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Citation for the original published paper (version of record):

Delić, Z., Basic, G. (2024)

Genocide, joint criminal enterprise, and reconciliation: Interactional analysis of a post-war society in the context of legitimizing transitional capitalism

*Cogent Social Sciences*, 10(1): 2287317

<https://doi.org/10.1080/23311886.2023.2287317>

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Permanent link to this version:

<http://urn.kb.se/resolve?urn=urn:nbn:se:lnu:diva-125891>

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**To cite this article:** Zlatan Delić & Goran Basic (2024) Genocide, joint criminal enterprise, and reconciliation: Interactional analysis of a post-war society in the context of legitimizing transitional capitalism, Cogent Social Sciences, 10:1, 2287317, DOI: [10.1080/23311886.2023.2287317](https://doi.org/10.1080/23311886.2023.2287317)

**To link to this article:** <https://doi.org/10.1080/23311886.2023.2287317>



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Published online: 04 Dec 2023.



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Received: 11 September 2023  
Accepted: 20 November 2023

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## CRIMINOLOGY | REVIEW ARTICLE

# Genocide, joint criminal enterprise, and reconciliation: Interactional analysis of a post-war society in the context of legitimizing transitional capitalism

Zlatan Delić<sup>1</sup> and Goran Basic<sup>2\*</sup>

**Abstract:** The war in Bosnia and Herzegovina (1992–1995) is the historic background of this paper, as produced in the documents presented during international and national trials concerning war crimes committed during this period. A literature review forms the analytical basis and contains various empirical and theoretical studies from the fields of philosophy, war sociology, and social epistemology. The aim of this paper is to analyse the normative orientations and social values that affect (1) the feelings of moral and social understanding (or non-understanding) after the genocide and the joint criminal enterprise in Bosnia and Herzegovina in the context of legitimizing transitional capitalism, (2) the actions of individuals, organizations, and states as well as the entire social community in the post-war society, and (3) the process of reconciliation and trust in post-war society. The analysis makes evident the usual tendency in a post-war society to deify one's own ethnic (religious) group, while the consequence of such false self-infatuation with "our" collective is that the "other" that is not ours becomes undesirable. It must be, as evidence of patriotism and unconditional emotional loyalty to "our holy issue", wiped out for good. Ethnic cleansings, joint criminal enterprises, and genocides thus become a normal means of ethnopolitical—i.e. biopolitical—"management of differences". At the same time, ethnocorruption and ethnobanditry can erroneously be qualified as the least transparent and, for social and criminological research, the most difficult phenomena (or manifestations) of social pathology. The difficulty lies in the fact that ethnocorruption and ethnobanditry are in many respects related and intertwined with the simultaneous institutional and organizational processes of regulating (or not regulating) the economic and political globalization and transfer of ownership during the transition from socialist self-management to a new type of economy.

**Subjects:** Regional Development; Adult Education and Lifelong Learning; Sociology

**Keywords:** co-existence; peaceful potential; power; global knowledge society; neoliberalism; ethnopolitics

### 1. Introduction

Genocide and joint criminal enterprise carried out against the Bosnian-Herzegovinian civilian population from 1992 to 1995 – was directly aimed at towards eradicating Bosniaks, Bosnianhood and the

state of Bosnia and Herzegovina from the geographic map of Europe (Case No.: IT-98-33; Case No.: IT-09-92; Case No.: IT-95-5/18; Case No.: S 1 K 014264 13 Krž; Case No.: IT-05-88; Case No.: X-KRŽ-07/386; Case No.: 2 BvR 1290/99; Case No.: BayObLG: 17; Case No.: 3 St 20/96).<sup>1</sup> The complexity of this war had a great impact on the processes of democratic transition and the consolidation of the state and society even after the Dayton Accords in 1995. The Bosnian—Herzegovinian society and state, after the end of armed aggression from Serbia and Croatia (i.e., after the Dayton Accords of 1995–2023), have a complex institutional structure: entities (Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Republika Srpska), districts, and an international High Representative (the purpose of the High Representative is to oversee the civilian implementation of the Dayton agreement).

This study relates to the interactional traditions of sociology, in which a practical action of an individual and/or a group, along with verbal, written, and visual presentations of such actions (and others) in and out of the context, is considered discursive, narrative, and based on experience. The general analytical starting point of this study is based on interpersonal, interorganizational, and interstate interactions but is influenced by (1) an ethnomethodological view of how individuals, organizations, and states present their social reality (Blumer, 1986 [1969]; Garfinkel, 1984 [1967]; Potter, 2007 [1996]) and (2) a concept of the term “social capital” as a basis of the analysis of the legitimization of transitional capitalism (Basic & Delić, 2019; Bourdieu, 1977, 1990, 1992a, 1992b; Coleman, 1990; García, 2010; Petrov, 2015). In addition, the concept of reconciliation is an especially important element of the analysis of the idea of trust and reconciliation after the genocide and the joint criminal enterprise in Bosnia and Herzegovina (1992–1995).

Earlier studies of post-war milieus focused partly on the analysis of interactional aspects of interpersonal, interorganizational, and interstate discursive production of narratives (Applegate, 2012; Basic, 2013, 2015; Cehajic et al., 2008; Hatzfeld, 2005a, 2005b; Sampson, 2003). However, these authors did not home in on interactive production or how individuals, organizations, and states present their social reality in relation to the idea of trust and reconciliation in the context of legitimizing transitional capitalism. With this article, we seek to fill this analytical vacuum by analysing relevant empirical and theoretical literature from the fields of philosophy, war sociology, and social epistemology. The aim is to analyse the normative orientations and social values that affect (1) the feelings of moral and social understanding (or non-understanding) after the genocide and joint criminal enterprise in Bosnia and Herzegovina in the context of legitimizing transitional capitalism, (2) the actions of individuals, organizations, and states as well as the entire social community in the post-war society, and (3) the process of reconciliation and trust in post-war society. The overall research question asked is, whether “legitimizing transitional capitalism” is a process that is tantamount to a crime against humanity, tantamount to war crimes, tantamount to genocide, a process that aides and abets sociocide? The research questions more precisely are actually deeper: How is the argument made that our contemporary course of the world only appears as a natural phenomenon rather than an oriented course of social action? How is the argument made that trust and reconciliation after war in the context of legitimizing transitional capitalism is a process of symbolic construction and state protection of collective ethnic and religious identities?

### **1.1. Methodological starting points**

This narrative (or traditional) literature review is based on a qualitative method (Basic, 2021, pp. 26–28; Machi & Brenda, 2016; Onwuegbuzie & Frels, 2016; Silverman, 2006, 2015). The empirical and theoretical studies from the fields of philosophy, war sociology, and social epistemology and empirical sequences in these studies that are reanalyzed in the present analysis, are of a secondary nature (Basic, 2021, pp. 26–28; Nilsson et al., 2023; Wästerfors et al., 2013).

The choice of the relevant empirical and theoretical studies and the primary analysis of the empirical material in these studies were performed in relation to this literature review aim and research questions. The corpus of studies that were reviewed and analysed in this literature review are presented in following table (Table 1).

**Table 1. The corpus of studies that were reviewed and analysed in this literature review**

<b>Themes related to the purpose of the study and research questions</b>	<b>Reviewed: empirical and theoretical studies from the fields of philosophy, war sociology, and social epistemology and empirical sequences in these studies</b>	<b>Reviewed: the documents presented during international and national trials concerning war crimes committed during the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina (1992–1995) and other relevant documents for the study</b>
Introduction	Basic (2013), Basic (2015); Delić et al. (2018); Garfinkel (1984[1967]); Blumer (1986 [1969]); Potter (2007[1996]); Bourdieu (1977), Bourdieu (1990) (Bourdieu, 1992a, 1992b); Coleman (1990); García (2010); Petrov (2015); Basic and Delić (2019); Sampson (2003); Hatzfeld (2005a), Hatzfeld (2005b); Cehajic et al. (2008); Applegate (2012).	Case No.: IT-98-33; Case No.: IT-09-92; Case No.: IT-95-5/18; Case No.: S 1 K 014264 13 Krž; Case No.: IT-05-88; Case No.: X-KRŽ-07/386; Case No.: 2 BvR 1290/99; Case No.: BayObLG: 17; Case No.: 3 St 20/96.
Conflict, forgiveness and reconciliation	Simmel (1908 [1955]; Bernard (1950); Simpson (1955); Basic (2013), (Basic, 2015; Ricoeur (2004); Derrida (2004); Sampson (2003); Hatzfeld (2005a), (Hatzfeld, 2005b, (Hatzfeld, 2008, Hatzfeld (2005b); Cehajic et al. (2008); Applegate (2012); Cordeiro-Rodrigues (2018); Schaap (2006); Janover (2005).	
Ideologies of reconciliation	Dimitrijevic (2011); Basic (2013), (Basic, 2015; Ricoeur (2004); Derrida (2004); Christie (2004); Hatzfeld (2005a), (Hatzfeld, 2005b, (Hatzfeld, 2008.	Case No.: IT-98-33; Case No.: IT-09-92; Case No.: IT-95-5/18; Case No.: S 1 K 014264 13 Krž; Case No.: IT-05-88; Case No.: X-KRŽ-07/386; Case No.: 2 BvR 1290/99; Case No.: BayObLG: 17; Case No.: 3 St 20/96.
Social capital, trust, ethnocorruption, and ethnobanditry	Willke (2007); Dewey (2010); Lazaroiu (2013); Kaldor (2013); Broome (2014); Couldry and Hepp (2016); Ohmae (1998); Guenin (2005); Moldoveanu and Baum (2011); Pap (2003), (Pap, 2017; Lavić (2014); Livada (2006); Olimid (2011); García (2010); Billig (1995); Malešević (2002), (Malešević, 2006, (Malešević, 2013; McIntyre (2008); Mujanović (2016); Basic and Delić (2018), (Basic & Delić, 2019; Basic et al. (2019).	

(Continued)

**Table 1. (Continued)**

Themes related to the purpose of the study and research questions	Reviewed: empirical and theoretical studies from the fields of philosophy, war sociology, and social epistemology and empirical sequences in these studies	Reviewed: the documents presented during international and national trials concerning war crimes committed during the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina (1992–1995) and other relevant documents for the study
New vocabularies of globalization and transition	Baronchelli et al. (2006); Bigon and Njoh (2015); Figal (2012); Fernando et al. (2013); Tzanelli and Korstanje (2016); Malešević (2002), Malešević (2006), Malešević (2013); Mujanović (2016); Radeljić (2017); Willke (2007); Dewey (2010); Lazaroiu (2013); Kaldor (2013); Broome (2014); Couldry and Hepp (2016).	
Ethnoclerical collective representation of citizens	Haller (2006); Malešević (2002), Malešević (2006), Malešević (2013); Mujanović (2016); Basic and Delić (2018), Basic and Delić (2019); Basic et al. (2019); Pap (2003), Pap (2017); Livada (2006); Lavić (2014).	
Normalizing ethnocorruption and ethnobanditry	Willke (2007); Dewey (2010); Lazaroiu (2013); Kaldor (2013); Broome (2014); Couldry and Hepp (2016); Garcia (2010); Livada (2007); Schwarzmantel (2009); Ravlić (2013); Basic et al. (2019); Basic & Delić accepted.	Case No.: IT-98-33; Case No.: IT-09-92; Case No.: IT-95-5/18; Case No.: S 1 K 014264 13 Krž; Case No.: IT-05-88; Case No.: X-KRŽ-07/386; Case No.: 2 BvR 1290/99; Case No.: BayObLG: 17; Case No.: 3 St 20/96.
Victims of ethnopolitics	Brljavac (2012); Tufekčić (2009); Neustroev et al. (2018); Bourdieu (1977), Bourdieu (1990) (Bourdieu, 1992a, 1992b); Billig (1995); Malešević (2002), Malešević (2006), Malešević (2013); McIntyre (2008); Mujanović (2016).	
Collective production of hatred towards the other	Malešević (2002), Malešević (2006), Malešević (2013); Mujanović (2016); Basic and Delić (2018, Basic & Delić, 2019); Basic et al. (2019); Russel Gray (2003); Billig (1995); McIntyre (2008); Pap (2003), Pap (2017); Livada (2006); Lavić (2014); Olimid (2011).	

(Continued)

Themes related to the purpose of the study and research questions	Reviewed: empirical and theoretical studies from the fields of philosophy, war sociology, and social epistemology and empirical sequences in these studies	Reviewed: the documents presented during international and national trials concerning war crimes committed during the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina (1992–1995) and other relevant documents for the study
Genocide, joint criminal enterprise, and the (non) violent “us”	Hylland Eriksen (1993), Hylland Eriksen (2007); Billig (1995); Malešević (2002), Malešević (2006), Malešević (2013); Katunarić (2003); Mujanović (2016); Basic and Delić (2018), Basic and Delić (2019), accepted; Basic et al. (2019); Bojanić (2016); Schwarzmantel (2009); Ravlić (2013).	Case No.: IT-98-33; Case No.: IT-09-92; Case No.: IT-95-5/18; Case No.: S 1 K 014264 13 Krž; Case No.: IT-05-88; Case No.: X-KRŽ-07/386; Case No.: 2 BvR 1290/99; Case No.: BayObLG: 17; Case No.: 3 St 20/96.
Social capital and criticism of socioeconomic reality	Bourdieu (1977), Bourdieu (1990) (Bourdieu, 1992b), (Bourdieu, 1992a); Coleman (1990); García (2010); Petrov (2015); Basic and Delić (2019); Ignjatović (2011); Delić et al. (2018); Ferragina and Arrigoni (2017).	SCP (2018).
Conclusion	Putnam (1993), Putnam (1995), Putnam (2000), Putnam (2015); Putnam and Goss (2002); Huntington (2002); Billig (1995); McIntyre (2008); Malešević (2002), Malešević (2006), Malešević (2013); Mujanović (2016); Bar-Tal and Hameiri (2020); Bourdieu (1977), Bourdieu (1990) (Bourdieu, 1992a, 1992a),	Case No.: IT-98-33; Case No.: IT-09-92; Case No.: IT-95-5/18; Case No.: S 1 K 014264 13 Krž; Case No.: IT-05-88; Case No.: X-KRŽ-07/386; Case No.: 2 BvR 1290/99; Case No.: BayObLG: 17; Case No.: 3 St 20/96; Case No.: IT-00-39 & 40/1.

## 2. Conflict, forgiveness and reconciliation

Simmel (1908 [1955]) describes social interaction as mutual interaction among individuals, organizations, and states—a reciprocity that can accept and show different and separate social forms (Bernard, 1950; Simpson, 1955). *Conflict* and *reconciliation* are, for example, special forms of interaction that becomes visible only when analysing the relations between an individual and a context/community after the end of war (Basic, 2013, pp. 52–54; 2015, pp. 109–112).

Simmel (1908 [1955]) claims that conciliatory spirit is an emotional attitude that aims to stop a conflict, unlike the potential combative spirit that aims to maintain a conflict. Simmel reasons that conciliatory spirit is a way of avoiding fighting from the very start and that reconciliation appears only after the fighting has already ended (Simmel, 1908 [1955], p. 117). Forgiveness is a key element in achieving reconciliation, and Simmel describes it as an exchange of emotions between individuals. His hypothesis (1908[1955], p. 118) is that when reconciliation happens, feelings of peace and consensus replace the feelings of enmity and conflict. Simmel (1908 [1955], pp. 121–122) describes reconciliation and irreconcilability as emotions that need external conditions to be actualized and argues that those who cannot forget certain events are not capable of forgiveness; in other words, not all can be reconciled fully. Simmel (1908 [1955], pp. 121–122) interprets this situation as “the most horrible irreconcilability” because all reasons for

reconciliation have disappeared from the mind of the unforgiving person (Basic, 2013, pp. 52–54; 2015, pp. 109–112).

Paul Ricoeur (2004, p. 460) claims that forgiveness is possible only when someone is assumed to be the guilty party. Ricoeur (2004, p. 466) also raises the issue of unforgivable crimes. He considers “unforgivable crimes” to be criminal acts characterized by the great suffering of the victim and that can be attributed to identified perpetrators and involve a personal connection between the victim and the perpetrator (Basic, 2013, pp. 52–54; 2015, pp. 109–112).

If we consider the views of forgiveness held by Simmel and Ricoeur, we can pose the following question: Can every crime be forgiven? Jacques Derrida (2004, pp. 34–40, pp. 56–57), as did Ricoeur (2004, p. 468), points out the connection between punishing and forgiving. According to Ricoeur (2004, p. 470), after committing a crime, the perpetrator is usually punished with a symbolic and actual label of injustice that was committed against another—the victim (e.g., with legal prosecution). At the same time, Ricoeur (2004, p. 478) believes that punishment leaves marginal space for forgiveness because of unconditionality, among other things, which he says is an important condition for forgiveness. Derrida (2004, p. 45) also believes that unconditional forgiveness is practically impossible. In this context, the following two questions are especially interesting: (1) Should a victim forgive a person who does not acknowledge their crime, and (2) Should the right to forgive belong only to the victim or can it belong to someone else without any direct relation to the crime (e.g., an institution; Basic, 2013, pp. 52–54; 2015, pp. 109–112)?

Ricoeur (2004, pp. 478–479) makes a normative statement that the victim should forgive and try to be considerate of the pride of the accused and simultaneously expect a later confession from the accused. Derrida (2004, p. 44) wrote the following in relation to a woman whose husband was killed: “If anyone has the right to forgive, it is only the victim, and not a tertiary institution”. Yet it appears that forgiveness also has an institutional side. We at times witness how politicians and leaders of religious communities apologize for acts that they did not personally commit. The question arises: Do these individuals have the right to present an apology, and if yes, who has the right to forgive? Should a representative of an institution forgive, or should it be the victim who was personally affected? Ricoeur (2005[2000]: 580–593) claims that forgiveness should not be institutionalized. He is of the opinion that only the affected victim can forgive (Basic, 2013, pp. 52–54; 2015, pp. 109–112).

In contrast to Ricoeur (2004, pp. 580–593), the earlier studies of post-war society show that without institutions, it is hard to offer individual forgiveness (Applegate, 2012; Basic, 2015; Cehajic et al., 2008; Cordeiro-Rodrigues, 2018; Hatzfeld, 2005a, 2005b, 2008; Sampson, 2003). Earlier studies of post-war communities have pointed out the structural violence and accompanying processes of reconciliation, including in South Africa (Cordeiro-Rodrigues, 2018; Sampson, 2003), Rwanda (Applegate, 2012; Hatzfeld, 2005a, 2005b, 2008), and Bosnia and Herzegovina (Basic, 2013; Cehajic et al., 2008). However, in reality, participants and structures overlap (Simmel, 1908–[1955]; Basic, 2013, pp. 52–54; 2015, pp. 109–112; Janover, 2005; Schaap, 2006).

### 3. Ideologies of reconciliation

The attitude of international courts and local courts in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia towards those accused of war crimes in Bosnia and Herzegovina has left a “mark” on the potential forgiveness and forgiving by the victim after a series of war crimes (Case No.: IT-98-33; Case No.: IT-09-92; Case No.: IT-95-5/18; Case No.: S 1 K 014264 13 Krž; Case No.: IT-05-88; Case No.: X-KRŽ-07/386; Case No.: 2 BvR 1290/99; Case No.: BayObLG: 17; Case No.: 3 St 20/96). Nenad Dimitrijevic (2011) argues, for example, that the surrender of political leaders from Serbia (e.g., Slobodan Milošević) to the International Criminal Court for the former Yugoslavia in The Hague was important specifically from a legal perspective. Dimitrijevic appears to believe that the legal punishment of crimes also forms part of the conditions necessary for forgiving and that for that reason alone, institutional forgiveness is important (Basic, 2015, pp. 109–112).



The texts of Ricoeur (2004) and Derrida (2004) show that ideologies of reconciliation are most often generally and imprecisely formulated. These ideologies frequently exist at two levels— institutional and individual. The institutional level is commonly founded on the efforts of current governments or regimes, where economic and administrative conditions of work affect the quality and the result of work (for example, of a tribunal or a truth commission). The individual level (or the interpersonal level) is often contingent on the efforts of the victim to forgive. This level is based on the following questions: how the victim and the perpetrator, through inevitable interaction, will relinquish their former roles, and how the perpetrator will ask for forgiveness and the victim will manage to forgive. Generally, there is no institutional background at this level, and the individuals are highly dependent on their own capacity to forgive the earlier crimes and to reconcile (Basic, 2013, pp. 52–54; 2015, pp. 109–112).

Nils Christie (2004, pp. 88–100) questions the importance of truth commissions and international tribunals when it comes to reconciliation (for example, the Hague Tribunal and the War Crime Court in Bosnia and Herzegovina). Christie claims that by punishing war criminals, the tribunals are “killing” the ideology behind the crime. He supports his reasoning with the help of the Nuremberg Tribunal, where German Nazi leaders were accused and the German Nazi ideology was convicted and punished by sentencing of individuals who participated in the crimes. Christie’s point is that better reconciliation results are achieved with truth commissions than with the legal punishment of individuals who are singled out as war criminals (perpetrators described as “monsters”)—all under the condition that the work of truth commissions is carried out without the presence of economic or political issues that could hinder the commission’s work (Basic, 2013, pp. 52–54; 2015, pp. 109–112).

Jean Hatzfeld (2005a, 2005b, 2008) analyses the retold experiences of the survivors of war in Rwanda in the 1990s. He mentions international tribunals and truth commissions throughout the analysis. These are, of course, institutions. An interesting question is why the truth commissions were not organized in Bosnia and Herzegovina, in keeping with the models from South Africa or Rwanda (Basic, 2013, pp. 52–54; 2015, pp. 109–112).

Reconciliation is a wide-ranging and interesting topic of our analysis. The perspective of cited theoreticians can at times be abstract and normative as well as distanced from the complicated and occasionally contradictory interpersonal, interorganizational, and interstate experiences. Nevertheless, they are useful for our aims as we try to understand and analyse the normative orientations and social values after the genocide and joint criminal enterprise in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

#### **4. Social capital, trust, ethnocorruption, and ethnobanditry**

In the 1980s and 1990s, the word “trust” became an integral part of what we in the social sciences call “social capital” (Broome, 2014; Couldry & Hepp, 2016; Dewey, 2010; Kaldor, 2013; Lazaroiu, 2013; Willke, 2007). The concept of social capital has often been discussed but rarely criticized. After the collapse of the neoliberal paradigm of knowledge, this acceptance contributed to the social sciences and humanities having to face the obligation of once again re-examining the entire terminological architecture on which they had been building what was until recently called the “global knowledge society” (Willke, 2007; Dewey, 2010; Lazaroiu, 2013; Kaldor, 2013; Broome, 2014; Couldry & Hepp, 2016). The trust in the neoliberal paradigm of globalization, popular after the collapse of the Berlin Wall in 1989, was understood in the Balkans as trust in the great promise of “democracy”: the trust in the arising multi-party parliamentary systems in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Slovenia, Croatia, Serbia, Montenegro, Macedonia, Kosovo, and Vojvodina. Some of the most courageous minds of our times took as their subject matter serious analyses of the disappointment arising from the betrayal (failure) of the great promise of globalization: that the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century would take place against a backdrop of a “world without borders” (Ohmae, 1998).

When we speak of “trust”, similar to terms such as “forgiveness”, “conciliation”, “reconciliation”, and “co-existence”, we must keep in mind a significant self-referential note. Namely, the word “trust” is part of a group of rhetorical expressions (figures) that are impossible to criticize. Why? Because such criticism, in one of the versions of its meaning, could easily be used against those who offer such terminological criticism and insist on it (Guenin, 2005; Moldoveanu & Baum, 2011). On the contrary, we believe that insisting on the social epistemological—terminological re-examination of the meaning of “trust” and “reconciliation” after genocide and a joint criminal enterprise—should be seen as an integral part of the new program of work in social sciences.

The main motivation in writing this paper was a manifold disappointment: (1) disappointment in the great promise of neoliberal globalization that a free borderless democratic world would come into being, (2) disappointment because of economic, political, safety, demographic, ecological, and other negative consequences of the dominance of ethnic politics, which has transformed into ethnocorruption and ethnobanditry, and (3) disappointment in the work and role of an international community that did not sanction the main ethnopolitical actors of war in a timely way (Olimid, 2011). Instead, these people were even rewarded and became the main actors of peace. The result has been *ethnocorruption* (Lavić, 2014; Pap, 2003, 2017) and *ethnobanditry* (Livada, 2006), the vicious cycle of violence we recognize also as a vicious cycle of robbery caused by the leadocracy and corruption that occurred after peace was established. The neoliberal promise of freedom, progress, democracy, prosperity, and development for all was given in the name of the idea that, after the destruction of socialism, “markets” would lead to the establishment of new and more *fair* relations in all spheres of society, and, first and foremost, in economy and politics. In the 30 years that have passed since the moment that promise first was given, it has become clear that it was a *great fraud* and that all those who believed in this promise were naïve and have, we can say, even become victims of their own naivety.

The great disappointment is also a disappointment in the transitional politics of constructing and reconstructing collective identities—a disappointment in the ethnopolitics in the Balkans (Olimid, 2011). These ethnopolitics have completely neglected and suppressed the issue of social justice and fairness. Therefore, after 30 years, we can clearly see today that it is precisely these identity politics that have been keeping prisoner all inhabitants of this region who have not (as of now) left it. In this paper, we are thus writing about manifold disappointments, of great disappointments, of a series of simultaneous disappointments. These are (a) the disappointment in the ethnoclerical nationalist politics of identity that have, even within their own vocabulary (terminology), led to the suppression of the idea of fairness and the idea of “public good”, and (b) the disappointments that arose because of an unfulfilled promise of neoliberal globalization. Last but not least, we also write about (c) disappointment in the overall role of the “international community” during the war and its role and function in peacetime. The international community is precisely the actor that has enabled the normalization of ethnocorruption and ethnobanditry, having treated the main actors of war as essential and as the single, exclusive holders of national legitimacy. It is thus necessary to speak of ethnocorruption and ethnobanditry, the two faces of the post-socialist politics of identity, from the Bosnian-Herzegovinian geo-epistemological perspective and as integral parts of establishing crony capitalism instead of liberal capitalism (García, 2010) in the Balkans. Namely, ethnocorruption (Lavić, 2014; Pap, 2003, 2017) and ethnobanditry (Livada, 2006), must be seen and analysed as integral parts of transnational and cross-border logics, politics, and practices of transition and privatization of public goods.

Ethnocorruption and ethnobanditry can be explored as the crucial structural moment of creating transitional organized crime in post-socialist states. The first victims of ethnocorruption and ethnobanditry are common sense, moral, and goodness. Individual and citizenship rights of individuals are erased, and there are corrupting corporative attacks made on educational and medical institutions. The individual’s right to be different from a group (ethnic or religious tribe) is questioned. The consequence of it all is the loss of contact with social reality, the collapse of rational critical thinking, and the disappearance of objective and self-critical studies (Lavić, 2014;

Livada, 2006; Pap, 2003, 2017). It is, in the name of ethnoreligious “protection of vital national interests of our holy collective”, happening in front of our eyes and in our immediate vicinity.

In this process, one’s own ethnic (religious) group is deified, and as a consequence of this false self-infatuation in *our* collective, the *other* who is not one of ours becomes the undesirable *hell*. This undesirable must be wiped off the face of the Earth as proof of our patriotism and unreserved emotional loyalty to *our holy matter* (Basic & Delić, 2018, 2019; Basic et al., 2019; Billig, 1995; Malešević, 2002, 2006, 2006; McIntyre, 2008; Mujanović, 2016). Ethnic cleansing, joint criminal enterprises, and genocides thus become a normal means of ethno-political—i.e., biopolitical – *management of differences*.

At the same time, ethnocorruption and ethnobanditry could be erroneously qualified as the least transparent and, for social and criminology studies, the most difficult phenomena (or manifestations) of social pathology. The difficulty lies in the fact that ethnocorruption and ethnobanditry are related and intertwined in many respects with the simultaneous institutional and organizational processes of regulating (or not regulating) economic and political globalization and ownership transfer during the transition from socialist self-governing into a new type of economy. This does not concern, however, the new economy of knowledge and skills or the market economy that, at least in economic theories, functions on the foundations of social responsibility. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, and Serbia, after the collapse of Yugoslavia, in the name of the global liberal break with the so-called socialist (command) economy, the main aim was often to establish a *new negotiated economy* that leads to legitimizing the most unscrupulous form of *crony capitalism*.

### 5. New vocabularies of globalization and transition

To make implementation of this new negotiated economy possible, new social and political syntax and new vocabularies of globalization and transition first needed to be conceived (Baronchelli et al., 2006; Bigon & Njoh, 2015).<sup>2</sup> It was necessary to legitimize new and progressive language practices in economy, while at the same time introducing entirely conservative and revisionist narratives into the politics of identity and the Balkan sciences of shared or separate history of each ethnicity and religious group (Malešević, 2002, 2006, 2013; Mujanović, 2016; Radeljić, 2017).

In addition, it was necessary at the highest metatheoretical levels in textbooks of micro- and macroeconomics to nominally depoliticize Balkan versions (variances) of the new economy of knowledge that were considered to represent a cognitive foundation for establishing global liberal capitalism (Broome, 2014; Couldry & Hepp, 2016; Dewey, 2010; Kaldor, 2013; Lazaroiu, 2013; Willke, 2007). Moreover, this new liberal economy, which once swore by the omnipotence of the “free market”, had to be nominally separated from the influence of political parties. By nominally separating the newly established Balkan economic politics and practices from the key processes of privatization (transition) of collective ownership over the means of production, involved actors tried to conceal and mask the structural connection between economic and political processes.

Disciplines such as “political economy” or “sociology of political parties”, which could allow for objective analysis of the impossibility of strictly separating economy and politics, were banished from the universities in the Balkans, where the Bologna Process was implemented. Syllabi intended for researching economy, politics, and society have been replaced with superficial commercial and corporative syllabi that lack critical thinking. Instead, Balkan syllabi in the fields of economy and society now are primarily concerned with meeting a normative demand oriented towards the mandatory production of “satisfaction” and “success” at any cost. This is the aim, independently of the fact that the economic and political transitions—transitions from socialism to capitalism—in the Balkans have morphed into a horror story with tragicomic elements.

### 6. Ethnoclerical collective representation of citizens

Cross-border ethnic and clerical politics of collective representation (presentation) of citizens have been normalized, while the ethnic leaders who have been successful for decades in cooperation

then united and together loudly claimed that co-existence in Bosnia is impossible. They believe that every ethnoreligious group in Bosnia, besides Bosnian Bosniaks and other Bosnian-Herzegovinian citizens not sorted in accordance with ethnoreligious classification criteria, must have a separate territorial identity (Basic & Delić, 2018, 2019; Basic et al., 2019; Haller, 2006; Malešević, 2002, 2006, 2013; Mujanović, 2016). Such an anti-Bosnian narrative claims that there are no Bosnian Serbs or Bosnian Croats, with the intent to show in practice that Bosnia and Herzegovina is an “impossible state”. This status is designated as opposed to neighbouring states that are considered possible, even though the Serb-Serbian ethnopolitics demonstrates that Serbs have managed to obtain in Dayton two republics for themselves (the Republic of Serbia and Republika Srpska).

Such ethnoclerical politics, such ridiculous theories and practices of presentation and representation of collective identities after genocide and after a joint criminal enterprise, can be viewed and analysed as case studies of ethnocorruption and ethnobanditry (Lavić, 2014; Livada, 2006; Pap, 2003, 2017).

How do we define ethnocorruption? In multinational communities such as the Bosnian-Herzegovinians, the power over different peoples often was maintained by antagonizing and instrumentalizing certain peoples or ethnic minorities. Similarly, by conferring privileges and with the help of agreements hidden from the public, *ethnocorruption* is established. In that sense, the newer Bosnian-Herzegovinian history and the histories of neighbouring countries are full of examples of controversial individuals who have, tentatively speaking, “crossed over to the other side” (Lavić, 2014, p. 211). In the lexicon of sociological terms (Lavić, 2014), the term “ethnocorruption” is described as encompassing at least two aspects of exploiting (one’s own) ethnic or national affiliation. The *first* is structurally similar to nepotism because the person addresses a powerful “fellow national” or an “ethnarch” as a relative to gain advantages that they otherwise would not have (or, to be more precise, that should not belong to them based on their ethnicity). The *second* is the aspect of ethnocorruption, analogous to a situation when a parliamentarian betrays his electoral base for his own benefit, which happens quite often in Bosnian-Herzegovinian political life. Therefore, a member of an ethnic or national community builds their social position (status) based on affiliation, followed by self-interest, even to the detriment of their ethnic community or people. In fact, this second aspect also has a general form, as in situations when “patriotism” is instrumentalized for private use. Of course, we cannot consider as ethnocorruption examples from daily life when laws give certain privileges to members of minorities for their own protection (Lavić, 2014, p. 211).

Since the cited lexicon of sociological terms was compiled in 2014 (so before many of the corruption and cronyism-privatisation scandals came to light in Serbia, Croatia, and Bosnia and Herzegovina), it has been interesting that the empirical foundation of terms is related to war and post-war events from the 1990s. Such examples include: ethnically controlled “dead people voting”; scandals related to organized ethnic human trafficking; voter trade; trade in double, multiple, or parallel identities; and trade in ethnic or religious influences. Security issues related to organized crime and corruption at the highest levels are probably shaking the very foundations of the identity politics of these states as well as the very foundations of the triply separated (and triply united) ethnoreligious constructions of the collective identities of the inhabitants of Bosnia and Herzegovina. These foundations are being reproduced, with the help of the institutionalized normalization of ethnocorruption and ethnobanditry, in the name of the false *protection of vital national interests of their people*. Meanwhile, these very people are leaving the region in droves, looking for salvation abroad. Furthermore, the foundations of ethnopolitics are shaken by the very suspicious ethnic interpretation of the letter and the spirit of the Dayton Accords that only superficially stopped the war against the Bosnian-Herzegovinian society and state.

This region has had the misfortune of living for decades in a politically unstable environment where (1) genocidal and/or “negotiated” wars were led in the name of the cross-border ethnic

*protection of vital national interests* and (2) the post-war robberies of public goods, as integral parts of the newly created transitional capitalism, remain concealed from the post-war public, primarily because the very same cross-border networked multidecade *protectors of vital national interests* often participate as main actors in or organize such robberies. With this misfortune, our region finds itself in a cognitive vacuum, and any similarly situated region risks this, as well.

### 7. Normalizing ethnocorruption and ethnobanditry

How could the Bosnian society develop after genocide and joint criminal enterprise to something like that? Did the socialist self-governing totalitarianism headed by the communist party just change its face, leaving too much space for the thriving of a kind of a post-modern ethnocorruption? Were canton or county ethnobanditry and *ours* and *theirs* structurally intertwined (mutually distancing and mutually approaching) Serbian-Croatian or Croatian-Serbian negotiated microfascisms that have led to the *death of the first person plural*?

How did this social, legal, and political normalization of these perverse strategic alliances between former communists and the newly established ethnoclerical and nationalist (i.e., new capitalist) structures of power even develop in the territory of former Yugoslavia? The reasons that the connection between (1) the logic of neoliberal globalization and (2) the regional politics of crony privatization of ownership have not been researched in the economic and political sciences are not clear (Broome, 2014; Couldry & Hepp, 2016; Dewey, 2010; Kaldor, 2013; Lazaroiu, 2013; Willke, 2007). The basic hypothesis of our studies is that ethnocorruption and ethnobanditry have become “successful” Balkan versions of establishing neoliberal crony capitalism (García, 2010) in this part of the world precisely because the population of this region did not recognize the danger of the “Ustasha-Chetnik syndrome” in the 1990s (Livada, 2007). Indeed, even today, 30 years later, it does not recognize the danger of the cross-border politics of identity that do not give up on the genocidal intent to divide Bosnia into “ethnically clean” territories.

The lack of will of the intellectual community in Croatia and Serbia to address the limitations of their own identity politics—the negative consequences of the Great Serbian and Great Croatian politics in regards to Bosnia and its mixed population—resulted in a change of the “possible future” of this whole region into endless necropolitics, ethnobanditry, and ethnocorruption. The so-called *humane resettlement of population* was arranged by a leader from Serbia (Slobodan Milošević) and a leader from Croatia (Franjo Tuđman) before the start of the war in the 1990s. In the territory of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina, this “arrangement” led very soon to the monstrous sufferings of civilians from ethnic cleansing, persecutions, mass deportations, concentration camps, mass executions, systematic rape, unselective shelling, and sniper attacks on men, women, and children. It is enough to mention the almost 4-year Chetnik siege and artillery assault on Sarajevo, the capital, by daily attacks from several hundred artillery weapons installed in the surrounding hills. From 1992 to 1995, hundreds of thousands of large-calibre artillery shells unselectively targeted both civilians and civilian facilities (Case No.: IT-98-33; Case No.: IT-09-92; Case No.: IT-95-5/18; Case No.: S 1 K 014264 13 Krž; Case No.: IT-05-88; Case No.: X-KRŽ-07/386; Case No.: 2 BvR 1290/99; Case No.: BayObLG: 17; Case No.: 3 St 20/96).

How can we then understand the sense of using widely circulating terms such as trust, conciliation, and reconciliation if we do not connect these terms with the simultaneous actions of neoliberal and ethnoclerical and neo-fascist ideologies (Schwarzmantel, 2009; Ravlić, 2013; Basic et al., 2019; Basic & Delić accepted) that led in the 1990s not only to war but also after 1995 and the signing of the General Framework Agreement for Peace to a dramatic *demographic depopulation*, a “demographic emptying” of this region? This emptying has been especially obvious during the second decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century and stunningly massive during the past few years.

How can we explain these simultaneous processes that, depending on interpretations, hinder and make impossible or speed up the processes of conciliation and the return of what we ambiguously call *trust*? Interesting suggestions have been offered. Reading books related to this

issue, we have also encountered the attitude that *Conciliation must be based on the persecution of ethnocentric ethnobanditry and the defeat of genocidal ideologies* (Livada, 2007, p. 222). It is not difficult to agree with this outlook if we analyse ethnocorruption and ethnobanditry in the neighbouring states from the Bosnian-Herzegovinian epistemic perspective.

### 8. Victims of ethnopolitics

The multidecade evolution of ethnopolitics in Bosnia and against Bosnia has reached a boiling point. Ethnopolitics has finally managed to change the mechanism of the so-called *protection of vital national interests* into the perfect means to paralyse the state and the society. A focus on the future does not exist because of the lucrative apotheosis of necropolitics. The dead have long since become the most significant resource for gaining points at the ethnically defined political elections. Thus, both the *dead* and the *living*, of whom there are fewer and fewer, have become the victims of ethnopolitics. The fewer there are among the living, the greater in number are their (false) protectors: ethnopoliticians and priests who vow that they will protect the vital interests of *their people* (Brljavac, 2012).

Nobody (except priests) can speak in the name of all victims. The question is whether even the divided priesthood can do so. The trouble with our Balkan priests is that they, like politicians, come exclusively from the *ranks of their own people*. The priests, together with politicians and ethnopedagogues (Neustroev et al., 2018; Tufekčić, 2009), carefully sort children during the lessons of religious studies, in line with the principle of two schools under the same roof. This is what happens in secular states such as Croatia, Bosnia, and Serbia. The priests, along with ethnoleaders, address their own flock. The problem with such pastoral discourses is that not even their “holy” organizations, which have grabbed onto symbolic power (Bourdieu, 1977, 1990, 1992a, 1992b) and the real transformative power of clarifying the metaphysics of human identity, are innocent because they have frequently not stopped the pack instinct for *revenge*.

The borders between sovereign states-nations have been relativized under the influence of the joint action of thousands of priests and tens of thousands of ethnopoliticians who act in our frozen semiotic environment. Strategic alliances between the priesthood and ethnopolitics act by dividing everyone—both the dead and the living, not only during the All Saints Day but also during the remaining 364 days of the year—according to ethnoreligious schemas of classification and selection (Billig, 1995; Malešević, 2002, 2006, 2013; McIntyre, 2008; Mujanović, 2016). Thus, Serbs, Croats, and Bosniaks and often all the others who remain in the hilly Balkans, and especially in the Dayton construction, live and die a performance of a post-modern state (a social laboratory) of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Our “collective” or our separate sociolinguistic spaces of using the pronoun *we* – and this is just one more paradox we have become used to after the semiological collapse of the *first person plural* – are still contaminated by *collective geographic hallucinations* (Billig, 1995; Malešević, 2002, 2006, 2013; McIntyre, 2008; Mujanović, 2016). These collective geographic hallucinations such as “Kosovo is Serbia” or in reverse “Serbia is Kosovo” are the most obvious examples of ethnobanditry and ethnocorruption in the Balkan politics of identity construction. These hallucinations are produced on purpose. They occur as a consequence of cross-border politics of the ethnic representation of citizens. They go hand in hand with the new media, political, multiparty ethnocorruption and ethnobanditry, apparently mutually negotiated, production of hate.

### 9. Collective production of hatred towards the other

Collective production of individual and collective hatred towards the other has long since been the most profitable sort of business in Bosnia and Herzegovina, in the name of *the protection of vital national interests*, devotedly encouraged by ethnoleaders, the privileged protectors of these interests, and their numerous party epigones who enter politics only to get rich and not to contribute to the formation of a just society (Basic & Delić, 2018, 2019; Basic et al., 2019; Malešević, 2002, 2006, 2013; Mujanović, 2016). The sociology of political parties that would address the political,

economic, identitarian, lucrative, organizational, institutional, social psychological, new media, and other mutations of communists into ethnonationalists and ethnic entrepreneurs, could show what kind of identity pathology and crime this actually is. However, this task is probably currently still doomed to fail, primarily because of immanent historic and geographic *phantasmagoria* (Russel Gray, 2003) of the current transitional politics of identity. This could also relate to the epistemic and security status of identitarian terminology, currently used in security studies regarding Croatia, Serbia, and Bosnia, etc. It also relates to the referential *vacuousness* of the first person plural, the questionability of the political, party, and the political representational use of the pronoun *we* after genocide and a joint criminal enterprise. At issue is also the meaning of the demise of the *first person plural* that, after genocide and the public denial of genocide by institutions, organizations, and main institutional representatives, could help to ask, explain, and answer the question of why we allow for something like this to happen and how it is even possible at the beginning of the third decade of the 21st century.

Furthermore, why did *our* societies and politics never even start the processes of lustration, as should have been done by actors of the main politics of identity who have made it possible for political parties such as the Serb Democratic Party (Srpska demokratska stranka—SDS) and the Croatian Democratic Union (Hrvatska demokratska zajednica—HDZ), together with coalitional party partners and close cross-border political parties and organizations in neighbouring states from the left or the right? The position of the Republic of Croatia, a member of the European Union, is indicative because it has found itself taking the paradoxical role of presiding over this organization (with the self-imposed task of safeguarding the true Christian values, the values of human dignity, and the values of international legacies that concern universal human rights), even though the role of Croatia in the joint criminal enterprise during the war against Bosnia and Herzegovina has been well documented.

A serious security problem is presented in the real meaning of the constant repetition, use, and abuse of syntagmas such as *political parties with a Croatian label*, *political parties with a Serbian label*, or *political parties with a third label*, used every day and for decades by certain ethno-politicians to obtain legitimacy and self-legitimacy. Why? Because such (in actuality pre-modern) use of political language, when an individual ethno-politician calls the people *his people*, hides the fact that the people in the 21<sup>st</sup> century cannot be defined and cannot be and are not owned by an individual as it was when slavery existed (Billig, 1995; Malešević, 2002, 2006, 2013; McIntyre, 2008; Mujanović, 2016).

In addition, the negotiated ethnic use of such vocabulary that allegedly protects the interests of a people from representatives of another or third people who endanger *our vital national interests* (as supposedly was the case with Dayton Bosnia) can conceal (and we believe does conceal) the actual party, organizational, institutional, politic, identitarian, and ideological sources of cross-border organized crime and corruption performed in the name of the *protection of vital national interests* of its people. When an ethno-politician says the political party he or she belongs to is the only political party (often just He or She) that protects the vital interests of the people in question, then he or she has, with using this language, already entered the zone of ethnocorruption and ethnobanditry (Lavić, 2014; Livada, 2006; Pap, 2003, 2017).

When a particular ethno-politician publicly speaks and constantly repeats the words *my people*, he or she wishes to express, and probably expresses, a certain *performative utterance* with the desire to make an essential political differentiation, a patriotic distinction, and most important, an identitarian separation of the *legitimate* and *original* representatives of the people from those who are the *illegitimate* and *unoriginal* representatives (Olimid, 2011). It may, however, appear (and be proven) that such use of political vocabulary is distorted, wrong, dangerous, manipulative, and, in essence, corrupting.

Within the context of the “ideologies of the undefeated Ustasha-Chetnik syndrome” (Livada, 2007, p. 5), there needs to be an analysis of the political, economic, demographic, ecologic, security, and other social consequences of the dominance of the Balkan politics of constructing and reconstructing collective identities in the sense of politics that are trilinearly led in Croatia, Serbia, and post Dayton Bosnia. All of war consequences are additionally complicated and become even harder to analyse and present if we view them within the context of the above-mentioned huge disappointment in neoliberal globalization. The great unfulfilled promise of about 30 years ago of a free democratic world without boundaries for the inhabitants of Bosnia and Herzegovina meant also disappointment in the role of the international community that treated Bosnia and Herzegovina as cynically as if the genocide and joint criminal enterprise never happened, as though the states of Serbia and Croatia were not guilty for these epochal events that occurred on the European continent.

### **10. Genocide, joint criminal enterprise, and the (non)violent “us”**

Different approaches to understanding ethnic identity are present in the sociology of ethnicity (Billig, 1995; Hylland Eriksen, 1993, 2007; Katunarić, 2003; Malešević, 2002, 2006, 2013; Mujanović, 2016). However, not one of these theoretic approaches has the performative force of evidence that international criminal justice institutions have when they make legally binding judgements on genocide and joint criminal enterprises. This means that the *judgements* of international courts on genocide and joint criminal enterprises should be taken very seriously, with their performative force of international criminal and legal evidence. Accordingly, such international legal evidence obliges all other institutions to change, humanize, and pacify all politics of constructing and reconstructing collective identities of a people in whose name the said crimes were committed. Varied discursive polemic discussions can be led, and are led in reality, in the social theories of collective identities. However, in the end, such forms of theoretical polemicizing do not have, nor can they have, the force of a final judgement that international legal evidence has in proving the crimes of genocide and joint criminal enterprise.

For example, Katunarić (2003) interpretation of national and ethnic identity, given in his book *Contested Community: Newer Theories of Nation and Nationalism*, is quite ambivalent. The author suggests that the ambivalence of a nation lies in the fact that one can be proud of one’s nation but simultaneously despise it. Katunarić does not, however, raise the question of how mass crimes against humanity, such as genocide and joint criminal enterprise, change the identity of the group in whose name such crimes were committed.

We claim that ethnic politics of the collective representation of such a group cannot remain the same after international criminal courts deliver judgements (Case No.: IT-98-33; Case No.: IT-09-92; Case No.: IT-95-5/18; Case No.: S 1 K 014264 13 Krž; Case No.: IT-05-88; Case No.: X-KRŽ-07/386; Case No.: 2 BvR 1290/99; Case No.: BayObLG: 17; Case No.: 3 St 20/96). Such judgements name both the criminals and victims of crimes committed in the name of a group and against the members of another ethnic, national, or religious group (Basic & Delić, accepted, 0000, 2018, 2019; Basic et al., 2019). In other words, these epochal events of committing a crime such as genocide and joint criminal enterprise, prosecuted in international criminal courts, change or should change the logic and politics of naming the those in whose name we speak when using the *first person plural - us*.

The thematization of the meaning of the pronoun *we* in philosophy and social ontology is comprehensively performed in the significant work of Petar Bojanić (2016), *On Institutional Action: How Is It Possible to Correctly Work, Write, Walk, Breathe, and Live Together?*. It is telling that the author refers to the ideas of the philosopher Martin Heidegger precisely for the impossibility of separating (1) the work of the German philosopher Martin Heidegger from (2) the German man and speaker Martin Heidegger. Namely, for our topic of the possibility of trust and reconciliation between peoples after the genocide and joint criminal enterprise against Bosnian-Herzegovinian civilians during 1992–1995, it is important also to pay attention to the philosophical thematization of the meaning of the first person plural. It seems that Heidegger, by thematizing



the pronouns in the first person plural (*Wir*), at least at one point of his life “too quickly and unconvincingly introduced the word people (*Volk*) in order to define ourselves (*Selbst*)”.

Bojanić stated that the title of his book (“On Institutional Action”) is missing the term *condition*, *conditions* – “On the Conditions of Institutional Action” (Bojanić, 2016, p. 7). The author has said that it is difficult for him to list these conditions in any kind of a systematic order. He also claims that he is quite certain that a very complex and vast set of preconditions, conditions, or unconditional conditions precede an action or a collection of actions that could be called “institutional actions”. The subtitle “How Is It Possible To *Correctly* Work, Write, Walk, Breathe, And Live *Together*?” lists just a few of such preconditions—working, writing, walking, breathing—that, if they are truly *correctly* and *jointly* (both words in italics are questionable and conditional) exercised, stand for the possibility of institutional action being taken or the possibility of establishing adequate conditions for its persistence (Bojanić, 2016, p. 7).

Referring to the French philosopher Emmanuel Levinas could be significant for our topic of the re-estimation of trust and reconciliation after genocide and a joint criminal enterprise. Specifically, Levinas puts the care and taking responsibility of others first in his philosophy. Therefore, Bojanić *correctly* notes that “the philosophy to institutionalize, invent, and reinvent the community was already discovered here. This is a start that ends with the latest Husserl’s texts on the absolute and relative primordial institution of philosophy (or pure philosophy)” (Bojanić, 2016, p. 116). The unanswered question remains as to the meaning of the pronoun “we, Serbs” after the genocide in Bosnia—after the judged genocide that was committed in the name of the Serbian people. The meaning that the pronoun “we, Serbs” takes in the Serbian-Serb or Great Serbian political or cultural vocabularies after the genocide and during the public and institutional denial of the crime of genocide is not self-evident. It is not possible at this point to give a single *correct* and *joint* answer to this question.

Another unanswered question is what is the meaning of the pronoun “we, Croats” after a joint criminal enterprise against the Bosnian-Herzegovinian civilian population, after a judged joint criminal enterprise that was committed in the name of the Croatian people? What meaning could the pronoun “we, Croats” take in the Republic of Croatia and the European Union if it is uttered as a *performative utterance*, in a cross-border ethnic meaning, especially considering the time after the International Criminal Court’s sentence against Croatian fighters who were prosecuted for *joint criminal enterprise*? What meaning does Croatian cross-border politics of the collective representation of people have, and what is the meaning of the institute of protection of “Croatian national interests” at a moment when the Republic of Croatia presides over the European Union (from 1 January to 30 June 2020), denying its own responsibility for the plight of civilians in Bosnia and Herzegovina, now an outer border of the European union? The joint criminal enterprise committed during the war against Bosnian-Herzegovinian civilians changes the meaning of the ethnically pure territory of the Croatian Republic of Herzeg-Bosnia that was fantasized about during the war. There is no correct joint answer to the many open dilemmas that have arisen here because of the institutional, joint, collective *denial* of genocide and the institutional, joint, collective *denial* of the joint criminal enterprise.

The notion of *community* has become particularly controversial in the Balkans, in the central Republic of the former state (the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina). It is especially so after the neo-fascist politics (Schwarzmantel, 2009; Ravlić, 2013; Basic et al., 2019; Basic & Delić accepted), which imagined *ethnically pure cultures* and *ethnically pure territories* (which led to ethnic cleansing, genocide, and a joint criminal enterprise), jointly and collectively started to dispute the very *idea of co-existence* with other ethnic, national, or religious groups.

## 11. Social capital and criticism of socioeconomic reality

Critical studies that (at least partly) estimate the explanatory reaches of social capital while explaining socioeconomic reality (Basic & Delić, 2019; Bourdieu, 1977, 1990, 1992a, 1992b;

Coleman, 1990; García, 2010; Petrov, 2015) lead us to believe that it is not enough to stop at theoretical work and research. For a more comprehensive understanding of the rise and fall of the popularity of social capital, it is necessary to cross the boundary that academia has erected between itself and politics. From theoretical work intended for academic production, the focus has gradually shifted to the public political domain.

The very first step into the political sphere has brought awareness that social capital can be recognized in almost the entire ideological corpus of the political scene of contemporary democracies and public political programs (Delić et al., 2018; Ignjatović, 2011, p. 9). Furthermore, a need has been expressed for a new and more precisely explained conceptualization of the notion of community in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. (Besides the notions of trust and cooperation, the notion of *community* belongs to a group of basic terms that constitute the anatomy of the concept of social capital.) Because the meaning of most of these terms has become quite fluid in recent decades, there has been a need for a more precise conception of the notion of community, keeping in mind that the need for specifying the notion of community is increasing intensely.

The report *The Geography of Social Capital in America* states that researchers and politicians do not currently have high-quality contemporary criteria of social capital that would be available at the state and local levels to facilitate suggesting solutions aligned with social life (SCP, 2018). What remains to be explained, considering the previously introduced epistemic dilemmas, are the sense of the geography of social capital and the meaning of the geography of expressing trust or mistrust of the cross-border ethnic politics of representing the population in the neighbouring states of Bosnia and Herzegovina, after the judgements on genocide and joint criminal enterprise.

Because of a series of factors, during the past few years, many authors have articulated dilemmas about whether “social capital” – together with the ideas of “freedom”, “development”, “democracy”, and “capitalism” – represents the “black box” of the new economy, and whether the time has come for a reconstruction or a redefinition of social sciences, considering changes in the dynamics of our social universe. Within the context of understanding the relation between “social capital” and the idea of “development”, which has within the crisis of neoliberalism also become the subject of critical revision, a short evaluation thus must be performed of the use and idea of social capital and development (Basic & Delić, 2019; Bourdieu, 1977, 1990, 1992a, 1992b; Coleman, 1990; García, 2010; Petrov, 2015).

During the 1990s, the relation between the theory of social capital and neoliberalism moved from the academic community to political discourse. It thus contributed to the popularization of social capital in the public sphere. However, during the period of growing economic inequalities (worsened by recent economic crises), it has become apparent that the neoliberal political program is not compatible with the aim of creating social capital (Basic & Delić, 2019; Bourdieu, 1977, 1990, 1992a, 1992b; Coleman, 1990; García, 2010; Petrov, 2015).

The relation between social capital and neoliberalism, certain authors claim, is a double-edged sword. On the one hand, this connection has contributed to the popularization of the concept of social capital precisely during a time when neoliberalism gained political importance during the 1990s: the existence of this relation has transformed social capital from a fantastical academic theory into an important ingredient of new political discourses and programs.

On the other hand, this connection could be the cause of death of social capital. The reason for the possible death of social capital is explained by the same situation, according to Ferragina and Arrigoni (2017). This situation is reflected in the fact that during a period characterized by economic crisis and preceded by decades of growing economic inequality, the politics focused on strengthening social capital is incompatible with a neoliberal political program (Ferragina & Arrigoni, 2017). Later, others arguing from different perspective made even harsher criticisms of the concept of social capital. Many conceptualizations of social capital were argued as oversimplifying, diminishing, and abstracting the concept to the point that it almost stops being social.

A separate question relates to the relations between the politics and practices of establishing global neoliberal capitalism, which swore by *free market*, and the Balkan regional politics and practices of establishing crony capitalism, which swore by the ethnic politics of the protection of vital national interests. The situation, along with the understanding of the meaning of social capital and the meaning of trust and reconciliation, has especially become complicated after the genocide and the joint criminal enterprise against the Bosnian-Herzegovinian population.

Even though many authors believe that social capital is a means of solving social issues, thorough analyses that consider the ways in which decisions are made in real life show that social capital is used for the opposite purpose.

The institutional power of imposing the criteria of social capital enables the orthodox economists to first and foremost colonize the understanding of social relationships—the fundamental sociological area of the social sphere—with economic terms. In addition, this power enables them to mask this colonization with the use of an exclusively positive concept of social capital (omitting its dark side) to create an illusion that the economy is in the service of society and that it solves the issues of social inequalities.

## 12. Conclusion

The aim of this scientific paper was to analyse the normative orientations and social values that affect (1) the feelings of moral and social understanding (or non-understanding) after the genocide and the joint criminal enterprise in Bosnia and Herzegovina in the context of legitimizing transitional capitalism, (2) the actions of individuals, organizations, and states as well as the entire social community in the post-war society, and (3) the process of reconciliation and trust in post-war society.

A region similar to Bosnia, Serbia, and Croatia will find itself in a cognitive vacuum if it suffers the disaster of its population living for several decades in a politically unstable environment that oscillates between (1) genocidal and/or “negotiated wars” led in the name of the cross-border ethnic *protection of vital national interests* and (2) the post-war robbery of public goods that remain concealed from the post-war public as elements of the newly created transitional capitalism (primarily because in these robberies, main actors often participate in the same cross-border networked multi-decennial *protectors of vital national interests* or organize these robberies). The conclusion of this scientific paper is that the processes of symbolic construction and state *protection* of collective ethnic and religious identities in Serbia and Croatia after the signing of the Dayton Accords did not evolve in the direction of developing trust and reconciliation. The victims of war have become the subject of political and judicial trade, in addition to the ethnic, religious, and general identitarian manipulation of election laws and voters also becoming the subject of such political trade. The processes of the ethnic and religious protection of the so-called *vital national interests* did not evolve in the direction of pacifist political pluralism in the region but instead are still evolving towards the ethnic and nationalist encouragement of new identitarian wars and conflicts and in the direction of further militarization, clericalization, and criminalization of political and economic structures of newly created transitional states. Their collective and joint insistence on cross-border ethnic, clerical, and nationalist politics of the representation of population is related to (1) anti-Bosnian sentiments and (2) the processes, dangerous to safety, of erasing civilian, secular, and peaceful potentials of Bosnian-Herzegovinian societies. In fact, the international involvement of these states in the war against the Bosnian-Herzegovinian state and society has been documented by a series of international legal judgements on crimes against humanity, the forced resettlement of populations, genocide, and the joint criminal enterprise (Case No.: IT-98-33; Case No.: IT-09-92; Case No.: IT-95-5/18; Case No.: S 1 K 014264 13 Krž; Case No.: IT-05-88; Case No.: X-KRŽ-07/386; Case No.: 2 BvR 1290/99; Case No.: BayObLG: 17; Case No.: 3 St 20/96).

Could the positivistic presentation of ideas of social capital and trust, conceived by classical authors in this field, such as Robert Putnam (Putnam, 1993, 1995, 2000, 2015; Putnam & Goss,

2002), help to understand our topic? We believe that reading classical and more contemporary authors who wrote about trust and reconciliation could help us better understand this complex topic in all of the divided communities. It is essential, however, to emphasize that Putnam did not focus in his general analyses of the notion of community or in his specific analyses of the negative dimensions of social capital (“the dark side of social capital”) on negative social impacts of neo-fascist ideas based on the anti-civilizational denial of the idea of coexistence. Putnam did not cover the aggression on the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina; he did not study the multidecade denial of the idea of coexistence, the ethnic cleansing, the genocide, the joint criminal enterprise against the civilian population of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Certainly, nobody has the right to criticize another person for what he did not analyse or for the fact he did not write on a certain topic. In effect, it may sound trivial if we point out that nobody can write about everything. However, mass crimes against the Bosnian-Herzegovinian population, which happened from 1992 to 1995, can and do serve as a paradigmatic example of joint actions of the “dark side of social capital”.

Therefore, we believe that Bosnia and Herzegovina is important in the wider European and global context. It is already important at the level of ideas because it already represents at this level a paradigmatic example of the abuse of a joint enterprise and serves as a paradigmatic example of the actions of the dark side of social capital. In other words, violence against the civilian population of Bosnia and Herzegovina is an example of the relation between *symbolic violence* and *actual violence*. This example of violence is one that had occurred at the same time that Putnam and his colleague Huntington (Huntington, 2002) published their most significant work on society, economy, and politics. Putnam only mentioned Bosnia and Herzegovina in passing and insisted on several occasions that it is necessary to keep in mind that his studies of social capital, which started with the research of the public politics of 20 Italian regions during the 1970s, related primarily to the US. In his self-evaluations of his own intellectual contribution to the study of social capital, Putnam admitted that his analyses of the decline of social capital and trust are related exclusively to the US and Italy. The old fear of identity discrimination and the fear of racism and chauvinism have, as they did 50 years ago, arisen again in 2023 in North America, which during the war against Bosnia and Herzegovina helped the Bosnians and Herzegovinians defend themselves from aggression.

How should we understand the *us* in Bosnia and Herzegovina and its geoeconomic environment and live the idea of coexistence? We believe that in civilized societies where the rule of law is prevalent, one should not have to trust politicians, writers, priests, or any other speakers who publicly deny the international judgements on genocide and joint criminal enterprise. The troubling example related to subject is the decision of the Swedish Academy to award the 2019 Nobel Prize in Literature to a well-known denier of the genocide in Bosnia and Herzegovina (Peter Handke).

An interesting issue that has arisen during the conduct of this study is concerning the relationship between trust, reconciliation and remorse, and the consequences for collective representation and symbolic construction of post-war society. In that analysis, what is interesting is the confession to war crimes, whether it is instrumentalization and false remorse (see for example Case No.: IT-00-39 & 40/1), and the analysis of affective and moral values of genocide in a fragmented state where we are dealing not only with diverse understandings and misunderstandings, but also with intentional misunderstandings (Bar-Tal & Hameiri, 2020; Billig, 1995; Malešević, 2002, 2006, 2013; McIntyre, 2008; Mujanović, 2016). These intentional (deliberately constructed misunderstandings) as a consequence creates a character of *social doxa* (Bourdieu, 1977, 1990, 1992a, 1992b) and naturalization. What are the consequences of these socio-cultural and socio-political naturalizations in a context of trust, reconciliation and the construction of a stable, multilateral and rationally grounded society?

Another interesting question is about the issue of understanding and misunderstanding (feelings, moral and social understandings/misunderstandings after the genocide). Is understanding as such sufficient and what other socio-political and socio-cultural factors are needed for a normal

society and the recognition of the Other. Political elites and national representatives understand themselves perfectly, and the citizens as well, but still the stable, rationally organized civil society is still an abstraction.

#### Funding

This work was supported by the Linnaeus Knowledge Environment: A Questioned Democracy.

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#### Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author(s).

#### Citation information

Cite this article as: Genocide, joint criminal enterprise, and reconciliation: Interactional analysis of a post-war society in the context of legitimizing transitional capitalism, Zlatan Delić & Goran Basic, *Cogent Social Sciences* (2024), 10: 2287317.

#### Notes

1. Parts of this article have previously been published in Bosnian language in the book “Socijalni kapital i socioekonomski razvoj Bosne i Hercegovine” (Delić et al., 2018), and in Swedish, and English languages in the scientific journals *Sociologisk Forskning* (under the title “Förlåtelse, försoning och oförsonlighet i överlevandes berättelser efter kriget i Bosnien”; Basic, 2013) and the *Journal of Criminal Justice and Security* (under the title “Conditions for Reconciliation: Narratives of Survivors from the War in Bosnia and Herzegovina”; Basic, 2015).
2. In transition after a war, it is important to discuss for example the role of tourism in accommodating or aggravating the controversies after a genocide (see also Fernando et al., 2013; Figal, 2012; Tzanelli & Korstanje, 2016).

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