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GEOPOLITICAL FAULT LINES IN THE BALKANS

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ABSTRACT

The aim of the study is to show a new geopolitical approach to the understanding of international processes. The authors come up with the idea of connecting geographical elements with international relations and the moves of great powers and smaller states. The new approach of matching geographical fault lines with the region of Central-Eastern Europe, a region between the Baltic and the Black Sea provides us a deeper view on international events and networks. Connecting the two fields of research, geography and international diplomacy, the authors describe the short 20th century and the beginning of the 21st century as the period of earthquakes and volcanic eruptions along the fault lines, concentrating on the history of the Balkan region, providing us with a better view on the international system and the situation of smaller states among the great powers.
Keywords: geopolitics, international relations, Balkans, history, Serbia

INTRODUCTION, METHODOLOGY

The political face of our world was being formed from the second half of the 19th century to the end of the 20th century.[1] This face is ever since continuously changing just like the upper layer of the Earth's crust. The tensions generating in the deeper layers of the crust result in the movements of structure of the crust. These movements make changes on the surface as well. Fault lines are created in the crust, along which strong volcanic activity and movement of the crust, earthquake can be experienced. The formation of political image is a similar process. The reasons of tensions in the deeper layers of politics can vary. The crust also forms due to varying reasons. In addition to crust movements the weather also strongly forms the surface. In politics the political climate can also be mentioned, whose effects are smaller than the outcomes of conflicts of deeper layers. A politician may cause a storm, the passing of which does not lead to fundamental transformation. The main causes of controversies occurring in the deeper layers of politics can be traced back to economic, ethnic, religious, ideological, cultural controversies, controversies among social systems and world views. Briefly with modern scientific expression we can call them geopolitical reasons.

Coming back to the metaphor of crust and geopolitical shape we can say that the geopolitical shape is divided by fault lines. Along these political eruption and

[1] The article is an extended version of the one published in: Péter Bertalan-András Nagy: The Balkans- Geopolitics of a Mirror Broken into Pieces. In.: Acta Scientiarum Socialum, Department of Social Scienses No 45 (2015) 261-293. p.

phenomena similar to earthquakes may occur. From the geopolitical fault lines, smaller ones start, like networks. These can also cause smaller political changes.

The biggest political fault line stretches from the Baltic Sea to the Black Sea in Central-Eastern Europe. The first and second world wars broke out along this line. The peace treaties closing the two world wars did not put an end to the political conflicts, tensions remained in the deep. *"The four and a half decades following the Second World War was the period of the cold war. … It was the product of differences in the strategic, geopolitical considerations, differences in the consideration of value systems and world views, thinking traditions, political structure, and partly the product of the differences derived from the idealist thinking of Roosevelt based on the principles of Wilson and Stalin's thinking of realpolitics, and political practice."*[2]

This was the period of cold war, so to say the war of nerves, which was carrying the danger of another world war. The balance of military power is the explanation for the seemingly peaceful political tug of war between the great powers – the Soviet Union and the USA, which is the source of constant political instability. *"The literature of history divides the cold war into four periods: freeze (1947-1953), rivalry (1953-1969), détente (1969-1979), and another freeze and the end of the cold war (1980-1990)."*[3] This periodization is based on the changes of diplomacy and politics. It does not give explanation to local wars and dangerous centres of tension along geopolitical fault lines (War of Korea, Vietnam, Cuban Crisis etc.). The geopolitical approach takes into consideration the global changes of the political, economic, military range of action of great powers. This is also influenced by the ideological clash on global scale.

"Starting from the last third of the 20th century the coordinates of the five dimensional concept of space define the frame of analysis embodying the ruling comprehension of geopolitical thinking."[4] The traditional geographical concept of space was complemented by outer space and cyberspace, part of space of information in a wider sense. From the military point of view the orbit around the Earth also belongs to this concept.[5] *"In case of the orbit around the Earth the following trajectories can be differentiated: 150-800 km: low height, 800-35000 km medium height, above 35000 km high height trajectory. The geostationary orbit can also be mentioned, rotating together with Earth, in 36000 km height from the surface, revolving in the line of the Equator in 24 hours revolving time."*[6]

Concept of space was not only complemented by outer space, but the area of world seas. We know from the programs of Viasat History TV channel that submarines equipped with more nuclear warheads can stay below the ice of the North Pole for several months. The concept of space expanded here as well from the strategic point of view. The Cold War was going on in spaces which can be defined by geopolitics. This can be extended by the global spatial network of communication. The front-lines, battlefields of Cold War in the first instance define economic political conditions; this is the main point of view, based on which the

[2] István Szilágyi: Geopolitika. Publikon Kiadó, Pécs, 2013. 81. p.
[3] ib. 93. p.
[4] ib. 125. p.
[5] ib.
[6] ib. 127. p.

war can be measured. This aspect defines the geopolitical periods of the Cold War. Based on the geopolitical aspects certain parts of the Cold War were determined by military political aspects and the economic resources behind them.

The clash of the forces facing each other can be modelled just by scientific means. It is hard to decide from the outside, who is about to win in the fierce clash, who is stronger. This I expressed by the geopolitical periodization.

1. First phase (1945-1956): nuclear stalemate and deterrence, drawing the ring of containment. This strategy meant the isolation of the soviet block from the free world, called the West. The atmosphere of mutual fear and uncertainty dominated.
2. The second phase (1957-1979) was the communist deep penetration into the sea zone. The Soviet Union broke through the limits set up by the American isolationist policy. It penetrated into the territorial waters of the USA – said to be the lord of world seas – and those territories which question the hegemony of the USA. Good example for this the Cuban Crisis of 1962-1963 and the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan.[7]
3. The third phase (1980-1991)[8] meant the collapse of the Soviet Union. It was a shocking moment of history of the 20th century. Peoples of the Eastern Block experienced similar feelings when Stalin died in 1953, and when Khrushchev was exposed in 1956. Khrushchev revealed the vileness and immorality of personality cult on the 20th Congress of the Soviet Communist Party. The first reaction to this was the Hungarian revolution and war of independence of 1956. The Soviet Union and the block of power ruled by it did not break. Comparing the two events can give explanation to the significance of the new era starting in 1991, and the analysis of events occurring in the deeper layers of geopolitics. The bipolar world, coming into being after the Second World War suddenly collapsed. One of the pillars of this world order was two economic and military alliances led by the Soviet Union, the Comecon and the Warsaw Pact.

The block led by the USA relied on the power of the USA. The explanation to this is, that "it gives quarter of the world's GNP. This equals to the GNP of China, Japan, Germany and Great Britain in total. Being the state of the highest industrial potential, the headquarters of one third of the 100 largest transnational companies can be found there. The growth rate of the so called new economy and money capital is the fastest in the USA. In the field of technology, the USA leads the informational and communicational revolution. In case of military in spite of decreasing expenses it could increase its range of action hand in hand with NATO. The USA has the only army, which can be deployed immediately in any part of the world, capable of immediate action. It has strengthened its traditional influence greatly in political sense in international organizations of strategic importance, like the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank and the World Trade Organization."[9]

[7] ib. 93-95. p.
[8] ib. 99. p.
[9] ib. 104. p.

In addition to the above mentioned facts, the following should be mentioned: "The monetary system of Bretton Woods – coming into being after the negotiations of 1-22 July 1944 – can be considered the first cornerstone of the new world order. That was the time when the American dollar became world money."[10] The struggle and fierce competition of the two poles was decided to the advantage of the West because of economic reasons in the long lasting Cold War. The basis of the military competition going on between the Soviet Union and the USA was the development of military technology. The balance of power was ensured by nuclear stalemate and Soviet land forces. This enormous force created great moving armoured force after the Second World War, which was able to quickly reach the Atlantic Ocean from East Germany according to data of the TV channel Viasat History. This was the basis of fear of the West, and a cornerstone of Stalin's strategy. In the time of the Cold War the Cuban Crisis brought a new turn to the state of balance of power. Based on the idea of President Reagan the USA announced the program of star wars, which meant the establishment of anti-missile defence systems. This caused a competition of military technology, which did not have the economic conditions in the Soviet Union. According to Viasat History, the USA spent 6% of national income on military expenses, while the Soviet Union spent 40%. The unequal competition led to collapse of the Soviet system. The great collapse led to geopolitical earthquake in Central-Eastern Europe, which aftereffect was that the geopolitical fault lines were torn mainly in the Balkans because of the geopolitical aftershocks. So the states of Central-Eastern Europe came to the historical task of change of regime, the solution of which was a common problem of the region within the given geopolitical scope. The terminus technicus of geopolitics should be emphasized, because it determined the fate of the region in the given historical situation. History also plays a relevant role, because the region was put in the shade of global bloody events of the First and Second World Wars. The superficiality of peace treaties was found again. The fate of Ukraine also proves that the change of regime has not finished yet. The expression itself, "change of regime" expresses that the historical turn is inevitable. There are no other alternatives for the small peoples of Central-Eastern Europe, just the task to somehow get back on their feet economically after the end of the Cold War. This is only possible by taking advantage of the possibilities by joining the international economic circulation. Small nations need economic blood transfusion. The situation of Hungary is a picturesque example. The situation of the country is also determined by the globalizing world apart from the region. "The world became global, the mutual dependencies and the new regionalist type of integrations, processes organizing in the form of networks and streams transformed the conceptual frames of geopolitical spaces and places and contributed to the collapse of old structures.[11]

The study analyses the Balkan region based on a new geopolitical approach, in the global system of interdependency and the system of asymmetric interdependency among the actors. The authors investigate the historical networks of the Balkans based on unique sources from Autonomous Province of Vojvodina. At the same time the authors mention in brief the geopolitical indicator of the end

[10] ib. 91. p.
[11] ib. 91. p.

of the 20th century and the beginning of the 21st century, called energy politics. Energy politics is becoming more and more important in the game of great powers in Eurasia; it is constantly discussed in the Central and Eastern European region and in the European Union as well. Energy politics has major role in defining the bargaining power of actors in international diplomacy.

The new geopolitical system of the 21st century and the new types of challenges desire the reinterpretation of complex network of international diplomacy. The characteristic diplomatic traditions of the 20th century, the secret diplomacy of great powers to make advantage of the conflicts among smaller states along the geopolitical fault lines can be considered as zero-sum game. The great powers were fighting against each other for the spheres of interest, important from the geostrategic point of view. The arms race resulted in the destabilization of the international system, the change of regime of Central and Eastern Europe is still going on. It is the responsibility of great powers and international organizations and institutions dominated by them to channel the blood stream of mankind to calmer periods. The means of secret diplomacy are not capable of stopping the processes; effectively deal with the conflicts which have deep roots. The authors of present study stand up for the application of international diplomacy based on consent and cooperation, the result of which might be a cooperative international system based on the cooperation of great powers and global players. The analysis presented here revises the 20th century fallen into the trap of secret diplomacy, based on a new geopolitical approach. We hope that the saying is true, according to which no man ever steps in the same river twice.

FORESHOCKS

The First World War, just like earthquakes, was preceded by a series of foreshocks. The Balkan region is worthily called the powder keg of Europe and the world even nowadays. The First World War was preceded by two conflicts, the geopolitical interpretation of which can be approached from more sides. On the one hand it is the scene of rivalry of great powers, acquiring areas of geostrategic importance (reaching the seas, straits), on the other hand the scene of struggles among smaller states for the same territories. *"There were two ranked officers at the head of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, who wanted to renew the policy of dynastic expansion. Count Aloys Aerenthal-Lexa minister of foreign affairs and count Franz Konrad von Hötzendorf chief of general staff thought that just like in 1881, an agreement can be put into practice with Russia about the mutual division of the Balkans.*[12] According to the agreement Russia would have got the straits of the Ottoman Empire and the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy would have been able to reach the harbour of Salonica. Russia came up against the resistance of England; the Monarchy annexed Bosnia and Herzegovina.[13]

Bulgaria, Serbia, Crna Gora and Greece, creating the Balkan Alliance, laid claim to the European territories of the Ottoman Empire. The "distribution of loot" after the first foreshock, the war of 1912 carried the outbreak of the second Balkan war, which

[12] Nándor Major: Egy állameszme tündöklése és bukása. Forum Könyvkiadó, 2013. 8.p.
[13] ib.

was this time launched by Bulgaria against its former allies, on the side of who Romania and the Ottoman Empire also joined.[14] *"It turned out that in the two Balkan wars the three small Balkan states, Greece, Serbia and Bulgaria were struggling against each other for the control of the Valley of Vardar and Salonica."*[15] *The Valley of Vardar … is the strategic gate to the harbour of Salonica. … Who controls the Valley of Vardar, dominates the Balkans."*[16] This is the interpretation of the geopolitical view of Mackinder for the Balkans.

THE FIRST GLOBAL EARTHQUAKE

"The Balkan-question could rise to the level of world politics because the opposing sides in the national debate and the great powers lining up behind them were member states of great European blocks, and the decision of the debate had effects on a series of systems of alliances."[17] The waves of the earthquake spread all over the world.

Immediately after the outbreak of the world war Russia asked Serbia to give up Macedonia to the advantage of Bulgaria for the resurrection of the Balkan Alliance. Serbia was only willing to give up the territories east to the Valley of Vardar, on the condition of the other member states of the Balkan Alliance also make concessions to Bulgaria, and Serbia would receive Serbo-Croatian territories with seashores belonging to them in return. Neither Greece, nor Bulgaria was willing to make concessions to Bulgaria, so the allied demanded Macedonia from Serbia with the Valley of Vardar. They offered Dalmatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina in return. But the political elite of Serbia insisted on keeping the valley due to the above mentioned reasons.[18]

Russia *"wanted to keep the area of the Dardanelles and Bosporus for itself, so tried to push Bulgaria to the central area of the Balkans, which provides strategic dominance embracing the Valley of Vardar."*[19] This got Serbia to change the principals to follow in the foreign policy of warfare and the national program. *"Instead of taking under the settling of the Serbian question in a narrow sense, it took under the settling of the more comprehensive Jugoslav question."*[20] But it required the victory of the Entente and the dissolution of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy. According to Nikola Paŝić, prime minister of Serbia the peace of the Balkan region depends on the creation of a strong national state, giving up the principal of balance of power. In his idea the key to guarantee a lasting peace is the creation of a strong south Slavic state, which would embrace the Serbs, the Croats, and the Slovenes too.[21] But the idea only served to disguise the expansive policy of Serbia, Paŝić himself did not believe in the existence of the Jugoslav nation, all the nations had their own separate national consciousness. The official aim of Serbia in the war at the end of 1914 was to crush the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy and to liberate and unite the Serb, Croat and Slovene brothers.

[14] József Juhász: Volt egyszer egy Jugoszlávia. Aula Kiadó, 1999. 12-13. p.
[15] Nándor Major: Egy állameszme tündöklése és bukása. Forum Könyvkiadó, 2013. 9. p.
[16] ib. 12. p.
[17] ib. 9-10. p.
[18] ib. 10-12. p.
[19] ib. 12. p.
[20] ib. 13. p.
[21] ib. 15. p.

But the Entente was not interested in crushing the Monarchy, they were rather thinking in a separate peace treaty, considered the Monarchy an important factor in the balance of power of European great powers. Furthermore the Entente had greater interest in drawing Italy into the war. But Italy, being afraid of the creation of a strong Jugoslav state, stipulated in a secret agreement with the allied to prevent the unification of Serbia, Croatia and Montenegro. According to the agreement Croatia can decide at the end of the war whether to join one of the countries or remain independent.

Russia was against the creation of a strong south Slavic state till 1917. The reason for this is that Russia could not take it for sure that the dominance of the orthodox Serbia will remain over the non-orthodox peoples. Later history proved their assumption. Although it did not support the efforts of Pašić, *"Russia, based on its best self-interest, entered the war on the side of Serbia to preserve, and if possible, turn to its side the balance of power of great powers in Southern-Eastern Europe, which would be upset with loosing Serbia to the advantage of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy."*[22]

Serbia had to change its policy after the fall of czarism in 1917, get closer to the Jugoslav Committee. *"The Jugoslav Committee was set up by those Slovenian, Serbian but mainly Croatian politicians, who emigrated from the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy to the West, who were staying in contact with the Serbian government before the war."*[23] The Jugoslav Committee stood up for the creation of a unified, strongly centralized Yugoslavia, based on the principal of trialism, the equality of the three tribes, three nations. But hitherto the relation between the Serbian government and the Jugoslav Committee with the seat in London was characterized by mutual mistrust. The Committee accepted the Serbian Karađorđević dynasty as the ruler of the new state 20 July 1917 in the declaration of Corfu, while the Serbian government accepted that all the tribes would have equal rights. The aim of Pašić was to gain the support of the Entente powers and the USA joining the war on their side. But the Entente powers ignored the declaration or took it with a grain of salt. France was thinking about the creation of two south Slavic states, Italy saw in it the obstacle to obtain the territories promised to it.[24]

The Entente powers, after the negotiations about separate peace treaties with the Monarchy ended in failure, tried to destabilize the weaker central power by encouraging national movements inside the Monarchy. In April 1918 the congress of nation subjugated by the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy was organized in Rome.[25]

The international conditions needed for the establishment of the Serb-Croat-Slovene Royal State were created by the victory of the Entente, but we cannot talk about a simply artificial formation on the basis of the will of great powers. Although the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes entered the southern Slavic states due to several forcing circumstances, but they did it on their own accord. The state struggled with strong inner conflicts.[26] Serbia, as a winner of the world war, with

[22] ib. 18. p.
[23] ib. 20. p.
[24] ib. 27-28. p.
[25] ib. 29. p.
[26] József Juhász: Volt egyszer egy Jugoszlávia. Aula Kiadó, 1999. 30. p.

the Valley of Vardar in its hands felt it a historical task to fill in the vacuum of power coming into being after the collapse of two empires, the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy and czarist Russia.[27]

THE SECOND GLOBAL EARTHQUAKE

After the First World War the southern Slavic state adjusted its foreign policy primarily to France, who had continental hegemony, and insisted on the country against the German "revengism", the restauration of the Habsburgs, the isolation of the Bolshevik revolution, and the restraint of Italian aspirations.[28] Yugoslavia could insist on its traditional allies only until the 1930's. Due to the effects of the world economic crisis Yugoslavia turned towards Germany, first economically, then politically. In the relations of the two countries one sided dependency came into being in a short time.[29] The primary goal of Yugoslavia was to stay out of the war. 25 March 1941 Prime Minister Cvetković signed the Tripartite Pact, in which Germany guaranteed the fulfilment of the demands of Yugoslavia in three appendices.[30] *"According to the first appendix Yugoslavia would have got exit to the Aegean Sea with the harbour of Salonica in the finalization of state borders – this was promised. With this the dream of Serbia would have come true."*[31] The second appendix was about guaranteeing sovereignty and territorial integrity. According to the third appendix Germany and Italy would not require military help from Yugoslavia in case of war.[32] But after signing the pact, probably with English assistance General Duŝan Simović carried out a coup d'état, anti-fascist demonstrations started all over Serbia. 6 April 1941 Hitler attacked both Greece and Yugoslavia. The winners divided the country. Serbia came under the control of Germany due to its geographical location and important mining.

After the invasion all hell broke loose. *"In Yugoslavia for four years there was war not only against the invaders, but also among the partisans, Serbian Chetniks, Croatian Ustashas, Albanian leftists, Slovenian white guardsmen, Muslim legionaries, none of them spared the civil population. In parallel, intertwined with each other there was war of liberation, civil war, armed revolution going on, the social classes tried to settle the bill with each other."*[33] The fault line of the Balkans, which extends not only among great powers, but also the Slavic people, took the life of at least 1 million people in Yugoslavia according to more researches.

Until 1918 Russia and the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy struggled for the Balkans. After the First World War, France tried to put the northern part of the Balkans in its sphere of interest. This time Italian aspirations also appeared. The French were ousted by the economically stronger, geographically closely located Germany in the 1930's. In parallel with the outbreak of the Second World War the

[27] Nándor Major: Egy állameszme tündöklése és bukása. Forum Könyvkiadó, 2013. 59-60. p.
[28] Juhász József: Volt egyszer egy Jugoszlávia. Aula Kiadó, 1999. 68. p.
[29] Major Nándor: Egy állameszme tündöklése és bukása. Forum Könyvkiadó, 2013. 76. p.
[30] ib. 84. p.
[31] ib.
[32] ib.
[33] ib. 132. p.

English tried to extend their influence towards the north (coup d'état of General Simović). After it became clear in the second phase of the war that the Germans and Italians had lost ground on the Balkans, England encountered the Soviet Union, which *"tried to collect its imperial share of inheritance."*[34]

After the Second Word War Great Britain lost its great power status, Europe and Yugoslavia was lying in ruins. The bipolar world was in formation, between the everything-winning USA and Soviet Union, which won and lost a lot. *"But this uncertain situation offered many opportunities. In Yugoslavia Tito and the communists recognized them, and quickly established their system."*[35]

YUGOSLAVIA IN THE BIPOLAR WORLD ORDER

After 1945 strong alliance came into being between Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union. Yugoslavia created the network of declarations of friendship with the Eastern European states. With the Western powers the relationship was tense, mainly due to territorial claims. Mainly the Yugoslav claims for Trieste became sources of conflicts with the Anglo-Saxon powers and Italy. The atmosphere of the Cold War left its mark on the Yugoslav-Soviet relations. Stalin wanted to homogenise and centralize the eastern block, wanted to put Yugoslavia into a dependent situation. Tito went against it.[36] *"Tito could do it due to the geographical location of the country, the lack of Soviet military presence and the outstanding internal support comparing to the other eastern European communist leaders."*[37]

After the Cominform conflict of 1948 foreign policy was focused on improving the relationship with the West to get out of isolation. The western powers also had interests in getting Yugoslavia on their side, because with it the area closing Moscow from the Mediterranean, extending from Turkey to Italy can be completed, and the Italian and Greek communist movement can be controlled better. In 1951 the USA, England, France, in 1952 West Germany signed economic aid agreements with Yugoslavia. The aim of the Balkan Pact signed in 1954-1954 (declaration of friendship among Yugoslavia, Greece and Turkey, later alliance) was to tie Yugoslavia to the western block. But the alliance did not really work due to the disagreements of member states.[38]

Yugoslavia did not want to fit in any of the blocks; its aim was to create the group of countries outside the blocks, so he contacted the newly liberated African and Asian countries, India, Egypt and Indonesia. In the meeting of Brion 18-19 July 1956 Tito, Nehru head of the state of India, Nasser President of Egypt bound themselves to keep the principals of Bandung (anti-colonialism, peaceful coexistence). The death of Stalin allowed the normalization of Soviet relations, which broke again with the second Soviet-Yugoslav debate (1957-1961), which excluded the possibility to return to the socialist block for Yugoslavia. In 1962 the

[34] ib. 138-139. p.
[35] Zoltán Mészáros: A korai titoizmus propagandája. Életjel Kiadó, 2008. 49. p.
[36] József Juhász: Volt egyszer egy Jugoszlávia. Aula Kiadó, 1999. 124-126. p.
[37] ib. 126. p.
[38] ib. 181-182. p.

Soviet Union acknowledged the international status of Yugoslavia. The aim of Moscow was to prevent Yugoslavia from becoming part of the West.[39]

After the deterioration of Yugoslav-Soviet relations in 1957 the attention turned to those countries that were outside the blocks. In 1961 the first congress of non-aligned countries was held in Belgrade. The titoist Yugoslavia played a major role in the preservation of the third-way nature of the movement of non-aligned countries, which increased its international importance. *"The transitional international status, the role played as opinion leader of the non-aligned countries and the active peace policy gave Yugoslavia an outstanding international reputation and authority in comparison with its size and economic weight."*[40]

With the end of the bipolar world Yugoslavia lost its particular international status and with the dawn of the non-aligned movement a scene of foreign policy. *"For the beginning of the 1990's the great powers traditionally aligned on the side of Yugoslavia were constantly losing their interest towards Yugoslavia. The Soviet power efforts were gone, the old English and French rivals were not afraid of the German predominance. Moscow was concentrating on its inner problems and new connections with the West…."*[41] The great powers wanted to keep together Yugoslavia because their interest was to have foreseeable changes. After all the great powers let Yugoslavia fall apart.

THE SOUTH SLAVIC CRISIS, CHANNEL THE FAULT LINES

Among the reasons of the collapse of Yugoslavia the temporary devaluation of the region on the scene of great power politics and the emerging inner conflicts can be mentioned. The personality of Tito was a centrifugal force, but after his death the centripetal forces reached the surface. The political climate also became tempestuous when Slobodan Milošević appeared on the scene. After the outbreak of the south Slavic war the great powers followed a "localizational" policy, their aim was to keep the new conflict of old basis within the region, to prevent the recurrence of 1914. The USA left the south Slavic issues to Europe for a time. But Europe could not agree on the aim of the interventional policy, it was a stalemate, which the USA could not stand in 1994-1995. The policy of localization was changed to the policy of intervention. On top of that the USA won a battle in its invisible war against Western Europe: it was proved, that Europe could not deal with a European regional conflict.[42]

After the treaty of Dayton putting an end to the Bosnian war in 1995 several questions remained open, among which the most important was the Alban question and Kosovo. The USA, being afraid of the escalation of the conflict started the air strikes 24 March 1995. The motivation of NATO was more complicated. The aim was not only to force the compromise between Serbs and Albans (agreement of Rambouillet). *"They wanted to represent the new role of NATO, assigning the place of other great powers, Russia and China in the new, evolving international order.*[43]

[39] ib. 184. p.
[40] ib. 186. p.
[41] ib. 187-188. p.
[42] ib. 272-273. p.
[43] Uo. 296. p.

AFTER MILOŜEVIĆ

After Miloŝević was overthrown by the key persons of the police, the wrangling of the Balkans continued. Serbia was at the crossroads in the beginning of the 21st century: on the one side joining the European Union, on the other keeping Montenegro and Kosovo. The aim was to achieve both. *"Serbia insisted on keeping Montenegro because of two reasons. From the two getting exit to the sea was more important. The other: with Montenegro there is a greater chance to keep Kosovo."*[44] In case of Kosovo from the point of view of Serbia the spiritual, religious dimensions are of greater importance. *"Kosovo does not have so much influence in world politics … that is why the luminaries of great powers are not worried about having and controlling it. … Having Kosovo also lost its local importance to the beginning of the 21st century, as it does not mean a significant advantage in the relations of Balkan states."*[45] *"It might be true, that the Serbian electors and the majority of the political elite want to join the European Union as soon as possible, but only if they accept the country as it is, without painful reforms and carrying the remnants of Miloŝević."*[46]

Russia, the traditional ally of Serbia approved that Serbia signed the pre-accession agreements with the European Union, and promised support for Serbia in the fight for Kosovo. The reasons of Russia are clear: *"Russia would take a greater advantage of a Serbia growing in the European Union, fighting for its own interests there, than a Serbia hopelessly impoverishing, fighting with the Union from the outside."*[47]

QUO VADIS SERBIA?

The future of Serbia, the Balkan state situated in one of the epicentres of geopolitics, in the centre of the Eurasian chessboard of great powers, worth examining taking into consideration the relations between Germany (European Union) and Russia, concentrating on energy politics and energy security. Serbia has dual aim, derived from its geopolitical situation. On the one hand, driven from economic motivation, Serbia is slowly advancing towards the European Union, the leading country of which is Germany. On the other hand, as energy security, which is an emphasized question, cannot be solved by joining the EU, The aim of the decision makers is to join Serbia to the planned system of pipelines of Russia, which carried the name of Southern Stream, now Turkish Stream. From the point of view of the European Union neither economically, nor politically is Serbia ready to join and it is possible, that Russia could use Serbia, its traditional ally as Trojan horse if the strategic aims deserve it. From the point of view of Russia the essential aim is to gain and increase influence in the Balkans, achieve the goals that has been followed for centuries, to get exit to warm sea. At the moment and in the foreseeable future Serbia will be commuting between the two spaces of power in a regional space divided by deep inner conflicts.

[44] Nándor Major: Szerbia Miloŝević után I. Forum Könyvkiadó, 2006. 74. p.
[45] Nándor Major: Szerbia Miloŝević után III. Forum Könyvkiadó, 2008. 27. p.
[46] Major Nándor: Szerbia Miloŝević után II. Forum Könyvkiadó, 2007 121-122. p.
[47] Nándor Major: Szerbia Miloŝević után III. Forum Könyvkiadó, 2008. 158. p.

ASSESSMENT

The fault line extending from the Baltic Sea to the Black Sea can be interpreted as the chessboard of the rivalry of great powers, scene of geopolitical games. Nationalisms of small nations easily fell victim to the assertion of interest of great powers. The small countries of the region have to accommodate to the movement of great tectonic plates of Earth, the great powers of a given period as we have seen in the processes of the 20th century in case of the two world wars and the Cold War, in proportion to their geopolitical circumstances. The great powers according to their geopolitical aims use the tool of resurrecting or breaking down small national nationalisms. The Balkan region lost some of its importance for the short period of the unipolar world order, as there was no other power to counterbalance the USA, after the Soviet Union collapsed. In the rather multipolar world order of the 21st century the value of the Balkan region was put up again, foreshocks can be experienced in Eastern Europe. Fortunately the global earthquake has not occurred yet, we can rather talk about the clash of networks in the background.

The understanding of geopolitical networks, shaping the global world of the 20th century, can help us to find optimal solutions to global problems and regional conflicts. We cannot understand the present, without knowing the past; we make decisions in the present. In the 20th century humanity went through two world wars, taking millions of lives, while an unprecedented technical development took place. One can say that tracking down the constantly changing and organizing networks is one of the greatest challenges. The moving of networks several times misled the most significant think tanks and policy makers in the 20th century. A key issue of the 21st century and a milestone in the short life of humanity is whether to be able use new, creative approaches and methods, to think in networks, finding solutions to the most urgent questions of international politics, medical science or ecology.

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