

Journalism, Justice, and the Transnational Community

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This article analyzes how newspaper editorials on the Yugoslav conflicts of the 1990s contributed to the modern understanding of the transnational community. During these conflicts, the notion of the transnational community was conceptualized and realized as a distinctive and functional collective subjectivity. This study found that journalists, in their coverage on armed conflicts, conceptualize the transnational community primarily as a discursive community. This discursive nature enables members of different national or local communities to join the transnational community in an active deliberation of justice.

Keywords: newspaper editorial, armed conflict, transnational community, justice

Introduction

In March 2014, Syria's conflict entered its fourth year. Despite the brutality of the Syrian regime and the enormous destruction of life and property, no international force has come forth to help protect the Syrian civilians. For many around the world, the question remains: Why was the international community able to intervene in the conflicts that occurred in Kosovo, Iraq, Libya, and Mali, but did not extend the same assistance in Syria? This question is also a reminder that atrocities against civilians in one country make people from other nations feel emotionally and morally responsible to help those who suffer. Although the decisions about international interventions go beyond notions of social justice and human suffering, it could be argued that they play a central role in the media's construction of a transnational community that stands against the normalization of atrocities against civilians as the "expected" consequences of armed conflicts.

This article discusses how newspaper editorials on the Yugoslav wars in the 1990s contributed to the construction of the notion of transnational community. Discursive constructions of the transnational community in media reports on the Yugoslav conflict are discussed in other research that do not focus primarily on newspaper editorial as a specific journalistic genre (Buckley & Cummings, 2001; Hammond & Herman, 2000; Mihelj, 2011). Much of the growing body of research carried out in the newborn, post-Yugoslav states discusses how the mass media in the region continues "to play a crucial role in creating and representing (ethno) national identities" (Džihana & Volčič, 2011, p. 8). However, the present article

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analyzes how journalists in their media coverage of the Yugoslav conflict conceptualize not ethnical or national community, but the idea of transnational community.

It was precisely the Yugoslav conflicts of the 1990s that profoundly influenced a modern understanding of the transnational community, not only as a morally responsible witness to atrocities committed against civilians during armed conflicts, but also as a moral authority ready to actively deliberate and intervene, even militarily, into nation-states' affairs under the justification of protecting civilian lives. The idea that in times of armed conflicts the transnational community should protect justice was argued many times before the conflicts that destroyed the former Yugoslavia. However, it was during the Yugoslav conflicts of the 1990s that the modern notion of the transnational community was transnationally argued, conceptualized, and fully realized as a distinctive and functional collective subjectivity, able not only to actively deliberate about the endangered lives of civilians, but to intervene, even militarily, as a powerful and just actor across nation-state borders. This notion of the transnational community later reappeared as the essence of a materialized force to intervene into other countries' affairs, from Afghanistan in 2001 and Iraq in 2003, to Libya in 2011 and Mali and Congo in 2013.

The structure of this article proceeds as follows. It begins by briefly revisiting the specifics of the Yugoslav conflicts of the 1990s and the role the media coverage of these conflicts played in discursive construction of the transnational community. To see how journalists discursively constructed the transnational community, the research focuses on that aspect of war intervention and analyzes 48 editorials on the Yugoslav conflicts published by newspapers representing two sides involved in these conflicts: *Politika*, the main Serbian daily, and *The New York Times*, the most influential U.S. newspaper. The article concludes with a discussion summarizing the main findings from the analysis.

Journalism, the Yugoslav Wars, and the Transnational Community

Despite an institutional infrastructure, which, on the international level, provided the possibility of the existence of an active transnational community, the idea that democracy can trespass nation-state borders or take a genuine form of a post-national democracy "until a few years ago . . . was generally quickly dismissed as utopian and its advocates treated as dreamers" (Archibugi et al., 2010, p. 84). It was the media presence and the exposure of the atrocities committed during the Yugoslav wars of the 1990s that, among other factors, crucially enabled the rise of the modern understanding of the transnational community as an actor actively engaged in solving these conflicts. The Yugoslav conflicts started in 1991 and produced wars in Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia, and Kosovo, resulting in seven new internationally recognized states and triggering an enormous volume of research. For the United Nations, no other conflict, with the exception of the situation in the Middle East, "occasioned so voluminous a flow of material—in the shape of debates, resolutions, reports, arrangements for UN forces and even the establishment of a special war crimes tribunal" (Leuterpracht, 1997, p. xv).

The media reports of atrocities committed against civilians during these wars left strong emotional and political effects on people and institutions around the world, bringing them together into a transnational community united around the issue of justice. In the end, the U.S.-led NATO forces did not intervene in the Yugoslav wars because of the "CNN effect" (Robinson, 2002), but media representations

of atrocities against civilians committed during these wars became an intrinsic element of transnational deliberation, and of the understanding of these wars. The media representations of atrocities committed against civilians during the Yugoslav wars also re-invigorated the global public awareness that the notion of the transnational community is inextricably intertwined with another notion—*notion of justice*. What is intrinsically ingrained into the media coverage of the Yugoslav conflicts is journalists' understanding of a modern transnational community as the community of humankind that ultimately rejects atrocities committed against civilians. This understanding of a transnational community is in line with Heller's (1987) argument that the Nuremberg Trials definitively established the right to life and the right to liberty as two universal and binding norms that constitute humankind as the essential social cluster. These two rights, consistently applied to every human being, turn into "a common yardstick for comparison and grading" (Heller, 1987, p. 41), to validate the formal concept of justice, which will, consequently, define the modern transnational community. In this sense, respect for the right to life and right to liberty should be understood as a "moral imperative" (Heller, 1987) that binds the transnational community across nation-state borders.

It is important to underline that the Yugoslav conflicts occurred against the background of social processes termed as globalization. In relation to the coverage of the Yugoslav conflicts and globalizing processes of the 1990s, the media had a crucial role on both levels: as the essential infrastructure of globalizing processes and as an active participant in these processes. How the media fulfilled this twofold role could also be seen in the media coverage of the Yugoslav conflicts, where the transnational community was discursively constructed not in relation to a consistent application of law, as the same set of rules and norms applied to all members of the transnational community, but in relation to necessary exceptions to the application of law. Hence, in their coverage of the Yugoslav conflicts, the media continuously argued that the transnational community's own defining rights—the right to life and the right to liberty—could be defended through a series of just and necessary exceptions introduced into legal or political practice in order to stop the Yugoslav conflicts. And this list is not short one: The International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia was the first war crimes court created by the UN, and the first international war crimes tribunal since the Nuremberg and Tokyo tribunals (Leuterpracht, 1997). For the first time in modern history an international court was set up to try a sitting head of state (Slobodan Milosevic) for war crimes and crimes against humanity (ICTY, 1999); for the first time NATO waged war against one sovereign country, in this case against Serbia; for the first time the legal principle of *uti possidetis* was applied outside of a colonial context to declare the dissolution of Yugoslavia as a sovereign country and without any consent of the parties involved (Lalonde, 2002); for the first time the special envoy of the UN Secretary General (in this case the envoy for Kosovo) asked the UN to "encourage the dismemberment of one of its member states" (Trbovich, 2008, p. 412); for the first time the principal judicial organ of the UN—the International Court of Justice—was given a mandate by the UN General Assembly to provide an advisory opinion related to the legality of the declaration of independence (of Kosovo) and decided that the declaration did not violate international law (ICJ, 2010). These exceptions were argued by transnational media as direct consequences of the transnational community's moral obligation to intervene across nation-state borders to protect the lives and liberties of civilians and to find just solutions to the Yugoslav conflicts. Argued and embedded into media coverage as the only available and just solutions for these conflicts, these exceptions turned into discursive objectivities, similar to what Agamben (2005) termed as the inevitable and continuous "state of exception."

Newspaper editorial, as a specific journalistic genre, and language used in newspaper editorials on the Yugoslav conflicts were crucial for the standardization of representations of these conflicts as transnationally shared injustices and violations of basic human rights that constitute the transnational community. The media's discursive constructions of the transnational community as a just actor that should engage in the protection of civilians was construed with academic research and political projects that were also introduced during the time of the Yugoslav conflicts. The period of the Yugoslav conflicts provides us with concepts such as "distant suffering" (Boltanski, 1993), "new wars" (Kaldor, 1999), "peace journalism" (The Peace Journalism Option, 1997; Lynch & McGoldrick, 2005), and "journalism of attachment" (Bell, 1998), and with a realization of "a new doctrine of international community" (Blair, 1999) and "Responsibility to Protect" (ICISS, 2001), as well as the revived dormant theories such as "just war theory" (Walzer, 1997). All of these concepts, theories, and political projects associated with the mainstream media's coverage of the war addressed essentially the same issue: namely that atrocities against civilians committed during the Yugoslav conflicts endangered not only the lives and liberties of these civilians, but also the essence of the transnational community. It could be argued that newspaper editorials on the Yugoslav conflicts, together with political actions and theoretical arguments, contributed to the process of transforming the idea of a just transnational community into a reality. New understandings of journalism practices in conflict reporting that emerged in the 1990s, such as the peace journalism and journalism of attachment, confirm that during the Yugoslav conflicts the journalistic community also struggled to actively conceptualize the notion of the transnational community as moral authority, while at the same time maintaining its own authority "derived simply from having been there" (Zelizer, 1998, p. 69).

In this sense, newspaper editorials about the Yugoslav wars became discursive mediated points during these wars. These mediated points serve as an orientation to a transnational space where matters of common concern, decisions, and possible collective actions are linked, and shared problems are or should be resolved, thus constructing ever-changing networks of individuals and collectivities. These networks are therefore formed in the contexts of "discursive event spheres" where "conflict related 'events' have been transformed into a dynamic discursive event 'sphere'" (Volkmer, 2008, p. 90). It is the discursive side of "belonging" that characterizes the transnational community as a communication community and a community of "rhetoric or discursive deliberation" (Delanty, 2010, p. 132).

Hence, I argue that the transnational community should be understood not as a simple sum of dispersed individuals or diasporic communities, or as an abstract global community without national roots that emerged by forces of the Internet, digital technologies, or transnational businesses. Rather, the transnational community should be conceptualized as a deliberative and discursive community (Delanty, 2010) that arises with transnational media events, especially with the most intense forms of conflicts, such as armed conflicts, which affect the transnational community's members emotionally, politically, or economically. The discursive nature of the transnational community enables members of this community to engage in deliberation about the particular media event and to transcend national state borders.

Therefore, this article understands the transnational community primarily as a discursive community that arises with transnational media events, and comes into being "in the medium of its

expression" (Delanty, 2010, p. 126), such as newspaper editorials. The transnational community is therefore not the community that represents the "world community," or the "cosmopolitan sense of boundarylessness" (Beck, 2006), or any random or systematic assemblage of members of diasporic communities. In this sense, the transnational community "is constructed in discourse and does not correspond directly to an underlying reality" (Delanty, 2010, p. 126).

Method of Analysis

The methodological approach to editorial analysis broadly follows principles of critical discourse analysis (CDA). While acknowledging that discourse, as a form of social practice, actively influences society, I approach discourse drawing on Richardson's (2007) argument that discourse should never be treated "as a thing that in itself can include or exclude, reproduce social inequalities or effect social change" (p. 28). At the same time we shall be well aware that when particular social conditions merge, discursive practices can materialize into actions in the hard world of realpolitik, as in the case of the U.S.-led NATO war against Serbia in 1999.

Editorials are a good object for CDA because they explicitly discuss distinctive and important issues, and by reproducing attitudes and ideologies they function "politically as an implementation of power, that is, as strategic moves in the legitimation of the dominance" (van Dijk, 1992, p. 244). Because an argumentative feature is crucial for the editorial as a journalistic genre, the research is focused on the argumentative strategies employed in newspapers editorials. This research understands argumentation drawing on Shi-xu, Keinpointer, and Servaes (2005), who define argumentation as "that dimension and mode of discourse in which an argument is offered in support of a (potentially) controversial claim [where] a claim can be a statement of fact or a call for action; argument can be a set of reasons for that claim" (p. 90). Thus, in order to see how newspaper editorials construct the notion of the transnational community, the analysis looks at the organization of arguments in editorials, following their hierarchical structure while simultaneously discussing the meanings of words, phrases, metaphors, or propositions employed in this argumentation. While conducting analyses of media texts it is necessary to recognize that the media's influences and the meanings disseminated by the media are exercised in very complex ways. Therefore, this research does not attempt to pin down only one way of understanding these editorials and the meanings they disseminate, but to offer one possible approach to the reading of different arguments and discourses employed by them.

The choice of the two newspapers (*Politika* and *The New York Times*) was "dictated" by the two dominant parties ultimately accountable for starting the Yugoslav conflicts (Serbia) and finally stopping these conflicts (the United States). *The New York Times* is described as "the most influential newspaper in the United States" (Mermin, 1999, p. 12), while *Politika* was regarded as "the paper with the strongest influence on public opinion" in Serbia (Nenadović, 2000, p. 537). Precisely for this reason, *Politika* was used by Slobodan Milosevic's regime in the 1990s to spread chauvinistic hatred and to directly support Milosevic's efforts to recompose the former Yugoslavia through war (Thompson, 1999).

For the purpose of this research, *The New York Times* represents transnational news media that are available across nation-state borders. *Politika*, on the other hand, represents national news media, the

media that operate primarily inside nation-state borders and, despite their on-line availability, are mainly confined to their nation-state space (and its distinct national diaspora) because of language barriers. During the period covered by this research, *The New York Times* online edition was the most visited online newspaper, with 18.2 million unique visitors (Web Traffic, 2009). *Politika's* Web edition still offered only articles in the Serbian language and in Cyrillic. Nevertheless, while the role of the transnational media "goes beyond being simply news channels; they act as 'mediators of the world' for multiple global spheres" (Volkmer, 2006, p. 255), it should be underlined that transnational media are also rooted in the local. Relationships between transnational and national media do not function as one-dimensional or one-way communication. Even during an armed conflict or war, and with the full-scale use of propaganda and censorship, transnational media are not cut off from a foreign national media space, and, as this research confirms, dialogical and argumentative relationships between transnational and national media continue in many forms. For example, during the time covered by this research, *The New York Times International Weekly* edition was also published in *Politika* as a 12-page pull-out Monday supplement.

The textual analysis was completed through several stages. First, by close reading, the global theme of a particular editorial is identified to establish whether that editorial is related to one of the three events under scrutiny. While the global theme or macrotopic "is related to the notion of what the overall discourse is about" (Tomlin, Forrest, Ming and Hee Kim 1997, p. 90), the analysis fully recognizes that together with global themes there are also other themes organized on lower levels of an editorial. Second, the main argument outlined in a particular editorial is identified. Third, supporting arguments used to uphold the main argument in a particular editorial are identified. While bearing in mind that argument is rational, the analysis understands the newspapers' editorials as discursive and as semantic fields, which respond to changes within the context of international relations and international law, through, for example, different understandings of the notions of justice, sovereignty or human rights.

To make a manageable sample, only editorials related to three crucial events that happened during the decade-long Yugoslav conflicts were chosen for the analysis. These three events, which the media turned into transnational media events, are (a) the publication of news stories about so-called Serb-run concentration camps in Bosnia in August 1992, as the event that radically changed presentation and understanding of these conflicts within the transnational community; (b) the beginning of the American-led NATO war against Serbia in March 1999, as the full realization of the role of the transnational community in protecting civilians; and (c) the declaration of Kosovo as an independent state in February 2008, as the symbolical end of these conflicts. These three events subsequently had far-reaching consequences on international law and international relations, journalism practices, and journalism and media studies. These events are remembered by journalistic communities as iconic media events and represent compulsory reference points for other similar media events and for academic studies that discuss similar phenomena. This analysis includes editorials published up to two weeks before and two weeks after the date on which each of the three events happened. This selection, supported by a close reading of all editorials published during this period of time, provided the sample of 48 editorials for this analysis.

Justice in 1992: The Holocaust and the Transnational Community

On August 5, 1992, the British TV station ITN broadcast internationally a news story about Bosnian Muslims held prisoner by the Bosnian Serb army in a compound in Trnopolje. The news stories that followed linked the ITN report to the concentration camps of Nazi Germany and transformed one still photograph, a close-up of "the man behind barbed wire," into an iconic image that crystalizes why "the gross barbarism inflicted on civilians of the former Yugoslavia nonetheless made the Holocaust analogy particularly apt" (Zelizer, 1998, p. 227). Reactions to this photograph also provide an insight into the wider social background of this news event: the concentration camp photographs made their impact on the transnational audiences not as an isolated news story, but as a news story that came on top of many already known reports that described atrocities orchestrated by the Milosevic regime.

How *The New York Times* in 1992 discursively constructed notions of justice and the transnational community could be seen from the editorial "Milosevic Isn't Hitler, But . . ." (*The New York Times*, 1992). The main arguments from this editorial could be summarized in its proposals, which reveal a schematic structure of the editorial from the *description* of the situation ("Serbia organizes another Holocaust in Bosnia"), through the *evaluation* of the news event ("Milosevic is doing to Bosnia what Hitler did to Europe"), to the *conclusion* ("Milosevic is a replica of Hitler and he must be stopped"), as a recommendation for action. In other editorials published by *The New York Times* in 1992, arguments are also structured around the main theme of the Holocaust and related to propositions that affirm that (a) Serbia's crimes in Bosnia are similar to the crimes of Nazi Germany, and (b) Serbia is carrying out a new Holocaust in Bosnia, which (c) must be stopped by the transnational community.

The editorial's arguments and related lexical choices consistently juxtapose the transnational community ("the rest of the world," "Europe," "NATO," "Western Europe," "the European Community, but also the U.S., Russia and the U.N.") and the concept of justice with the semantic field of the Holocaust ("Hitler's genocide against Jews" vs. Milosevic's "version of the Final Solution"). The notion of justice is conceptualized in a similar way: The editorial juxtaposes acts of crimes committed in Bosnia ("the carnage," "the savagery," "ethnic cleansing") with the moral principles and human rights endorsed by the transnational community ("values of civilized nations everywhere"), which must be protected by all means, including "collective military force" ("the world does not lack military options for defending Bosnia"). To emphasize Serbian violations of human rights in Bosnia, *The New York Times* uses the phrases "concentration camps" or "Serb-run concentration camps" continuously throughout the other editorials under scrutiny.

By arguing that the life and freedom of Bosnians must be protected, *The New York Times* endorses an understanding of the transnational community as humankind, the essential social cluster defined by the right to life and right to liberty as universal norms that Heller argues (1987, p. 41) "cannot be both chosen and rejected; they can only be observed and infringed." The newspaper's approach to different people as potential members of the transnational community clearly expresses the spirit of the 1980s and 1990s, with an understanding of the globalizing forces as just objectivities that will bring together citizens of different countries by various means of economy, politics, or military force, because "globalization is not just economic. It is also a political and security phenomenon" (Blair, 1999). Thus, *The*

New York Times editorials ("Debate the Real European Issues," 1992) argue that the effects of globalizing forces could incorporate the post-Communist societies into the rest of the world by means of the global economy since the United States "has an interest in seeing that the old Iron Curtain is not replaced by an equally impenetrable economic barrier" (para. 9) or by force if necessary ("a new international force is desperately needed") (para. 10).

It is important to note that *The New York Times* editorials do not explicitly use the word "justice" as the lexical item to address historical injustices committed by Nazi Germany or by the Milosevic regime. Instead, editorials published by *The Times* employ transnationally shared memories of "civilians transported in sealed buses and railways," "concentration camps," "Hitler's genocide against Jews, Gypsies and Slavs," the "Final Solution," and "Munich in 1938" ("Milosevic Isn't Hitler, But . . .," 1992). This interplay of arguments, lexical choices, and meanings confirms that argumentative strategies in analyzed editorials are "closely connected to the concepts of 'frame,' 'scheme' and 'script'" (Wodak, de Cillia, Reisigl, & Liebhart 2009, p. 34). In all five editorials published in 1992 about "Serb-run concentration camps" in Bosnia, *The New York Times* presents the Milosevic regime as a clear and present danger to the transnational community by directly linking the Milosevic regime and atrocities against Bosnians to the meaning of the Holocaust.

On the other side, editorials published in 1992 by *Politika* discuss the news reports of Serb-run concentration camps in Bosnia not as a direct reaction to the issue of the camps, but in the context of a transnational community radically changed by "the final strengthening of a global militarism" (Stojadinović, 1992a, p. 7) and a possible military intervention by NATO in Bosnia or in Serbia. However, the argumentative and rhetorical strategy applied in *Politika's* editorial does not just simply reject any notion of the existence of these camps. *Politika* recognizes the existence of concentration camps in Bosnia through the "naturalization of discourse type" (Fairclough, 1989) to mitigate responsibility for crimes committed in these camps. This is clearly visible from *Politika's* argumentative strategies, which attempt to normalize shocking pictures of Bosnian Muslims held prisoner by the Bosnian Serb army in a compound in Trnopolje: "Their poor state and Mauthausen-style starvation are due more to the widespread poverty in Bosnia, than to organized torture; probably there is torture in these camps, but the extent of it is a mystery" (Stojadinović, 1992a, p. 7). *Politika's* argumentation normalizes unlawful, immoral, and unjust actions, which should be understood as the expected side effects of the war: "All sides involved in the Bosnian conflict hold their own prisoners in their own way" (Stojadinović, 1992a, p. 7). Justice and the Holocaust are understood here through inhuman and criminal practices "blended with ordinary bureaucratic frames to produce a blended concept of genocide as a bureaucratic operation" (Fauconnier & Turner, 2002, p. 27).

In the other direction, *Politika* is very consistent (Stojadinović, 1992a) in constructing the transnational community as a community tightly controlled by "anxious militarism," supported by "the politics that is thirsty for any news story which demonizes Serbs and justifies the argument that someone should knock some sense into Serbs" (p. 7). For *Politika*, it is not a surprise that "the transnational public (without any evidence) have accused only one culprit [Serbia] and the results are furious requests that the same culprit should be punished" (Stojadinović, 1992a, p. 7). *Politika* presents the transnational community of the 1990s as an entity suppressed and manipulated by "the West," and its media

("fabricated and senseless accusations"), which, again, betrayed the West's own normative ideal of equal people ("a lack of impartiality as a supreme principle of the UN") (Lazanski, 1992, p. 2). As a result, the essence of this transnational community is revealed as hypocrisy: "The West is surprised that war is death and destruction, despite the fact that precisely the American way of waging war was always extremely severe, dreadful, and destructive. Examples: Dresden, Hiroshima, Vietnam, Iraq" (Lazanski, 1992, p. 2).

Other editorials published by *Politika* in 1992 also argue that the unjust attitude of the West is an institutionalized injustice that suppresses the development and realization of an ideal normative transnational community. In *Politika's* argumentation, it is not the Milosevic regime, its politics, and its unjust acts in Bosnia that puts Serbs into a potential war against the West. Rather it is the intrinsic differences between peaceful Serbs and the militarized West that pose a threat to the transnational community, inevitably leading to another war: "While preparations for the final blow against us are finalized we tried all we could do—to provide evidence that we are innocent, we argued, we negotiated, we promised, but transnational distrust in us was growing" (Stojadinović, 1992b, p. 7).

Justice in 1999: The Just War and the Transnational Community

The U.S.-led NATO war against Serbia started on March 24, 1999 and lasted for 78 days, resulting in the withdrawal of all Serbian police and army forces from Kosovo. This war has been regarded as "the paradigm of humanitarian intervention" (Gibbs, 2009), and was semi-officially declared as "the beginnings of a new doctrine of international community" (Blair, 1999). It is important to underline that journalists on both sides of this conflict worked under a heavy influence of propaganda: The Milosevic regime declared a state of war and imposed a strict censorship on media (Goff, 1999), while NATO leaders brought in public relations experts, including the leading PR advisers from the British and American governments who were relocated to NATO headquarters in Belgium during the war (Clark, 2001).

While *New York Times* editorials published in 1992 argued about justice in relation to the transnational community's rejection of another Holocaust, the newspaper's editorials published in 1999 conceptualized justice in relation to the "just war" (Walzer, 1977) supported by the transnational community. *The New York Times'* lexical choices echoed the fact that the UN did not officially endorse this war. For example, the editorial "Air Campaign against Yugoslavia" (*The New York Times*, 1999) discursively designates the U.S.-led NATO war with seven different phrases: "air campaign," "air and missile attacks," "the attacks," "air attacks," "NATO action," "bombing campaign," and "air strikes." These lexical choices reveal that, for *The New York Times*, the U.S.-led NATO war against Serbia is over-lexicalized as an area of "intense preoccupation" (Fowler, Hodge, Kress, & Trew 1979, p. 211). The newspaper's lexical choices resonate with the use of similar phrases in the official statements released by the U.S. government and the NATO leadership, such as "air strikes" or "air operations." These mergers of "meaning-making" choices and realpolitik possibilities are revealed in the words of the NATO's Supreme Allied Commander American General Wesley Clark (2001), who writes in his memoirs about the U.S.-led NATO war against Serbia: "In fact, we were never allowed to call it war. But it was, of course" (p. xxiv).

The New York Times editorials of 1999 ("Air Campaign Against Yugoslavia," 1999) argue that the just war is the last resource for humanitarian action initiated by the transnational community: "The air

attacks are fully warranted"; "Milosevic . . . has ratcheted up his military campaign against the innocent civilians of Kosovo. NATO's aim is to protect those civilians" (para. 2). This argumentation is in line with the modern just war theory, which also conceptualizes justice (in the form of a humanitarian military intervention) as the commonsensical answer of the transnational community to situations where otherwise "there may well be no help unless help comes from outside" (Walzer, 1977, p. 101). Here the newspaper upheld its support to the just war introducing U.S. President Clinton's justification of this war as "the moral imperative of protecting innocent people against killings" ("Air Campaign Against Yugoslavia," 1999, para. 3). The same editorial emphasizes that President Clinton, "who addressed the American people twice on Kosovo yesterday, framed the issue well" (para. 3). The blending of the newspaper's arguments with the president's public justification of the war confirms Chilton's point that "justification can be regarded as a type of linguistic-social action" (2003, p. 96).

The New York Times editorials in 1999 ("Air Campaign Against Yugoslavia," 1999) discursively endorse NATO as an assumed representation of the transnational community ("the unity of the 19-member NATO alliance"), which, after the collapse of the Soviet Union, is the only entity that is able to enforce justice. The newspaper conceptualizes justice through the notion of the just war, where the just war is argued as an action of the transnational community performed by NATO. The newspaper in this editorial (para. 4) presents NATO as discursive objectivity ("formidable air power," "nearly 400 warplanes," "destroyers, cruisers and submarines armed with cruise missiles"), which will fully realize the idea of the transnational community by bringing justice to unprotected civilians in the Balkans. Hence, the editorial also projects NATO into the future where a well-ordered transnational community and justice would be directly related to and dependent on NATO's existence and its action against outlaw states ("it is a reasonable bet that NATO may again be called on to act against ethnic conflicts in Europe in the years ahead") (para. 7). This argumentation turns NATO's purpose into the main corrector of the unstable post-Communist world, where justice directly depends on NATO's military force. This projection of a future transnational community in relation to the current conflict in the Balkans reveals the importance of the conceptualization of time in public deliberations of conflict, and confirms that "past and future can be 'remote', but how remote is a function of discourse representation" (Chilton, 2003, p. 109).

For *Politika*, the U.S.-led NATO war was an illegal war, an immoral enterprise initiated without the approval of the UN. The editorial "Criminals Beyond Compare" (Petrović, 1999b, p. 14) represents *Politika's* argumentation strategies of 1999 where the newspaper continuously attempts to align its arguments with an ideal normative transnational community. *Politika* argues that NATO's war is against the transnational community because it endangers the whole of humanity: "NATO's criminal aggression is against all norms of humanity and international law" (Petrović, 1999b, p. 14). The editorial aims to present Serbia's war with NATO as a just and noble fight of the Serbian nation that "demonstrated a rare composure, an expected patriotism and a historical greatness," the fight for an ideal normative transnational community ("Serbs . . . reject to fulfill the wishes and goals of the new promoters of neo-colonialism") (Petrović, 1999b, p. 14) .

Politika employs a counter-discourse to the transnational media reports to assign moral superiority to "Serbia and its innocent people" and describe it as "one small but proud country" that "refuse[s] to be obedient" and demonstrates "defiance" and "the highest character . . . patience . . . a

strong moral, political and military unity, and a determination to hold out" (Petrović, 1999b, p. 14). Similar arguments are employed in other editorials where injustice and the Kosovo war are presented as a true form of globalization: "The goal of the American administration is not to achieve peace in Kosovo, or a civilized political solution for the conflict, but to punish Serbia and Yugoslavia under the excuse of globalization" (Petrović, 1999a, p. 14). *Politika* is convinced that the Kosovo war will bring injustice to the whole of the transnational community: "The goal of the USA and NATO in the Balkans is completely transparent—to conquer these lands at all costs, before going further to the heart of Europe" (Samardžija, 1999, p. 2).

The newspaper discursively constructs the Western leaders as personifying metaphors of a globalized, unipolar post-Cold War world to give "meaning to the phenomena of the world in humanized, anthropomorphized form" (Wodak et al., 2009, p. 4). Hence, *Politika's* editorials present American President Clinton as an immoral person who "spent some time on drugs" and "discredited himself with his sexual exhibitionism" and a hypocrite who "said he is a responsible man" (Petrović, 1999b, p. 15). The editorial uses similar lexical choices to discredit NATO Secretary General Solana, calling him "the scum of the earth," "a killer," a "former leftist," a "real criminal," and a "really wicked person."

The same editorial does not mention the atrocities committed by Serbian forces in Kosovo, but accuses the transnational media of reporting this war in a biased way: "They present our tragedy as a glamorous world spectacle" (Petrović, 1999b, p. 14). *Politika's* explanation why the current transnational community is not supporting Serbia in its fight for justice against NATO is not only related to the pressure of the hegemonic power of the United States and the apparent immorality of the Western leaders, but also to biases and manipulations disseminated by the transnational media represented by "manufacturers of lies from CNN, SKY and other warmongering offices of NATO" (Petrović, 1999c, p. 14). *Politika* in 1999 understands justice as a notion easily manipulated by advocacy journalism.

Politika also projects causes and consequences of the Kosovo war into the future where there will be no respect for international law, where "all rules will be broken, humanity squashed, and the world dominated by sophisticated lies and manipulations," where "the voice of the UN will mean nothing," and where the UN itself "will be under American control" (Petrović, 1999b, p. 15). For *Politika*, the Kosovo war is not just Serbia's war with NATO, but NATO's demonstration of the future events that expect to happen to the whole transnational community that did not support Serbia in this war ("you will kneel down sooner or later") (Petrović, 1999b, p. 15). The newspaper's attempt to discursively construct Serbia's role in this war as "the 'historically expanding we'" (Wodak et al., 2009) is another attempt to present Serbia as the community that was pushed into war for its heroic defense of a just transnational community.

Justice in 2008: The Notion of Sovereignty and the Transnational Community

While in 1991 the U.S. administration and media unanimously rejected the secession of the Yugoslav republics, in 2008 they supported Kosovo's secession as the way to draw to an end the Yugoslav conflicts, with the justification that "a 21st century sovereignty fetish" (Cohen 2008, para. 3) is incompatible with "the age of globalization" (para. 18). In order to avoid conflict with international law, the European Parliament accepted the recommendation that, while fully supporting the principle of

sovereignty, "it will be up to each EU Member State individually to establish relations with Kosovo in accordance with its national procedures" (Rehn, 2008, para. 6). But Serbia continues to reject Kosovo's independence even after the International Court of Justice delivered its opinion to the UN in 2010 that the declaration of Kosovo's independence was not against international law (ICJ, 2010).

Opinion pieces written by *The New York Times'* Foreign Affairs Editor Roger Cohen exemplify the newspaper's understanding of justice and the role of the transnational community in 2008. Cohen (2008) claims that Kosovo's independence clearly demonstrates that globalization should be understood as the transnational force of justice, which radically reinforces notions of human rights and sovereignty, and consequently, "when a government abuse[s] the basic rights of its citizens through slaughter or ethnic cleansing, sovereignty could in effect be suspended" (para. 12).

In the editorial titled "Trapped in the Past" (*The New York Times*, 2008), the newspaper argues that American leadership, as a demonstration of morality, makes the post-Communist world dependent on the United States. This is clearly visible on the one hand from the editorial's argument that the international organizations have gathered around one country, the United States, as the representatives of a just transnational community that will solve the question of the independent Kosovo ("NATO, the United Nations, the European Union and the United States") (para. 3). On the other hand, the editorial discursively constructs Serbia as an outlaw state that violates human rights and the values recognized by the same transnational community. The editorial argues that Kosovo's independence actually reveals another conflict between the progressive and just Western societies because "every effort has been made to accommodate Serbian fears and sensitivities" and a post-Communist Serbia that is unable to overcome the criminal past of the Milosevic regime ("Belgrade has never demonstrated any remorse for the carnage unleashed by former dictator Slobodan Milosevic on Kosovo's ethnic Albanian") (para. 3).

The New York Times conceptualizes justice in 2008 as the transnational community's judgment on atrocities committed by Serbian forces in Kosovo ten years earlier, supporting the argument that, in the case of Kosovo's independence, "the 'moral imperative' can override all other considerations, including national sovereignty and international law" (Hammond, 2000b, p. 19). Therefore, in 2008 *The New York Times* conceptualized the notion of sovereignty not as a supreme authority over a territory, but as a limited authority of Serbia over its own territory, and justifies Kosovo's independence as the only just response of the transnational community to Kosovo's demands for human rights and the adjustment of advancing values of globalization within post-Communist Eastern Europe.

The New York Times argumentation strategy aims to construct notions of justice, the transnational community, and sovereignty as discursive objectivities that in 2008 could only be observed and accepted as the commonsensical answer to the demands of the post-Communist transnational community. Hence, in the editorial "Serbia votes for the future" (*The New York Times*, 2008), the newspaper argues that post-Communist Serbia must give up its sovereignty "to embrace a more constructive, realistic future" (ibid., para. 6) and to accept Kosovo's independence, which "is no longer negotiable" (ibid., para. 4) in order to join the transnational community ("Washington and Brussels," para. 3). Likewise, justice is argued as a principle that is directly linked to a globalization of Western values and to Serbia's acceptance of that reality ("to ally Serbia with the West"; "cooperation with the United Nations

war crimes tribunal" (ibid., para. 2); "Europe rightly insists"; "Brussels is prepared to sign" (ibid., para. 5). The newspaper understands the Western countries' support for Kosovo's independence as justice delivered not only to Kosovo, but also to Serbia, the Balkans, and the post-Communist transnational community, which confirms that hegemony could be understood "as the expansion of a discourse, or set of discourses into a dominant horizon of social orientation and action" (Torfing, 1999, p. 101). Hence, the newspaper's editorials ("Trapped in the Past," 2008) employs transnational memories of the Balkans as the place where a production of dangerous conflicts is endemic ("anachronistic hatred"; "xenophobia and self-pity"; "passions"; "resentments"; "anti-Western rhetoric"), to support the argument that Serbia could overcome this backward-looking legacy only as a member of the globalized transnational community and with the acceptance that sovereignty is a redundant notion.

The Milosevic regime was ousted in 2000, but editorials published by *Politika* in 2008 testify that, after the Milosevic era, the Serbian media and Serbian politics did not radically change the nationalistic rhetoric toward Kosovo. The argumentation of *Politika* editorials about Kosovo's independence is straightforward: International law protects the sovereignty of all countries and any unilateral act of independence is an act of secession, which should immediately be rejected by the transnational community. Opinion pieces written by Ljiljana Smajlović, the newspaper's editor-in-chief, exemplify *Politika's* argumentation of justice in relation to Kosovo's independence.

For example, the editorial "The Days of Furor" (Smajlović, 2008) argues that the West's recognition of Kosovo's independence is unjust not only to Serbia, but also to the transnational community: "Our defeat is also defeat of the principle that international law protects not only big countries, but small countries as well" (para. 5). *Politika* understands globalization as the unjust and immoral interference into a national space by an actor who is discursively constructed as a generic representation of the West. Hence the newspaper's discursive construction of the collective West as the hegemonic objectivity of post-Communism is closely related to argumentation of unjust actions against Serbia's sovereignty ("Western interventionism," "Serbia . . . defeated by Western leaders," etc.) (Smajlović, 2008, para 5).

For *Politika*, the West's support of the illegal and unjust declaration of Kosovo's independence is a continuation of the West's immoral actions against Serbia, from 1999 ("NATO's illegal, immoral and illegitimate attacks") to 2008 ("the West's support to unilateral declaration of Kosovo's independence is illegal and immoral") (Smajlović, 2008, para. 1). The newspaper's argumentation strategy consistently reinforces Serbia as a deictic center, from where the morally authoritative and independent nation judges and distances itself from morally and legally wrong actions of the West. Hence, the editorial argues for justice, understood as a value that is also related to and guarded by a nation's morality: "We do not have anything to be ashamed of, but we do have something to be proud of" (Smajlović, 2008, para. 9), which will ultimately overcome the ruptures in the national "we" ("defeats"; "violation of sovereignty"; "the theft of our land"). The newspaper aims to convince the readers that even if Serbia is a loser in terms of realpolitik, and not supported by the existing transnational community, Serbia is nevertheless a winner in terms of spiritual and moral values, which define an ideal transnational community.

However, the newspaper argumentation of justice in 2008 avoids a direct mention of any of the

atrocities committed by the Serbian forces in Kosovo in 1998 and 1999. Instead, *Politika* conceptualizes the notion of justice through the argumentation of sovereignty as the myth of international law "to provide new, sanitized narratives which cover up ruptures, war crimes and conflicts which have occurred in the past" (Wodak & Meyer, 2009, p. 19). At the same time, *Politika* discursively constructs Serbian national identity as the nation's anthropomorphic collective body, cruelly and unjustly dismembered by the declaration of Kosovo's independence: "Serbia reminds us of a patient who woke up after a surgical operation. . . . And when the operation was finished, after they chopped-off a part of our territory, the Kosovo wound hurt the most" (Cerovina, 2008, para. 1).

Other editorials published by *Politika* in 2008 also aim to convince readers that Serbia does not just feel the pain of losing Kosovo, but also worries that the West's attack on Serbia's own territory will destroy the ideals of the transnational community and turn the UN as its representative into a "powerless observer of the world's events and the UN Charter into a dead letter" (Lazanski, 2008, para. 4). Hence, *Politika* again argues for an ideal transnational community, which, in a post-Communist globalized world, should be organized as an association of equal societies and people, and without possibility for "the major powers to simply re-draw 'inappropriate' borders however they please, which will lead to new conflicts" (Vasović-Mekina, 2008, para. 5).

Conclusion

This article discusses how newspapers editorials on the Yugoslav conflicts contributed to the process of transforming the idea of a just transnational community into reality. The analysis of language employed in newspapers editorials on the Yugoslav conflicts demonstrates that journalists in the analyzed newspapers editorials conceptualize the transnational community as a discursive community that actively deliberate about justice for civilians whose lives are endangered during times of conflict. As the analyzed editorials argue, this discursive nature of the transnational community enables members of different national or local communities to join in these deliberations.

The article also reveals that while commenting on armed conflicts, journalists conceptualize the notion of the transnational community as a community defined and bounded by its respect for two rights—the right to life and the right to liberty. What this article demonstrates is that newspapers editorials on armed conflicts attempt, through their discursive fight for justice, not only to call the transnational community into being but also to revive the transnational community as a moral and argumentative authority. In this sense, newspaper editorial, as a specific journalistic genre, and language used in newspaper editorials on the Yugoslav conflicts contribute to understanding of the transnational community as an actor morally responsible to protect not only civilians endangered by the armed conflicts, but also responsible to protect the defining norms of the transnational community itself. Further research, which will include media coverage within a variety of journalistic genres of a variety of different conflicts as case studies, could offer more insight into journalists' understanding of the transnational community in times of conflict.

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