Original Research Article
Accepted: 3 November 2022
https://doi.org/10.20901/pm.59.4.08

Ordinary Affects During the *Democratization of Violence* in the Context of the Breakup of Yugoslavia

DUŠKO PETROVIĆ
Faculty of Humanities and Social Science, University of Zagreb

Summary

In the paper, based on the analysis of ethnographic material, the author explains the emergence of ordinary affects during the breakup of Yugoslavia. He shows that the ordinary affects were unfolding amid social anomie created by the collapse of the Yugoslav state and the processes of ethnicization on the subnational level. One of the striking features of the processes of ethnicization was targeted violence against civilians or democratization of violence on a subnational level. To help understand the emergence of affective afflictions, the author supplements theories of cultural trauma and ethnicization with the concepts of situation and crisis embedded in the ordinary. Furthermore, he argues that this small theoretical supplement can help understand the persistence and unusually high presence of war rhetoric in some post-Yugoslav states.

Keywords: Ordinary Affects, Democratization of Violence, Ethnicization, Situation, Cultural Trauma, Crisis of Ordinary, Situational Political Identity

Introduction

I approached the topic of the breakup of Yugoslavia and the beginning of the war through an autoethnographic recollection[1] of my memories and insights into the

[1] Besides commonly used qualitative research methods, like interviews, this ethnography is also based upon autoethnography. This methodology and way of writing within cultural-anthropological research has become increasingly prevalent since the 1980s and is today, despite its critics, considered a legitimate research technique. The increasingly frequent use of this method can be traced alongside the emergence of an interest in the anthropology of the personal and singular – by questioning ethnographic authority and representations in ethnographic texts. Definitions of autoethnography are usually grouped around one of two essential determinants: an emphasis on the ethnographic or a focus on the autobiographic. The cultural anthropologist Deborah Reed-

experiences of others in written records and research interviews, as well as everyday conversations that I have often had about that period.

The ethnographic material which forms the basis for the article consists of my memories from the period at the start of the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia, i.e., 1990-1993; personal memories gathered from the archives of the non-governmental organization Documenta, titled "Personal memories of war and other forms of political violence from 1941 until today"; two unstructured interviews and four semi-structured interviews which I conducted during 2016 and 2017 with interlocutors who were themselves victims of violence, and all were born and living in cities at the time of war; data about civilian victims of the war in Croatia from Documenta; everyday conversations with friends and acquaintances; articles from newspapers and internet portals.

During my research, I noticed that my interlocutors often mentioned ambiguous and intense affects, which I can reluctantly recall. These *ordinary affects*[2] were widespread at that, in every sense, extraordinary time and essentially determined the experience of living in the various political communities that emerged from the former Yugoslav federation.

It is worth noting that *we* could not clearly articulate the object and direction of these affects. That is the reason I can best describe this affective state as being like immersion in a particular kind of atmosphere. It seems that *we* perceived wartime reality primarily affectively, but not through affects of fear of violent attack of the ethnically recognized enemy or affects of rage and resentment directed towards the inimical Other, but as immersion in an affective atmosphere and long-lasting affective state sensed on the level of the ordinary social relations.

Danahay suggests that autoethnography can be defined as the juncture between three genres that are visible in contemporary anthropological production: "1. *native anthropology*, in which people who were formerly the subjects of ethnography become the authors of studies of their group; 2. *ethnic autobiography*, personal narratives written by members of ethnic minority groups; and 3. *autobiographical ethnography*, in which anthropologists interject personal experience into ethnographic writing" (1997, p. 2). I consider this text to most closely adhere to Reed-Danahay's second and third types of ethnography.

[2] The term *ordinary affects* was initially coined by anthropologist Kathleen Stewart to designate public feelings "in the background" of orders of representation and conceptual schemas. Ordinary affects are simultaneously public and intimate, animated circuits of feelings in which modes of social knowledge and relations are primarily present in a state of potentiality, they are a contact zone at once abstract and concrete, subjective and objective, and are more compelling than ideologies and identities. "They are not the kind of analytic object that can be laid out on a single, static plane of analysis, and they don't lend themselves to perfect, three-tiered parallelism between analytic subject, concept, and world" (Stewart, 2007, pp. 2-4).

This kind of undirected, ambiguous affective response may come as a surprise because wars and violent conflicts are partly generated by strong emotional investment in politically recognized enemies, or in some cases, strong emotions triggered by violence can be a generative factor in creating new political identities and communities (Bergholz, 2016). In the case of the breakup of Yugoslavia, strong emotions of resentment and fear drove many people to support and participate in violent activities against their neighbors and fellow citizens of different ethnicity (Petersen, 2002) and were part of the process of ethnicization – the process of creation of political ethnicity and essentialized ethnic identity (Dragojević, 2019). Also, these emotions were the motor for "resolving" situational ambiguity created by the collapse of socialist Yugoslavia (Petersen, 2002, pp. 208-253).

The indeterminate affective response by my interlocutors and witnesses was triggered by actions and events that carriers of influence and people in some local communities interpreted as points of conflict between emerging political ethnicities. Some scholars identified these actions and events as crucial points in the crystallization of conflict on the territory of Yugoslavia as a war between ethnically defined communities and later progression of violence and war. For instance, drawing from the case of Croatia, Mila Dragojević (2019) has argued that these types of events and actions were a crucial part of transferring the process of ethnicization and the creation of new political ethnicities – from the state level to the sub-national level of everyday social relations, to the level of the ordinary. As Dragojević showed, the process of ethnicization on the level of local communities included the production of borders, exclusion of moderates, and the use of targeted violence against civilians as a political strategy to secure political support. These actions created the conditions for the emergence of, what Dragojević conceptualized as, amoral communities in which violent activities toward civilians of presumed inimical ethnical origin were welcomed and enhanced by the local community. Amoral communities were communities where targeted violence against the civilian population had the tacit or active popular support of the civilians and where social conditions set the stage for the emergence and rapid growth of violent incidents between ethnical communities. In another research, I called this process of gaining popular support and transferring violent activities on the level of the ordinary: democratization of violence – where the demos, defined primarily through an ethnic lens, is tacitly or openly invited and encouraged by the carriers of influence to participate in targeted violence against their fellow citizens, which was accepted by a significant number of people (Petrović, 2020). Because of its popular support, this violent capillary activity appeared in various forms. It did not include just killing or physically harming people with long-lasting consequences, but also the destruction of property, evictions from homes, and lawless dismissals from the workplace.

It also included "soft" social violence – harassment, social ostracism, humiliation, and discrimination. In other words, violence was present on the micro level, on the level of everyday social relations, and on the level of the ordinary. The notion of democratization of violence is slightly different from Dragojević's notion of targeted violence against civilians because it includes random violence and the element of uncertainty that was the prevailing social condition at that time. For instance, one of my interlocutors, a person who fled from Belgrade to Zagreb at the beginning of the war, told me that she was twice beaten up in Zagreb by people she incidentally met because of her Serbian-sounding accent. In my analysis of the phenomenon of democratization of violence, I emphasized the effects that this type of violence had on society, state apparatus, and law. I argued that this type of violence caused social anomie and spread ordinary criminality. During this anomie, illegal activities could spread throughout society, and all citizens, regardless of their ethnicity, could suffer from it. In that sense, the unlawful activities initially motivated by ethnic hostilities merged with opportunism and criminal activity directed at citizens irrespective of their ethnicity. This effect of normalization of ordinary criminal activities during ethnicization and targeted violence against ethnic others was not covered by Dragojević. Many citizens suffered because of a lack of public order and widespread lawlessness. Some of them were victims of violence and criminal activities, and some suffered because of a general feeling of insecurity. Also, I emphasized that the phenomenon of democratization of violence was generated during the state of exception on the territory of the former Yugoslav federation. The state of exception arose because of two related reasons (Petrović, 2020): 1. The state of exception partially occurred within the territory of Yugoslavia as a consequence of the Yugoslav state's demise and a lack of confidence in its official political ideology, Yugoslav socialism and communism (Jović, 2003), and, likewise, the collapse of the then world order, within which Yugoslavia had occupied a significant place (Jović, 2017); 2. Under such social circumstances, there was an emergence of political actors who would finally abolish the constitutional norms that had regulated interethnic, interrepublic, and intrarepublic relations within the federation, fostering hostilities, spreading violence, and drawing distinctions between friend and foe based on ethnonational principles that were introduced as the primary legitimizing principle in many of the emerging states.

It is important to point out that during the emergence and rapid growth of violent incidents and later war between ethnonational communities, some of these violent incidents were experienced as a part of the collective trauma process and later served as an identification focal point for ethnonational communities in the making.[3]

[3] For the symbolical meaning of violence and war in the process of (ethno)national building in the case of Croatia, see Đerić (2008), Jović (2012), Kolsto (2014).

In the article, based on my own and the experience of others, I am following a slightly different path.

Firstly, I will show that the witnesses and my interlocutors did not interpret war primarily as a violent clash between two ethnonational communities. Instead, they emphasized a state of social anomie and a legal vacuum created by the dominant social actors at the time. In their eyes, the aforementioned violent incidents spreading during the democratization of violence were not just moments of the clash between two ethnic communities in the making but points in time when the reign of lawlessness, targeted and random violence began. The collapse of the Yugoslav state, the democratization of violence, and the process of ethnicization induced the transgression of social norms that triggered a strong affective response – the production of ordinary affects. In other words, ordinary affects were unfolding because of the lawlessness, democratization of violence, and violent acts committed on the level of everyday social relations. However, witnesses did not describe the spreading of the affective afflictions in terms of a cause-and-effect action. For most of them, affective afflictions were interpreted as an overall social state they were immersed in, and as a presence. Also, they did not use clear determined, "objective" markers when describing these affective afflictions. Mostly they used the indeterminate term *atmosphere* to describe the *presence* of affective afflictions in society. In other words, an out of joint affective state colonized their experience of social reality.

Secondly, after presenting their experience, I am asking what is the best way to understand this kind of affective experience of witnesses and their atmospheric attunement?

I am proposing to go beyond the theoretical framework provided by cultural trauma theory or theories that put processes of collective identification in front. So, I will provide a kind of supplement to these theories. Going beyond then implies supplementing the concepts of event, representation, identification, and memory.

To provide a supplement to the usual theoretical framework and mentioned concepts, I will propose to add the concept of *situation*. More precisely, for describing social reality and the overall experience of witnesses during the breakup of Yugoslavia, it is necessary to add the notions of situation and crisis. In her book *Cruel Optimism*, Laurent Berlant, when describing historical present and prevailing contemporary social conditions in the US and Europe, defines the genre of situation as "... a genre of social time and practice in which a relation of persons and worlds is sensed to be changing but the rules for habitation and the genres of storytelling about it are unstable, in chaos" (Berlant, 2011, p. 6). Moreover, a situation points to the experience of the breaking down of genre, or "the waning of genre" (*ibid*.), in general. In my opinion, during the breakup of Yugoslavia witnesses found themselves in a situation. A situation emerges when ordinary life – social practices, rules,

habits, and values – are in a state of crisis. In situations, usual genres are broken, or do not function. In other words, witnesses experienced the breakdown of genre. The waning of genre triggered the emergence of affective afflictions because, generally speaking, "genres provide an affective expectation of the experience of watching something unfold" (*ibid*.).

Also, the inclusion of situation in understanding the breakup of Yugoslavia is vital because it could help to understand the persistence of war rhetoric or the continuation of the war in public discourses in some of post-Yugoslav countries. It seems, paradoxically, that the creation of the new ethnonational states did not successfully "resolve" the social ambiguity created by the collapse of socialist Yugoslavia. Maybe it is, in part, because the core of new ethnonational states still consists of fragile, continually endangered ethnic identities built upon the social condition of the situation – situational political identities. Today people living in these communities could still sense situational social condition as a prolonged social and political crisis embedded in the ordinary. At the end of the text, I will provide arguments that could lead to the above conclusion.

Moreover, the genre of situation can help us understand the emergence of amoral communities, although the genre of situation resonates with Alain Badiou's concept of the event (*ibid*., p. 5), which creates a radical break that could lead to social transformation, and "the constitution of the potential for a scene of ethical sociality" (*ibid*.). The destructive ambiguity of the situation threatens ethical action because, to paraphrase Badiou's conceptualization of the event – "People can't have fidelity to the situation..." (*ibid*.), and some form of fidelity is the necessary precondition for ethical life. This interpretation that the situation produces unethical sociality coincides with Dragojević's insight about the emergence of amoral communities during ethnicization.

The following text will further explore the abovementioned issues.

Ordinary Affects

In the introduction I stated that ordinary affects were not exclusively affects of fear or resentment directed towards the (inimical) Other that served as mechanisms for change action readiness. Also, ordinary affects were not primarily caused and directed by a prior belief or cognitively recognized "object" like in Petersen's model, where "... cognition is treated as prior in the casual sequence of Fear, Hatred, and Resentment" (Petersen, 2002, p. 21). In other words, they did not fit into the model – recognition, otherness, action – to meet social challenges presumedly caused by others. Naturally, this does not mean that they, in a particular context, did not compel people to take some form of action – to flee, to defend themselves, to take a stance etc.

The witnesses and interlocutors mentioned ambiguous, undirected ordinary affects which could not be clearly articulated. They were primarily sensed as the immersion in an atmosphere, as atmospheric attunement that escaped the dominant order of representation and conceptualization at that time. I argue that such affective afflictions can occur in societies where the current order has lost its legitimacy and in which citizens' trust has been violated, and in which people experience sudden transgression of social laws and ethical norms, so much so that those who were until yesterday neighbors have now become enemies or have at least begun to be perceived as such. There are multiple factors in play here: the rules and norms that were in place up until then must have ceased to be valid, the legitimacy of institutions must have been rocked, and plenty of valid laws are only applied partially or selectively.

I have come across attempted definitions in terms such as "atmosphere", "psychosis", "fear", and "hysteria" in individual works by intellectuals, artists, and scholars who have dealt with the 1990s. In describing the social context of the time and the start of the war, many indeed resort to such psychological and affective categories. In his autobiographical book *Baština* (*Heritage*), the Split musician and journalist Nikola Čelan describes the May 1991 protests held in front of the Yugoslav Army's headquarters in the city: "That was the day when the violence of war entered through the front door into my neighborhood and, although the city was spared significant destruction, over the next few years we could feel the wartime *psychosis* in its fullest sense both on a mental and a physical level" (Čelan, 2017, p. 26; italics added).

I likewise found that the descriptions are packed with affective categories in the individual journalistic articles that deal with the social context at the start of the war in Split:

An anonymous statement by a former journalist testifies to the atmosphere of *fear* back then, and today's *unease*:

> A massive *fear* existed which could not be seen. On the one hand, there was the illusion of *normal* life. The usual offering in cinemas, the usual shows on the television, and reports that something was happening somewhere else, which could not be verified. You did not know, for instance, what was really going on in Osijek, just as those in Osijek did not know what was happening here. On the other hand, on television, you had a placed news story that they attacked us without reason, they were shooting at us. There was always this feel that we were attacked and could not defend ourselves, but at the same time corpses were floating down the rivers Danube and Drava. (Bačić, 2016; italics added)

Living in Split then, I also sensed the wartime atmosphere packed with affective afflictions on the level of ordinary life.

I came to Split in the summer of 1992, a little over half a year after the large artillery attacks against specific targets in the city by the Yugoslav Army's warships on 14 and 15 November 1991. By this time, there was no more ongoing conflict in the city, and the front line was some twenty-or-so kilometers away. A truce was in place between Croatia and the Yugoslav Army, signed in Sarajevo on 2 January 1992,[4] and at that time there were no large-scale military operations. Nevertheless, one could sense the wartime atmosphere on the level of everyday relations, on the level of the ordinary. Because, for example, you could often see armed military personnel in the city. They would usually be carrying pistols and automatic rifles. Walking the city's streets, on multiple occasions, I saw people carrying grenades and even hand-held rocket launchers. During those years, I once witnessed the destruction of a café carried out by a paramilitary unit in the center of Split. Also, unofficial pieces of information were regularly circulating among citizens, about forced eviction from homes, physical violence, murders, destruction of property, and social harassment.

Furthermore, for example, there are also those about the "situation" across the whole territory of Croatia:

> Bojan Munjin, who was an activist for the Croatian Helsinki Committee during the 1990s, and is nowadays a theatre critic, describes, as he puts it, an atmosphere of "*hysteria*" before and after the war broke out in 1991 and 1992 when people walking along the streets of Croatian cities in military and paramilitary uniforms was a common sight. This was the prevailing atmosphere at a time when many people who had been labeled as "enemies" – or at least believed that they had been thus labeled – left their homes in fear, losing them forever thereafter. (Milekić, 2016)

In an attempt to encapsulate and interpret the process of ethnicization in Eastern Slavonia that was unfolding after the murder of twelve Croatian policemen in Borovo Selo, Mila Dragojević repeatedly uses in her book the terms *atmosphere*, *the general sense of fear*, *a general atmosphere of unrest*, *sense of fear and insecurity*, etc. Also, it looks like the witness she is quoting described the emergence of what I am in the text calling a situation. Here are some examples from the book: "The event and the way it was framed in the media by various political leaders, unlike any other political tensions beforehand, led to *the general sense of fear* among residents of Easter Slavonia. In the following interview, a local resident recalls the *atmosphere*:

[4] "The signatories to the ceasefire were the Croatian Minister of Defense, Gojko Šušak, and the Deputy Commander of the Yugoslav Army's 5th Military District in Zagreb, General Andrija Rašeta, while Cyrus R. Vance signed the document as the representative of the international community" (Žunec, 2007, p. 233).

'I remember very well the time after May 2nd. We went to a May 1st celebration, as usual. The next day, there was some chaos. Everyone stopped their work, and people started walking around. We received the news that Borovo Selo was attacked and that some people died there. I remember that people in our village organized themselves with hunting guns out of fear that some policeman would attack us here and that they would kill us for some reason.' This account shows how violence occurred unexpectedly, provoked fear, and compelled some local residents to take arms even though they did not understand what was happening" (Dragojević, 2019, p. 58). It seems that in the abovementioned quote Dragojević used the term atmosphere to better determine the unfolding of the situation that the witness described as "some chaos". Similarly, another Dragojević's respondent in Eastern Slavonia found himself in a situation where "nobody was able to protect oneself", regardless of one's ethnicity. Again, Dragojević interpreted this indeterminate social situation with the term *atmosphere*: "In this atmosphere in which it was not clear who would be attacked next and why, people shared what they heard from others as they tried to decide whether to leave or to stay behind, potentially risk their lives" (*ibid*., p. 59).

Based on testimonies of her respondents, Dragojević concluded that, after it began in May, this atmosphere of fear reigned onward and ended up with large-scale military conflict between army units. Later during my research, within the "*Personal* Memories"[5] collection that was compiled by Zagreb's Documenta –Centre for Dealing with the Past, I discovered how the word "atmosphere" was used by both the historian Hrvoje Klasić and the music critic, journalist, and musician Ante Perković to describe the social context before the war and then during it in Croatia. It is worth pointing out that they, like many other witnesses, did not define the impending reality of war through clear "objective" criteria. From their testimonies, we gain the impression of some sort of war that was going on everywhere, all of the time: in your building, out on the street, in the neighborhood... And at the same time, the existential fear of the encroaching enemy (in the cases of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia) was mixed and intertwined with a general atmosphere of insecurity, fueled by the presence of members of military units and also paramilitaries, armed civilians, and various other violent groups who were out on the streets.

Out of Joint – Without Boundaries

It seems clear from the testimonies that the public (general) affective states described by the witnesses lacked "objective" boundaries. For instance, two witnesses mentioned that the atmosphere of hysteria was present before and after the war broke out in Croatia. "Hysteria" did not start after the war broke out due to massive

[5] Available at: http://www.osobnasjecanja.hr/.

military action and the fear of the encroaching more powerful enemy at the beginning of the war in Croatia. The atmosphere of hysteria was partially disconnected from the concrete military action and the events marking the start of the war. Moreover, it wasn't exclusively attached to one of the ethnic communities unfolding in the conflict. Also, Perković and Klasić spoke about the war atmosphere that was present before the actual war and military activities started. Partially in line with these testimonies, Nikola Čelan from Split, similar to Dragojević, explicitly marks the event when, as he said, *wartime psychosis* entered, not city or country, but his neighborhood. This event was not a massive military action of the enemy. Also, he did not interpret this event as the start of the conflict between two ethnic communities but as an event of social upheaval.

Moreover, in his eyes, it did not mark the start of the war but a new affective reality – wartime psychosis. This wartime psychosis entered Čelan's neighborhood because of mass protests in front of the Yugoslav Army's garrison. One Yugoslav Army soldier was killed by "someone from the crowd" during these protests. After that day, he felt wartime psychosis for several years even though the city was spared significant destruction. At first glance, it seems rather unusual to feel strong wartime psychosis in a city that was not under constant direct attack by the enemy military units. However, from his testimony, one can conclude that he felt the wartime psychosis not because of the direct, violent action of the enemy but because of the onset of social disorder. For him, wartime started during the social upheaval and massive protest when anonymous armed men attacked Yugoslav Army units. That violent act committed by anonymous men from the crowd marked the advent of long-lasting social conditions he primarily perceived affectively. Also, the violent attack was the advent of a new type of violence – targeted violence. This targeted violence was a consequence of the democratization of violence. It was usually perpetrated by non-state, unofficial, paramilitary, or civilian armed groups during the breakup of Yugoslavia at the beginning of the war.[6]

[6] So far, I emphasized that escalation of conflict in former Yugoslavia was not just caused by direct military aggression of another (national) political community, but by the onset of social disorder and events of social upheaval. In the attempt to explain the violent breakup of Yugoslavia some authors focused on the social crisis and causes that triggered the wider social disorder. It is not easy to find the univocal consensus what were these social preconditions that enabled the escalation of conflict, but some authors (e.g., Fink-Hafner, 1995; Ramet, 2007; Blanuša, 2021) agree that several social processes had contributed to the escalation of violence: the nationalistic political agenda of the dominant political leaders and the building of rival ethno-nationalist projects based on the idea of being exploited by other constituent nations, the economic crisis and the consequent destruction of the implicit social contract between the population and the political elite at the time, the wider ideological disillusionment in the communist system and its worldwide downfall, the dysfunctional Yugoslav federal system with its institutions decentra-

For the moment, it is sufficient to conclude that Čelan did not primarily interpret war as a violent clash between two nation-states, national or ethnic communities. For him, most important was not the experience of war on a state, macro level but on the local, micro level – on the level of the ordinary life. Although his war was unfolding on the level of the Ordinary, unlike in Dragojević's model, he resisted the ethnicization of the conflict. He experienced the emergence of targeted violence primarily affectively – through ordinary affects. Moreover, as I have shown, a general affective state entered his neighborhood regardless of large-scale or small-scale military activities. Ordinary affects were unfolding because of the democratization of violence and violent acts committed on the level of everyday social relations.

The ubiquitous ordinary violence and the effects of the war psychosis in Split were well described by Čelan in his book as mentioned earlier. Commenting orally on specific allegations from the book in one conversation, he recounted an incident from the early 1990s with a soldier. Čelan and his then-girlfriend were sitting in a café in Split while a *gardist*[7] was at the next table to them eating *ćevapi*.[8] All of a sudden, the soldier pulled out his gun and pointed it at the girl's head, forcing her to eat the *somun* which was served with the meat and which he had not yet managed to finish.[9] She ate the bun in silence, after which the soldier put his gun away and left. Recalling that event, Čelan described the situation in society at the time: "Yes, everyone was an autonomous territory with a weapon back then."

lized along ethno-national lines, the lack of democratic political culture, the influence of the memory of past atrocities, mainly from World War II and the period of the Ottoman Empire, etc. On top of these social factors, in my work (Petrović, 2020) I emphasized the importance of the dominant political principle at the time – primordially understood ethnic identity. In Yugoslavia at that time, the division between friend and enemy, just like the suspension of the legal order, was above all drawn along the lines of ethnic identity, which was considered to exist seemingly independently, beyond or "above" the level of the state and public authorities, penetrating deep into private, family lives and the personality of the individual. For this reason, ethnic enmities caused not just the breakup of the Yugoslav federation but also the disintegration of the tissue binding individual republics, cities, neighborhoods and even personal relationships. Ethnic hostility also fomented areas of conflict, violence, disorder and insecurity outside the zones of conflict between official military and policing forces, with violent activities spreading into the "internal", civilian territory, which should have been excluded from the fighting.

[7] The term *gardist* was a colloquial name used at the time for members of the Croatian Army and other people in military uniforms. It is derived from the "Croatian National Guard", the name of one of the first armed units around which the Croatian Army was formed.

[8] *Ćevapi* are a type of finger-shaped kebab, usually made from beef, but sometimes also include lamb or pork. They are a very popular dish throughout the former Yugoslav states.

[9] *Somun* is a type of round bun that is traditionally served alongside *ćevapi*.

If I summarize his overall experience, I can conclude that he experienced the war primarily through ordinary affects induced by the prevailing overall social situation at the time.

Like Nikola Čelan's experience of war, Bojan Munjin experienced the atmosphere of hysteria, before and after the actual war broke out, induced by the presence of various people dressed in military and paramilitary uniforms on the streets of Croatian cities. According to his testimony, many people living in Croatian cities were just "labeled" as enemies during this period. Furthermore, some type of war was waged against these wannabe enemies on the level of everyday life.

For instance, in Split, the well-known restauranteur Miroslav Bogdanović was labeled as an enemy from 1991 because of his presupposed ethnicity and, like Čelan, experienced the violence from the time of the popular protest held in front of the Yugoslav Army garrison. However, unlike Čelan, he was a victim of targeted violence during the protest. His case, publicly available in Documenta's Personal Memories[10] collection, clearly presents what was going on. This restauranteur endured violence from various groups from 1991 until 2013 when the interview took place. During mass protests against the Yugoslav Army, which culminated in the gathering of a large number of citizens outside the Yugoslav Army headquarters in May 1991, many tried to break into his restaurant and destroy it.[11] Like other witnesses, he spoke of a reign of fear and uncertainty induced by the democratization of violence.

"Fear reigned. And uncertainty. It's the sort of time that makes people go crazy, when they lose all their principles, when everyone's blood cells get inspected and when everyone looks at everyone else like they're the enemy. Of course, whoever is of the opposite ethnicity", said Bogdanović in one conversation. Grenades were twice thrown at his restaurant, several times he was threatened, and he was beaten up on multiple occasions. He was primarily the target of attacks because his father was Serbian. "Whoever was respectable was shot. Especially if they had the wrong blood cells", he testified in the interview. The first step was his restaurant Stefanel in which, as he testified in an interview, various people showed up in uniforms.

[10] http://www.osobnasjecanja.hr/video-arhiva/miro-bogdanovic/

[11] By comparison, on May 2nd of the same year, in Zadar, after the death of the police officer Franko Lisica in a fight with rebel Serb forces in the village of Polače, several hundred villagers from Bibinje and residents of Zadar armed with baseball bats and batons demolished about one hundred stores and restaurants owned by Serbs or companies from Serbia. The enterprises were destroyed and the stores were looted. Law enforcement bodies, above all the police, did not do enough to prevent the destruction by a large number of people and did not protect the buildings from looting. Nobody has ever been held accountable for the damage that occurred (Marinković, 2010).

"Everyone was coming down. They pointed their guns at me a million times. I had to prove to them a million times that I'm not a Serb and that I'm not an enemy. It's just all your human rights. Every single fool in this city has more rights than you. He'd have the right to abuse you based on his Croatian identity, to oppress you", Bogdanović recounted to Documenta's researchers.

In Split, businesses belonging to "unsuitable" owners began to be destroyed during the second half of 1991 – cafés, stores, workshops, and homes of owners known as or considered Serbs, Montenegrins and/or, more broadly, enemies.[12]

As can be seen in Bogdanović's testimony, he refused to be labeled as a Serb. Still, nevertheless, he was labeled as an enemy because he had been identified as an ethnic Serb. His presumed ethnic identity, rather than his actions, was sufficient to be characterized as an "enemy of the regime". In the context of the time, he became a Serb, an enemy, and his presumed Serbian identity was enough for his fundamental civil rights to be suspended without a valid reason[13] and for him to be exposed to violence from multiple, more or less organized groups, and even the official state bodies like the military and the police.

The injustices that were committed against those who were ethnically undesirable soon became more general and spilled over into the lives of all citizens, irrespective of their ethnic identity. It was not long before not just those of a different ethnic identity found themselves in danger of being declared enemies but also those who held the ethnic identity of the majority. Within the social context of the 1990s, citizens with a Croatian ethnic identity could already be declared enemies of a system if they did not agree with the official politics or if they had displeased somebody for other, possibly completely unrelated, reasons. In this sense, I can provide the instructive example of a friend's mother working in a hospital in Split.

[12] Apart from the aforementioned destruction of property and the means of work, there was also the legally ungrounded dismissals of employees from state-owned companies and a series of state institutions: municipalities, courts, and the police; the violently illegal and "semi-legal" evictions of citizens who lived in apartments owned by the Yugoslav Army; the illegal arrest and detention of civilians of Serbian ethnicity by the civilian and military police; ethnically motivated murders, etc. (Jurišin, 2001; Bačić, 2016).

[13] In his testimony for Documenta's archive of personal memories, Tonči Majić from the Dalmatian Committee for Human Rights confirmed that one of his illegally evicted clients "found herself outside of the law". To be precise, in an attempt to help the individual, he directly approached the then assistant to the Minister of Defense with a request to stop the members of the military who had carried out the eviction. The minister's assistant answered that he did not have the moral right to oppose Croatian soldiers. After this event, according to Majić, the concerned woman understood "that a person was outside of the law because the Croatian state's leadership did not want to hear about her" (http://www.osobnasjecanja.hr/video-arhiva/tonci-majic/).

Although of Croatian origin, she learned from a reliable source in 1991 that she had been placed on an internal list of unsuitable, hostile personnel, the list of so-called enemies at the start of the war. And indeed, she was soon demoted at work. Using personal and family ties and the social capital she still possessed, she was able to report the incident to a military officer who, at that time, held a very high position in the Croatian military authorities, and her name was removed from the list.

This case illustrates the consequences of the illegal activities initially motivated by ethnic hostilities but later merged with opportunism and criminality directed at citizens regardless of their ethnic identity.

On the one hand, citizens suffered because of the general feeling of insecurity which they articulated in testimonies through psychological terms like "psychosis", "atmosphere", and "fear". On the other hand, they testified to a general increase in criminality and various forms of violence.[14]

More Real than Reality – Unforeclosed Social Experience

Partly in line with the testimonies of the witnesses mentioned above, the anonymous journalist from Split quoted in the first chapter spoke about the presence of massive fear. Also, he spoke about the peculiar intertwining of normality and exceptional state that he described by the phrase "the illusion of normal life". This mixture of normality and exceptional state was also perceived by him primarily affectively at the level of ordinary life without mentioning the macro level and without mentioning clear boundaries between ethnic communities. He also testified about the uncertainty of social knowledge at the time, knowledge about some violent events – secret executions of civilians, corpses mysteriously appearing in the rivers Danube and Drava – events that could be classified as unofficial, mass violence against civilians. It seems that this unofficial violence against civilians conducted by anonymous perpetrators has brought much confusion. People were not sure what was going on anymore. Their trust in social reality was shaken. He captured this uncertainty by saying that "*something* was happening somewhere else, which could not be verified". This simple line reveals the complexity of the social context at the time. As he explained, people were getting unofficial information that some violent events did occur but could not be verified by the official representation of things. Interestingly, this lack of official support did not result in overall skepticism and

[14] "To begin with, it is sufficient just to look at the statistics from the time. As the journalist Pero Jurišin wrote, in 1991 in Split the number of criminal offenses rose by 15%, while the increase until then had been 5-10%. From 1991 to 1993, there were 280 recorded cases of explosives being planted and shootings, while before and after that period the number stood at around 40 cases per year" (Bačić, 2016).

abandonment of such crippled knowledge but in the erasure of boundaries between the official and unofficial interpretation of things.

On the other hand, this lack of overall skepticism did not produce the firm belief that these violent events are "objectively" happening. Most of the people from his inner circle were unsure of what was going on and what wasn't. It seems that in the eyes of the social subjects mentioned by the anonymous journalist, violent events were some "phantom happenings" that shook the sense of reality because they transgressed the social norms. Also, phantom happenings created a sense that something more was happening. Furthermore, according to the ambiguous ontological status of these bogus events, the witnesses transformed them into a something – some-thing was active, something was happening. Alternatively, to put it in a slightly different manner, in the eyes of the social subjects mentioned by the anonymous journalist, these were some phantom happenings that did not have the form of an event.

To briefly conclude, I think that these types of explanations are pointing toward unforeclosed social experience[15] that subjects could not represent by available discourses, but only sense it. Moreover, the sense that something was coming into existence, that something was happening, brought a pause and called subjects to the state of attention. They felt that some-thing was happening, something more, something that was coming into existence, an event, as some strange omnipresent thing. Just this coming into existence was overwhelming for the witnesses. People felt affected. The subjects were sucked in, immersed in the atmosphere, and were forced to pay attention. This overall positioning of subjects that were a part of this atmospheric attunement enacted a temporal suspension that erased diachronic succession – just a massive fear and idea that something was happening. But what?

"The End of History" – The Extended Crisis?

The sense that immersion in an affective atmosphere suspended diachronic succession brings the prevailing concepts of history and memory into question. In the first chapter, I stated that I approached the topic of the breakup of Yugoslavia through an autoethnographic recollection of my memories and insights into the experience of others in written records and research interviews. This type of approach includes a recollection of the experience of often traumatic happenings during the breakup of Yugoslavia and its memory. However, that was not all. I also stated that I often had

[15] Kathleen Stewart described this type of social experience: "There's a pause, a temporal suspension animated by the sense something is coming into existence. The subject is called to a state of attention... Events and outcomes are imminent, unknown but pressing. As Lauren Berlant (2011) puts it, the subject finds herself in a situation – an event that does not yet have its form, a moment of unforeclosed experience" (Stewart, 2011, pp. 446-447).

conversations with friends and acquaintances about that period. At first glance, this small supplement to the general methodological direction looks insignificant but was, in fact, crucial to the research topic. These everyday conversations opened the path towards the origin of the critical research question. Also, they were the virtual place where methodology and theory coincided and where materiality and singularity of the experience were directly converted to theory and general theoretical problems. How?

Because, during our conversations, I got the impression that my interlocutors and I were jointly bringing the affective atmosphere back into existence. We mutually sensed the atmosphere as if it was still present and part of our everyday experience, our ordinariness. It seemed that we were not just remembering past events in these moments. We were not just telling each other personal or collective stories about the people, places, and processes. But parallel to our joint discursive production, we were also sensing something that put us back into the state of attention. Our talk was somehow immersed in an atmosphere that suddenly emerged as if it never faded away, as if it waited for us all these years.

Because of this repetition of wartime atmosphere, is it fair to ask whether it ever actually faded away? Is the wartime atmosphere still present in our lives? Maybe the fabric of our everyday existence is still made of this affective atmosphere? Maybe it is still in the background like the background noise that still shapes our everyday existence, haunting us even today?

Overall, can this unusually high "presence" of wartime atmospheric attunement partly explain the persistence of war rhetoric or continuation of the war in public discourses in some post-Yugoslav countries?[16] Or maybe it is the other way around? Maybe the continuation of the war in public discourses causes the persistence of the wartime atmosphere?

An indicator that parts of past affective attunement are still silently present can also be found in people's testimonies. For instance, an anonymous journalist from Split spoke about the unease he still feels when talking about happenings during the war. During interviews, my interlocutors were also experiencing a similar unease. They mostly felt very uncomfortable during our conversations, like the atmosphere back then was still present.

My thesis is that this affective presence, this unease, is not represented in prevailing narratives and memories of past experiences, it is something that is still intensely present and compelling. We are partly living our everyday existence as if we are still immersed in it and still waiting for something to happen. We are still

[16] About the persistence of war rhetoric in public discourses and politics in Croatia, see Jović (2017).

attuned to it. That is why witnesses speak about the affective atmosphere in indeterminate temporal categories. From their testimonies, one gets the impression that this Thing-atmosphere is a timeless virtual reality still present and pressing. This atmospheric attunement puts in question collective memory and representation of the past because it is still silently present and enigmatic and still shaping the collective sense of the world.

It seems that the breakup of Yugoslavia can be interpreted not just as a series of traumatic events and an overall state of exception that shattered ordinary life, igniting the formation of new political identities, narratives, and histories, but as an extended political and social crisis embedded in the ordinary. The possible sign of an extended political crisis is the continuation of war rhetoric and hostilities that can still be detected in public discourses in societies that emerged after the breakup of Yugoslavia.

Theoretical Considerations

In previous sections, I have shown that the witnesses did not interpret war primarily on the state, macro level as a violent clash between two national communities, but on the local, micro level – on the level of ordinary life. Also, they did not primarily interpret war as a conflict between two ethnic communities. For most of them, the war did not start with the action of the enemy, but with the various incidents that triggered social disorder and ripped the previously existing social tissue. The witnesses experienced wartime firstly as a time of social anomie and legal vacuum. The democratization of violence induced this transgression of social norms that triggered a strong affective response – the production of ordinary affects. In other words, ordinary affects were unfolding because of the democratization of violence and violent acts committed on the level of everyday social relations. However, witnesses did not describe the spreading of the affective afflictions in terms of a cause-and-effect action. For most of them, affective afflictions were interpreted as an overall social state they were immersed into, and as a presence. Also, they did not use clear "objective" markers when describing these affective afflictions. Mostly they used the indeterminate term *atmosphere* to describe the *presence* of affective afflictions in the society. An out of joint affective state colonized their experience of social reality. People perceived social reality primarily affectively, which they could not transform easily into "objective" representation, narration, or series of events.

Moreover, during our joint conversations, this atmospheric attunement was actively reemerging as it did not completely fade away. It seems that the wartime atmosphere was and is still present and active and part of some virtual temporal stretched-out present, and that social reality, at least for the witnesses, is still partly affectively charged, ambiguous and enigmatic.

Summarizing the several analytical points discussed above, it seems necessary to further develop the theoretical analysis of the captured phenomena of ordinary affects and affective atmosphere at the time of the breakup of Yugoslavia and today's unease. Maybe the affective experience analyzed can be interpreted through cultural trauma theory. As it is well known, events like social revolutions, wars, and natural and economic disasters can disrupt a group's meaning system and induce social and/or cultural trauma.

In other words, as Jeffrey Alexander (2004) points out, no matter how the event can be "objectively" disruptive, cultural trauma only occurs when collective identity is affected. Because, "Individual security is anchored in structures of emotional and cultural expectations that provides a sense of security and capability" (*ibid*., p. 10). Only when the collective group's meaning system and, consequently, its collective identity is disrupted can we talk about cultural trauma. Thus, "It is the meaning that provides the sense of shock and fear, not the events in themselves" (*ibid*.); cultural trauma is not produced by the events in themselves but by "sociocultural processes" (*ibid*.). First and foremost, the event must be represented as something that disrupts the "collective sense of identity" (*ibid*.). If cultural trauma is not produced by the events themselves but by social processes, then there is a gap between the event and its representation that can be conceptualized as the "trauma process" (*ibid*.). And because it is socially mediated, the trauma process includes interpretative struggle over the representation of the event.

Overall, Alexander (2004) emphasizes the representation and struggles over the representation of a particular event. One can know that an event is traumatic only through its representation and not prior to it.[17]

Furthermore, there is a productive difference between various representations of the same event. Because if representation is a-priori of the event, there will always be different representations and interpretations of the event. Vice versa, through different representations, or, more accurately said, "difference" in representations, we can recognize the traumatic event as such.

So far, I have used three key concepts of cultural trauma theory: event, representation, and interpretation.

[17] Alexander is representative of the constructivist approach to cultural trauma. He rejects the "naturalistic fallacy" of lay understanding of trauma. Because, "According to lay theory, traumas are naturally occurring events that shatter an individual or collective actor's sense of well-being. In other words, the power to shatter – the 'trauma' – is thought to emerge from events themselves" (2004, p. 2), and "It is upon the rejection of this naturalistic fallacy that our own approach rests. First and foremost, we maintain that events do not, in and of themselves, create collective trauma. Events are not inherently traumatic. Trauma is a socially mediated attribution" (*ibid*., p. 8).

Another critical point in the cultural trauma theory interpreted by Alexander is the concept originally coined by Max Weber: that of carrier groups (*ibid*.). The carrier groups are key actors in the meaning-making of traumatic events. They are groups that seek to spread their interpretation of the events to a broader group by constructing a compelling narrative about the meaning of the events. In the process, they are trying to capture the imagination of the broader group so the public can identify with a particular narrative and dominant interpretation of the events. These points are significant for the analysis conducted in this paper. Earlier I concluded that most of my informants did not or, for various reasons, could not identify with the master narrative, or as I put it, with the official interpretations of the events of the war. For instance, an anonymous journalist from Split said that people around him were receiving information that could not be verified by the publicly available discourses at the time, information about happenings that were not in line with the prevailing interpretation put forward by official politics and media. Moreover, as I pointed out, it seems that their sense of reality was shaken. People did not know what was true, what wasn't, or what to believe in. Their sense of reality was shaken to the degree of breakdown of the relation between representation and event, or between narration as such and event. It seems that they could not transform this unreliable information into a compelling, probable narrative. Most of my witnesses could not attach themselves to the circulating social representations. They were in a social situation that they could not transform into representation about specific events as if they experienced the loss of potential for representation. Regardless of the official narratives, people felt that they were immersed into something that they could not identify, something that was just happening, something that is not clearly articulated as an event. They were just immersed in the affective atmosphere they could not transform into a compelling narrative. In their reflection about past events, the witnesses emphasized this affective aspect of their experience during the war, simultaneously minimizing narrative and interpretative aspects.

These preliminary insights point to a conclusion that the version of cultural trauma theory that focuses on the meaning-making strategies put forward by competing carrier groups is insufficient to explain the experience of interviewed people during the breakup of Yugoslavia.

However, one familiar with the cultural trauma theory knows several branches of this theoretical endeavor. At least one branch, articulated by Eyerman, did include the affective and emotional aspects of traumatic experiences. "For Eyerman emotions are central to a cultural trauma" (Woods, 2019, p. 265). Eyerman states that cultural trauma is unfolding because shock triggers a strong affective response to an event. These affective afflictions break everyday relations simultaneously, opening a window of interpretative opportunity for individuals and groups to make sense of what is happening. He writes:

> There are two sides to a cultural trauma: an emotional experience and an interpretative reaction. Shocks arouse emotion by breaking everyday routines (behaviors as well as cognitive frameworks) and as such demand interpretation, opening a discursive field of interpretative opportunity where well-placed individuals can play a determinant role in making sense of what has occurred (Eyerman, 2015, p. 9).

For Eyerman, then, affects play a central role in the cultural trauma process. Social disturbances can arouse a robust affective response that demands interpretation. However, this interpretative process is not devoid of emotions and affects. Interpreting the event, the carrier groups are diffusing affects and emotions throughout a society and a "primary aspect, if not *the* primary aspect, of a carrier group's efforts is the communication of affect and emotion. At its core, the trauma process, in this regard, can be seen as a process by which emotions are diffused throughout a society" (Woods, 2019, p. 265). As Eyerman emphasizes, well-placed individuals (politicians, intellectuals, journalists, media people) can influence the broader public by diffusing discourse and affects and capturing the imagination of the wider group. At the end of the process, the group can identify with a particular interpretation of the event.

Nevertheless, what happens to individuals not part of this interpretative process? Individuals who are displaced from the cultural trauma process of group identification? This paper analyzes the experiences of the individuals who were literally and metaphorically displaced within communities shocked by enemy activity from the outside; individuals who did not and could not identify with the prevailing interpretations of the carrier groups and communities which have been affected by traumatic events of the war on the territory of the former Yugoslav federation. For instance, from the testimony of the anonymous journalist from Split one can get the impression that the circle of people around him did not believe in the official, public interpretation and communication of affect and emotion disseminated by the dominant carrier groups and the wider public. They *felt* that something more was happening, something that was coming into existence and was not represented and disseminated by the dominant narrative of the community and its carrier groups. So, their affective response wasn't part of the dominant diffusion of emotions and official dramatization of events. Moreover, an autobiographical trait of their affective experience suggests that it was not shared publicly through available discourses, but was rather an intimate experience of witnesses.

Also, I have shown that most of the witnesses did not interpret war primarily on the state, macro level as a violent clash between two national communities, but on the local, micro level – on the level of ordinary life. Also, they resisted the process of ethnicization on the local level. Most did not experience war via identi-

fication with the ethnonational community and its collective trauma. For them, the war started with various incidents that triggered social disorder and ripped the previously existing social tissue. The witnesses experienced wartime firstly as a time of social anomie and legal vacuum. The democratization of violence induced this transgression of social norms. The new capillary violence triggered a strong affective response they experienced as an immersion into the affective atmosphere.

Conclusion

How can we understand their affective experience or atmospheric attunement if cultural trauma theory is not entirely suitable?

The best way to think about this type of affective experience is to go beyond the theoretical framework provided by the cultural trauma theory and the theory of ethnicization that emphasizes the process of collective representation. To understand the affective experience of witnesses, I think it is necessary to provide some supplement to these theories. Going beyond them implies supplementing the concepts of event, representation, identification, ethnicization, and memory.

To provide a supplement to the usual theoretical framework and mentioned concepts, I will propose to add the concept of *situation*. More precisely, for describing social reality and the overall experience of witnesses during the breakup of Yugoslavia, it is necessary to add the notion of situation and crisis embedded in the ordinary.

In her book *Cruel Optimism*, Laurent Berlant, when describing the historical present and prevailing contemporary social conditions in the US and Europe, defines the genre of situation as animated suspension that overwhelms subjects and produces a sense of emergency. "A situation is a state of things in which something that will perhaps matter is unfolding amid the usual activity of life. It is a state of the animated and animating suspension that forces itself on the consciousness, a state that produces a sense of the emergence of something in the present that may become an event" (Berlant, 2011, p. 5). What differentiates the genre of situation from the event is its anti-sovereign effect on subjects. The subject who finds himself in a situation does not know what and how to be in it. Also, the genre of situation partially undermines collective representation and personal and collective identification.

Although witnesses mentioned important violent events in the examples mentioned before from Split and Eastern Slavonia, they did not identify themselves with the prevailing collective representation of these events. In other words, they did not interpret these violent events as a point of the clash between ethnonational communities, but as a moment when they found themselves in a perplexing social situation; they did not know how to and could not handle it. As Dragojević explained,

residents of the village in Eastern Slavonia did not fully understand what was happening and what would happen; they were confused and in chaos. They found themselves in a situation they did not fully understand as they did not know what it was and how to be in it. Similarly, another Dragojević's respondent found himself in a situation in which "nobody was able to protect oneself". Dragojević explained this indeterminate social state as a situation in which it is almost impossible to decide what to do next.

The testimony of an anonymous journalist from Split is a good example of how subjects think and feel when they find themselves in a situation. Most of the witnesses in a situation did not know what was happening. They did not know what to believe because their sense of reality was fundamentally shaken. However, as I have shown, the lack of trustworthy social knowledge did not trigger overall skepticism. Witnesses were receiving information about some happenings, a piece of information they could not verify and, subsequently, transform it into the genre of event. These phantom happenings pushed them further to the overall feeling that something was really happening or that something more was happening. They were in a state of animated and animating suspension that produced a sense of emergency that they could not articulate in the genre of event and a compelling collective narrative. The witnesses were in an ambivalent, puzzling, confusing situation without eventful and narrative closure, similar to Berlant's definition of a situation: "The situation is therefore a genre of social time and practice in which a relation of persons and worlds is sensed to be changing but the rules for habitation and the genres of storytelling about it are unstable, in chaos" (Berlant, 2011, p. 6). In other words, they find themselves in a situation, a state of animated and animating suspension, a moment of unforeclosed experience. In a situation, usual genres are broken or do not function. What defines a situation is the waning of genres. The waning of genres triggered the emergence of affective afflictions because, generally speaking, "genres provide an affective expectation of the experience of watching something unfold" (*ibid*.).

But, as I have shown in the paper, during the reign of a situation, due to the process of ethnicization, new ethnic identities emerged. They emerged in the social condition with an anti-sovereign effect on individual and collective subjects. If a situation was the precondition for creating new ethnic identities, then the result could be the creation of continually endangered, fragile identities. These situational political identities would then be constantly alert for possible threats and dangers. In other words, if during the breakup of Yugoslavia, the process of ethnicization was unfolding amid the social condition of a situation, then it might result in the production of continually endangered ethnic identities – situational political identities. And if the core of new ethnonational states still consists of these situational identities, then the

result could be the persistence and unusually high presence of war rhetoric in public discourses in some post-Yugoslav states.

Also, the genre of situation brings a specific sense of time without compelling narrative structure about the past. When the subject finds itself in a situation or is thinking about the present and the past in the genre of situation, the subject finds itself in a virtual temporal stretched-out present. It is a type of temporal experience that can be called presentism, in which the present is primarily perceived affectively: "... the present is what makes itself present to us before it becomes anything else, such as an orchestrated collective event or an epoch on which we can look back" (*ibid*., p. 4). I mentioned previously that my interlocutors and witnesses are still sensing the wartime atmosphere as if they were still part of the wartime social situation. From the testimonies, one can understand that the wartime atmosphere is still present and part of the temporal stretched-out present. Also, I concluded that in war-torn post-Yugoslav societies, one could find an unusually high "presence" of wartime rhetoric or continuation of the war in public discourses.

If in war-torn post-Yugoslav societies the wartime atmosphere is still present, and the genre of storytelling about the past is still unstable, and in chaos, this could mean that "the present moment increasingly imposes itself on consciousness as a moment in extended crisis, with one happening piling on another" (*ibid*., p. 7).

Also, it means that the breakup of Yugoslavia can be interpreted not just as a series of (traumatic) events igniting the formation of new political identities, narratives, and histories, but as an extended political and social crisis embedded in the ordinary.

REFERENCES

Alexander, J. C. (2004) 'Toward a Theory of Cultural Trauma' in J. C. Alexander, R. Eyerman, B. Giesen, N. J. Smelser and P. Sztompka, *Cultural Trauma and Collective Identity*. Berkeley: University of California Press, pp. 1-30.

Bačić, M. (2016) 'Deložacije devedesetih: kako je sve počelo', *STav.cenzura*, 13 January 2016. Available at: http://stav.cenzura.hr/delozacije-iz-devedesetih-kako-je-sve-pocelo/ (Accessed: 10 September 2021).

Bergholz, M. (2016) *Violence as a Generative Force: Identity, Nationalism, and Memory in a Balkan Community*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

Berlant, L. (2011) *Cruel Optimism*. Durham and London: Duke University Press.

Blanuša, N. (2021) 'Dissolution of Yugoslavia as a conspiracy and its haunting returns: Narratives of internal and external othering' in Astapova, A., Colăcel, O., Pintilescu,

C. and Scheibner, T. (eds.) *Conspiracy Theories in Eastern Europe: Tropes and Trends*. Abingdon, Oxon; New York: Routledge, Francis & Taylor Group, pp. 147-166.

Čelan, N. (2017) *Baština. Kako sam preživio splitske devedesete i prvih dvadeset godina TBF-a*. Split: slobodna Dalmacija print d.o.o.

Dragojević, M. (2019) *Amoral Communities: Collective Crimes in Time of War*. Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press.

Đerić, G. (2008) 'Nasilje u društvenom pamćenju. Intima hrvatske i srpske javnosti povodom akcije Oluja', *Filozofija i društvo*, (1), pp. 43-68.

Eyerman, R. (2015) *Is This America?: Katrina as Cultural Trauma*. Austin: University of Texas Press.

Fink-Hafner, D. (1995) 'The Disintegration of Yugoslavia', *Canadian Slavonic Papers*, 37(3-4), pp. 339-356.

Jović, D. (2003) *Jugoslavija. Država koja je odumrla*. Zagreb, Beograd: Prometej, Samizdat B92.

Jović, D. (2012) 'The War That Is Not Allowed to Be Forgotten. Nationalist Discourse on the Homeland War (1991-1995) in Contemporary Croatia', *Südosteuropa Mitteilungen*, 3, pp. 52-69.

Jović, D. (2017) *Rat i mit. Politika identiteta u suvremenoj Hrvatskoj*. Zagreb: Fraktura.

Jurišin, P. (2001) 'Splitske olovne godine', *Nedjeljna Dalmacija*, 12 October 2001. Available at: http://arhiv.slobodnadalmacija.hr/nedjeljna/20011012/ (Accessed: 10 September 2021).

Kolsto, P. (ed.) (2014) *Strategies of Symbolic Nation Building in South Eastern Europe.* London: Ashgate.

Marinković, E. (2010) 'Kristallnacht – Zadar 1991.', *Novosti 535*, 20 March 2010. Available at: http://arhiva.portalnovosti.com/2010/03/kristallnacht-%E2%80%93-zadar-1991/ (Accessed: 10 September 2021).

Milekić, S. (2016) 'Suprotstavljanje ratnim prisilnim deložacijama u Hrvatskoj', *BIRN*, 21 April 2016. Available at: http://www.balkaninsight.com/rs/article/suprotstavljanje-ratnim-prisilnim-delo%C5%BEacijama-u-hrvatskoj-04-19-2016 (Accessed: 10 September 2021).

Petersen, R. D. (2002) *Understanding Ethnic Violence. Fear, Hatred, and Resentment in Twentieth-Century Eastern Europe*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Petrović, D. (2020) 'Vrijeme bezakonja: demokratizacija nasilja u kontekstu raspada Jugoslavije' in O. Obad and P. Bagarić (eds.) *Devedesete: kratki rezovi*. Zagreb: IEF, Jesenski i Turk.

Ramet, S. P. (2007) 'The Dissolution of Yugoslavia: Competing Narratives of Resentment and Blame', *Südosteuropa. Zeitschrift für Politik und Gesellschaft*, 55(1), pp. 26-69.

Reed-Danahay, D. (1997) 'Introduction' in D. Reed-Danahay (ed.) *Auto/ethnography. Rewriting the Self and the Social*. Oxford: Bloomsbury Academic, pp. 1-20.

Stewart, K. (2007) *Ordinary Affects*. Durham and London: Duke University Press.

Stewart, K. (2011) 'Atmospheric Attunements', *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*, (29), pp. 445-453.

Woods, E. T. (2019) 'Cultural trauma: Ron Eyerman and the founding of a new research paradigm', *American Journal of Cultural Sociology*, 7(2), pp. 260-274.

Žunec, O. (2007) *Goli život. Socijetalne dimenzije pobune Srba u Hrvatskoj*, 1. Zagreb: Demetra.

Mailing Address:

Duško Petrović, Associate professor at the Faculty of Humanities and Social Science, University of Zagreb, Ivana Lučića 3, 10000 Zagreb.
E-mail: duspetrov@gmail.com