, and why is Belgrade resolute to support the Serb resistance.

The third development that informs the evolution and the construction of the Serb resistance is the American political and diplomatic support for the new state. When Kosova declared its independence in 2008, the new state was recognized by America the very next day. Soon after that, majority of the EU states followed. The new state continues to receive a great deal of economic and political support from America as well as significant assistance for matters related to building effective institutions, fighting organized crime and corruption, and improving ties with ethnic minorities. Such American support has been clearly communicated to Serbian leaders in Belgrade when Biden paid a visit in 2009 and urged them to cooperate with Kosova institutions, instead of setting up separate institutions for Kosova Serbs.<sup>87</sup> The official American position on Kosova was reiterated in 2012 when Hillary Clinton visited Kosova and stated that America is firmly committed to Kosovo's sovereignty and territorial integrity, and that "We [Americans] oppose any discussion of territory changes or reopening Kosovo's independent status. These matters are not up for discussion. The boundaries of an independent, sovereign Kosovo are clear and set."<sup>88</sup>

To sum up, the American power, policies, and support for the new state are the causal mechanism that best explain the evolution and the construction of Serb anti-Americanism and consequently the Serb resistance in northern Kosova. In the eyes of political and religious elites in Belgrade and in the constructed minds of Serb masses in northern Kosova, America is there to subordinate and enslave them. To majority of them, American 'imperialism' is not different from the old European kinds. The fact that America has been depicted as the 'Fourth Reich'<sup>89</sup> should not come as a surprise to any of us.

## 5. Conclusion

This paper has examined and explained the Serb resistance in northern Kosova. While the three alternative approaches to resistance, socio-biological, culturalist, and rationalist, appeared useful for partial explanation of the Serb

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<sup>87</sup> Steven Woehrel, *Kosovo: Current Issues and U.S. Policy*, (Washington DC: Congressional Research Services, 2010), pp 8-9. Accessible at <http://www.au.af.mil/au/awc/awcgate/crs/rs21721.pdf>

<sup>88</sup> Michael R. Gordon, "Clinton Urges Serbia to Accept Kosovo's Borders," *The New York Times*, [http://www.nytimes.com/2012/11/01/world/europe/clinton-urges-serbia-to-accept-kosovo-and-its-borders.html?\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2012/11/01/world/europe/clinton-urges-serbia-to-accept-kosovo-and-its-borders.html?_r=0) (accessed January 7, 2013)

<sup>89</sup> See Dan Bilefsky, "In a Divided Kosovo City, a Resounding Vow to Remain Part of Serbia," *The New York Times*, <http://www.nytimes.com/2008/02/19/world/europe/19serbs.html> (accessed January 7, 2013)

resistance in northern Kosovo, more logical and plausible explanation of the phenomenon emerges when the resistance is examined via the theoretical lens of anti-Americanism. This paper has argued that the Serb resistance in northern Kosovo is a Serbian elite construct, made of and crammed with anti-Americanism sentiments. This constructed anti-Americanism is certainly complex in nature and by and large rests on three specific developments: the American presence in Kosovo, the American policies towards the region, and the American political and diplomatic support for the new state.

As it was stressed in the pages above, the Serb anti-Americanism in northern Kosovo is important for numerous reasons, including regional security and socio-economic development. However, this case study is also significant for the larger debate on anti-Americanism. While the image of America, according to *Pew Global Attitudes Project*, has improved significantly since 2008, in the case of Serbs it went in the opposite direction. The year 2008, as the paper illustrated above, was the year when Serb anti-Americanism developed into the second phase and became much more unpredictable. If anti-Americanisms around the world, including the one just explained, were associated with George W. Bush's policies, then what accounts for the continuity or further development of anti-Americanisms in post-Bush world? This is a matter that needs new research.

Finally, the Serb anti-Americanism and the resistance in northern Kosovo must be carefully and effectively controlled. The anti-Americanism in northern Kosovo can easily slither into a radicalized mode and ultimately turn violent. To effectively control, if not eliminate, the Serb anti-Americanism, American diplomats and policy-makers must draw strategies and make policies that attack the roots of the problem. On the other hand, the resistance is also of great immediate concern since it prohibits a number of positive developments both within Kosovo and the region. In relation to this matter, more must be done both by American and EU officials to stop the illegal parallel structures in northern Kosovo and pave the way for full integration of this area into the larger state apparatus. The Serb resistance in northern Kosovo can be effectively controlled or eliminated only after the Serb anti-Americanism as an elite construct is put at rest.

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