

THE KOSOVO WAR IN MEDIA: BETWEEN WAR JOURNALISM AND FOREIGN POLICY OF NATO MEMBERS

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Abstract

Significant links between the media and war have been identified for well over a century. Media often plays a key role in today's conflict. Basically, their role can take two different and opposed forms. Either the media takes an active part in the conflict and has responsibility for the increased violence, or stays independent and out of the conflict, thereby contributing to the resolution of conflict and alleviation of violence. Indeed, throughout the Yugoslav crisis of the 1990s, it often seemed that the media were dictating policy to Western governments. The implications of the conflict were broad and did not exhaust themselves in its military aspects. A key player in the conflict was the media, both the tightly controlled media in Yugoslavia, which came under increasing pressure in the months before the Kosovo war, and the Western media, largely unaware of the background to the conflict. The aim of this work is to show the media coverage on the Kosovo war. Although, how much influenced the foreign policies of states that have to find the solutions? The study includes the research done on Balkans (including Turkey), European and American Press.

Keywords: *Kosovo War, Balkans Press, European Press, US Press, Foreign Policy.*

1. Introduction

In the Kosovo conflict, three sides were clearly involved: the Serbs, the Kosovo Albanians, and NATO. Though the nominal appearance of various political, cultural, and interest positions, there were striking resemblances among Western media, which clearly indicates that the media can be considered as a single, specific element of the conflict (Blagojević, 2005: 166). The media have played a huge role here; this was one of the real times that the media had a moral impact on Western leaders and their states, and vice versa, which was what the Albanian freedom-fighters wanted. This was the time when human rights and values were to be noted, as always, putting pressure on international leaders to act. Later, the leaders began to condemn the attacks by Serbian security forces in the unarmed Albanian population resulting in NATO intervention to stop Serbian genocide against the Albanian population in Kosovo and to stop the second Srebrenica occurring.

NATO's press relations budget for the Serbia/Kosovo operation was between 50 and 60 million Belgian francs; at 1999 exchange rates that was about £882,252. Its chief press spokesman, Jamie Shea, reveals that rather than bidding for a supplementary public relations budget he "raided the existing budget". Most of the money went towards equipping a press centre adequate to the needs of the international media presence in Brussels for the duration of the air campaign. This was what he had been "begging for years for" to no avail "but which had suddenly become instantaneously and miraculously available during the air operation (McLaughlin, 2002: 262).

Up to seven months before NATO troops entered Kosovo, Western international broadcasters predicted a crisis in their reports. They increased broadcasting time and expanded their reach in the Balkans. They pulled out all the stops, moving well beyond their traditional shortwave transmissions: They leased more time on medium wave transmitters, and organized or expanded Internet text, audio and video delivery services and e-mail exchanges in Serbian and Albanian to reach the estimated half-million personal computers in the former Yugoslavia; They began construction of several FM stations in countries neighboring Serbia. In this, the Voice of America (VOA), the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC), Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL), Deutsche Welle of Germany (DW) and Radio France International (RFI) launched an unprecedented joint project during an international crisis—two 24-hour-a-day satellite feeds of their individual programs to the stations. Both around-the-clock streams were tailored for Balkan audiences, but one was dominated by Serbian, the other Albanian-language transmissions; they expanded downlinks of TV (VOA's Serbian and Bosnian simulcasts, available in successive half-hour programs each weekday evening from 11

to midnight, local time) via Astra satellites. These programs reached direct to homes, independent of terrestrial in-country TV stations on which President Milosevic had banned foreign relays; at full throttle, the Western international broadcasters provided vital news and information to listeners in the Balkans around the clock for nearly 250 hours a week. Even under the information blackout and crackdown against universities, their programming reaches remote corners of the former Yugoslavia. Unlike CNN, their words are borne on electronic wings in the languages of the people at or near the center of the conflict: in Albanian, Bosnian, Croatian, Macedonian, and Serbian (Heil, 1999).

Kosovo War is important for patients to be witnessing one of the first examples of cyberwar in the world. When the Kosovo crisis erupted in 1999, there were almost 4000 journalists at the scene, many of them independent freelancers. Philip Knightley in book *“The First Casualty: The War Correspondent as Hero and Myth-Maker from the Crimea to Kosovo”* asserted that there were more war correspondents than ever before, as “2700 media people accompanied NATO forces when they entered Kosovo at the end of the bombing campaign (cited by Bessaiso, 2010: 55). A new development also made Kosovo the first internet war. Beyond the battle area, anyone with a computer could broadcast their views to a global audience from the comfort of their homes. There is a need to place this development in some historical context since there were television cameras in Korea during the 1950-53 war, but very few people had television sets at that time. Vietnam, often erroneously labeled the ‘first television war’, was only ten years later. The Gulf War was the first real-time war. By the time of Kosovo, around 8% of the world’s population had logged on to the World Wide Web, mainly in Europe and North America. The internet was to Kosovo, therefore, what television was to Korea. Although ultimately the internet was less significant than the traditional mass media during the Kosovo conflict, to repeat (Taylor, 2003: 5).

According to Bucher, Internet changes and improves crisis communication. Crisis communication becomes multi-directional, more intercultural. If you compare coverage of the Gulf War and recent events in Afghanistan with the coverage of Kosovo war the differences are obvious: the lack of Internet resources in the first two cases was caused by a television-centered crisis communication with a high dependency on military information. In the case of the Kosovo war, there were Internet-based information sources right where the war was occurring, from e-mail to Web sites, all of which reported as private correspondence and eyewitnesses. This multidirectional form of crisis communication allowed the audience to compare and evaluate different sources and to understand better the biases of official information (Bucher, 2002). Thanks to the internet, therefore, the fog of war’ in Kosovo merely

got thicker. For the Serbs, and accordingly for the 19 NATO countries they faced, the Kosovo conflict was to the internet what the Korean War was to television. NATO's performance was such that it will need to ensure! that its next conflict, if there is one, does not become another Vietnam (Taylor, 2000: 200).

What comes out of it is a picture of the world in which contemporary wars and modern news media attract each other. In this process, the media become an integral part of the wars. They play a complex role in the conduct and pursuit of wars, which can't be limited to simply being observers of events. They have become participants and even catalysts in international crises. The main aspect of media involvement in wars is the relationship between media coverage of wars and the crisis in creating foreign policy.

2. Background of the Kosovo War

Kosovo was an autonomous region in the former Yugoslavia, which has struggled for its independence ever since it was annexed to Serbia in the early twentieth century. Both sides of the Kosovo conflict—the Serbs and the Kosovo Albanians—have historic claims for Kosovo. Albanians claim to be direct descendants of the Illyrians, the earliest known inhabitants of Kosovo, while the Serbs claim that Kosovo was part of the original Serbian kingdom and the cradle of their civilization. Whatever the historic claims are, the undeniable fact is that the Kosovo Albanians comprised about 90% of the total Kosovo population when the disintegration of Yugoslavia and the collapse of communism in the former socialist countries started in the late 1980s. Both the domestic and international political situations became favorable for the Kosovo Albanians' independence cause. In order to bring Kosovo under the direct control and to strengthen his personal political power, Serbia's nationalist leader, Slobodan Milosevic, deprived Kosovo of its autonomy in 1989. The Kosovo Albanians strenuously opposed the revocation of its autonomy and struggled for independence. With the change of time and actual situation, Kosovo Albanians' passive resistance was replaced by violent reaction. In 1998, Milosevic responded to the armed Albanian resistance with a campaign of ethnic cleansing, which caused wide international concern.

In March of 1999, the confrontation between Serb forces and Albanians reached the peak of violence as tens of thousands of people fled from their homes from Serbian military ransacking cities and villages through Kosovo (Yang, 2003: 234). This eventually led to NATO intervening to end the ethnic cleansing, which was compared to the Holocaust of World War II. NATO initiated an airstrike where they began bombing areas where Serb military were

camped out. On June 5, 1999 NATO and the Former Republic of Yugoslavia came to an agreement to ceasefire.

The pretext for NATO intervention was that Kosovo was experiencing a humanitarian catastrophe from Serbian aggression. The problem with military interventions is that they often serve more than one objective. One of these objectives, but not necessarily primary, is restoring respect for the existing humanitarian norms. One of the main reasons that NATO intervened in the Kosovo crisis is that NATO is preparing to celebrate its fiftieth anniversary - an opportunity to determine the Alliance's vision for its future role. According to Jing Ke, underlying the Kosovo War is the US global strategy of setting a new world order after the Cold War, where the US and NATO would have a free hand to protect their interests, ideological values, and credibility. Before the war, NATO used the threat of force. Both Serb and Kosovo delegations were summoned to Rambouillet, France, for the so-called "political negotiation." The nonnegotiable Rambouillet Accords was rejected by Serbia because the acceptance would mean the loss of sovereignty of the state (Ke, 2008: 158). The following is part of the stipulations in Appendix B of the Rambouillet Accords: "NATO personnel, under all circumstances and at all times, shall be immune from the Parties, jurisdiction in respect of any civil, administrative, criminal, or disciplinary offenses which may be committed by them in the FRY. NATO personnel shall enjoy, together with their vehicles, vessels, aircraft, and equipment, free and unrestricted passage and unimpeded access throughout the FRY including associated airspace and territorial waters (Rambouillet Accords, 1999)".¹ It is clear that the US and its allies were not interested in negotiation. What they truly wanted was to get rid of Milosevic and gain control of the Balkan Peninsular. Behind the well-intentioned purpose of the humanitarian intervention in the Kosovo War lies the unspeakable Western geopolitical strategy (Ke, 2008: 159).

3. US Press and Kosovo War

The biggest effect of the „CNN effect“ is the agenda-setting effect. The media affects the agenda by identifying a certain issue as a priority and push the policy-makers towards dealing with that issue prior to the other issues. There are some other effects of the CNN effect, which come secondary after the agenda-setting effect. These effects are the accelerant effect, the impediment effect, the propaganda effect, and the challenging effect. The accelerant effect

¹ The Rambouillet Accords (Feb. 23, 1999) is also called Rambouillet Agreement. Its full name is Interim Agreement for Peace and Self-Government in Kosovo.

accelerates the process of decision-making, of the government, by putting public pressure. Even if something is happening in a country far away from the audience of the CNN, the media can present an issue as a priority, as existential to human rights values, and this will make public pressure to the government to take immediate decisions to stop atrocities and respond to the injustice. This usually happens with 24-hour coverage of the issue (Bahador, 2007: 57-61).

In article examines the coverage of NATO's bombing of Yugoslavia in March–June 1999 by the global television news organization, the Cable News Network (CNN), Daya Kishnu Thussu argues that NATO's precedent-setting action — the first conflict in which the world's most powerful military alliance intervened in the internal affairs of a sovereign state — was reported uncritically and presented by CNN as a humanitarian intervention. Television pictures tended to follow the news agenda set up by the US military. Few alternative views were aired and, most importantly, a fundamental change in the nature of NATO — from a defence alliance to an offensive peace-enforcing organization — was largely ignored (Thussu, 2000: 345). According to Thussu, the war was presented as a humanitarian emergency, the last resort when all other diplomatic options had been exhausted. By giving a large proportion of news time to US military commanders, NATO spokespersons and generally hawkish 'independent' experts, CNN tended to legitimize the bombing. Though Yugoslav and Serbian leaders were given an opportunity to put across their point, the time allotted to such views was very limited. This was also the case in CNN's analysis and comment program *Insight* and the special extended *Worldview* reports. The majority of the experts interviewed — both military and civilian — supported the NATO action, arguing that the alliance was the best guarantee for peace in Europe. CNN, like other mainstream western media organizations, presented the bombing as a moral crusade against a tyrant. The demonization of the Serbs and the personalization of the conflict with Slobodan Milosevic was a continuation of eight years of western reporting of Serbs as the main perpetrator of what has been routinely called 'ethnic cleansing'. The KLA, which in 1998 was labeled as a terrorist organization by the US government and by a leading US-based human rights group, running its operations with profits from international drug smuggling, was transformed by CNN into an army of 'freedom fighters' (Thussu, 2000: 350-351).

Instead of only checking and analyzing what was presented by the newspapers on issues related to the Kosovo Crisis, the study of Jing Ke about US press pays more attention to what was not reported or was only rarely reported and presented to the public by these two papers. From this unique perspective, the essay attempts to examine the objectivity of the American

newspapers through *The Washington Post* and *The Washington Times*, and the correctness of the theory on the social construction of reality (Ke, 2008: 157). Neither of the two selected papers presented a clear political slant in their reports on the Kosovo conflict. Both published articles questioning NATO's intention of intervention and the legitimacy of NATO's military means and operations during the war. On the other hand, both presented reports showing their pro-NATO attitude because NATO's intervention was generally perceived as an attempt to put an end to the humanitarian crisis in Kosovo. However, a closer look could help us see the fact that *The Post* reported on the Kosovo War more neutrally than *The Times*. *The Post* presented only two articles criticizing NATO, but neither aimed to accuse the US Democratic Party or the Clinton Administration for the US involvement in NATO's Kosovo intervention. *The Times* published five articles reporting negatively on the US government and NATO, where sometimes a strong political slant could be easily sensed. This may explain to some extent why *The Post* has a larger audience (Ke, 2008: 167-168).

One more study that is worth mentioning is Richard Vincent's (2000) "A Narrative Analysis of U.S. Press Coverage of Slobodan Milosevic and the Serbs in Kosovo," where he noted the four themes that captured journalistic attention: (a) Serbs as terrorists, (b) Serbs as evil, (c) Milosevic as a dictator, and (d) Kosovo refugees as fearful victims of Milosevic and Serbs (Vincent, 2000: 325-326). This article is an exploratory analysis of the linguistic treatment of the Kosovo bombing and related events as reported in the major US media. It studies the national news reported by nine different news media during one-week period, 22-28 April 1999. This was the period about midway through the NATO bombing activity in Kosovo. The specific media analysed were: the newspapers *Christian Science Monitor*, *Los Angeles Times*, *New York Times*, and *Washington Post*; the news agency Associated Press (AP); and television and cable news channels ABC, CBS, CNN and MSNBC (Vincent, 2000: 321-322). The resulting data pool comprised 645 separate stories on Kosovo identified across the eight-individual media during the one week. (Vincent, 2000: 325).

Bahador's study about US media included, in research made in begin, the main television evening news programs of four major American networks—*American Broadcasting Company* (ABC), *Columbia Broadcasting System* (CBS), *National Broadcasting Company* (NBC), and *Cable News Network* (CNN)—were reviewed from January 1, 1998 to March 20, 1999, the final week before NATO bombing. The Kosovo conflict of 1998–1999 was covered on American television news for the first time on March 2, 1998, in 3 minutes and 30 seconds of collective coverage on CNN, ABC, and CBS, although images of the incident in the Drenica area did not emerge until March 5. From the week that began on March 1, 1998, to the final

full week before the NATO intervention (a period of 55 weeks or 385 days), there was 1,061 minutes and 50 seconds of total Kosovo coverage, representing 3 percent of all American television news over this period.² In periods immediately after the three massacre incidents, however, there was much greater coverage. In the two weeks (14 days) after images of the incidents first surfaced, for example, the average coverage per day was 8 minutes —almost three times the daily average (5 minutes and 40 seconds average after Drenica, 12 minutes and 30 seconds average after Gornje Obrinje, and 6 minutes average after Racak). Although these three two-week periods after the massacres represented 10.9 percent of the total period reviewed, they accounted for 32 percent of the total Kosovo television coverage. In the four-week (28-day) periods after the massacres, which accounted for 21.8 percent of the time, media coverage was 48 percent of the total coverage. In other words, these three incidents accounted for nearly half of all media coverage (Bahador, 2007: 90-91). The evidence reviewed in this case study demonstrates that the CNN effect, as defined and qualified in this study, was one of the influencing factors behind NATO's decision to intervene militarily in Kosovo. Each incident opened a window of opportunity in which policy shifted incrementally toward military intervention. In fact, the case study shows that the CNN effect was only one-factor pressuring policy toward intervention. Other variables relating to the actual fighting in Kosovo and its consequences on civilians also contributed. These other drivers, which garnered limited or no media coverage, were the basis for more traditional government driven actions that, in some cases, were followed by media coverage (Bahador, 2007: 163-165).

Hammond and Peterson, in their study about CNN's wartime coverage, concluded that in word usage, assumptions, and choice and treatment of issues and sources, CNN and its reporters on the Kosovo war followed NATO's lead and served as a de facto public-information partner. These journalists never questioned NATO's motives, explored any hidden agendas, challenged NATO's claims of fact, or followed investigatory leads that did not conform to NATO propaganda requirements. CNN's journalists not only followed NATO's agenda and failed to ask critical questions, they also served as salespersons and promoters of the NATO war (Hammond & Peterson, 2000: 113-114). Overall, CNN served as NATO's de facto public information arm during Operation Allied Force. Despite its pretensions to being a 'global' enterprise, its news-making was not significantly different from that of its US media rivals.

² There was an estimated 40,425 minutes of television news coverage over this period. (One hour on CNN and 30 minutes each on ABC, CBS, and NBC. If this number is then divided by the 1,061 minutes and 50 seconds devoted to the Kosovo civil war, an estimated three percent of all American news coverage over this period was devoted to the issue.

Any effort at being ‘open’ and ‘balanced’ was overwhelmed by its reporters’ internalized acceptance of NATO’s aims, language, and frames of reference. NATO’s basic truthfulness was assumed, and its spokespersons given command of the floor. Although immensely successful at reaching a large audience with ‘breaking news’, CNN broke the news that NATO wanted featured and rarely departed from NATO’s perspective (Hammond & Peterson, 2000: 120).

The study of Jin Yang, using a frame analysis technic, compares the way in which Chinese media, represented by the *People’s Daily Online* and the *China Daily*, and US media, represented by the *New York Times* and *Washington Post*, covered the NATO air strikes in 1999. The content analysis of 200 news stories reveals that Chinese newspapers and US newspapers adopted two different media frames in recounting the large-scale military action. While the Chinese newspapers framed the air strikes as an intervention of Yugoslavia’s sovereignty and territory, the US newspaper framed the air strikes as a humanistic aid to Albanians to stop the ethnic cleansing initiated by Serbians. The general corresponding reflections of government attitudes toward the air strikes in the newspapers indicate a considerable influence of national interest on media frames in newspapers. The author concludes that in international news reportage, national interest often outweighs other factors to play an active role in framing media texts (Yang, 2003: 231).³ Yang concluded that, the Chinese government’s stand of respecting Yugoslavia’s sovereignty and territorial integrity and solving the Kosovo crisis through peaceful and political negotiations was echoed in almost all the aspects of media framing. Through selecting protest and condemnation topics and omitting ethnic cleansing and refugee topics, the Chinese papers focused on challenging the NATO air strikes. By choosing Chinese and Russian sources most of the time, the Chinese papers adopted Serbian points of view more often than the US papers. The antistrike attitude was also mirrored in using more anti-strike terms and displaying more emotion-charged headlines. Hence, it was reasonable to conclude that Chinese newspaper coverage reflected the Chinese government’s reaction to the air strikes. The Chinese newspapers presented to the Chinese audience a frame of the NATO intervention in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia’s internal affairs by force. On the other hand, the US newspapers, by giving more focus on the topics of air war updates and strategy/tactics/weapons, took the justice of the air strike action for granted. By using American and NATO sources most of the time, the US papers covered

³ The official declarations from China and the US on the issue of Kosovo exhibited two strikingly different national interests. While China upheld the principle of sovereignty, the US believed Europe’s security, therefore its own security, had to be defended by providing humanistic aid to the Albanians in Kosovo (Yang, 2003: 235).

stories from the Albanian point of view more frequently. The pro-strike attitude was also reflected in the usage of more pro-strike terms than the Chinese papers. Therefore it was legitimate to conclude that the way in which the US stories were framed corresponded to the US government's stand in the crisis: the action of NATO air strikes was in support of justice for the Albanians to stop an ethnic cleansing. Therefore, the American public was exposed to a different media frame than the Chinese public (Yang, 2003: 244-245).

One main media framing technique includes comparing the current event to previous events that are similar. The Kosovo War was not exempt from these generalizations and were frequently compared to the Holocaust and Vietnam War. When comparing the Kosovo War to the Holocaust opinion leaders framed the need for intervention from Western Countries. "If, for instance, the Kosovo crisis were successfully portrayed through direct or indirect allusions as another Holocaust, the imperative of stopping a genocide would lend support to some kind of American intervention in Kosovo" (Paris, 2002: 425). The same was done when comparing the Kosovo War to the Vietnam War, "If the crisis were viewed as another Vietnam or as a civil war in which the United States had no clear national interest, unpleasant memories of the Vietnam conflict would likely produce countervailing pressures against intervention" (Paris, 2002: 425).

These comparisons were used by such news outlets and discussed on national television in United States by influential opinion leaders. Making such references and metaphors provided the public to activate conscious and subconscious, rational and emotional responses to these other current events, due to strong emotions that are associated with American intervention of the Vietnam War, thus swaying the public opinions on the Kosovo War (Paris, 2002: 447-448). In other words, the Kosovo war may not be a new Holocaust, but it should be thought as a similar event where international intervention would be necessary. These are the statements and comparisons that have been repeatedly made by the Clinton Administration, as well as by other politicians and leaders in the media.

4. Coverage of European Press

In *Infosuasion in European Newspapers; A Case Study on the War in Kosovo*, Rosella Savarese examined the orientation of the European press during Kosovo by means of the 'infosuasion' (persuasive information) and media logic hypotheses; analyzing a selection of ten European newspapers, with the biggest circulation, to see how the conflict's participants were presented. Two newspaper from each country (France, the UK, Italy, Spain and Germany) were selected, one known as being conservative and the other as being liberal. The conservative

papers were *Le Figaro*, *The Times*, *Il Corriere Della Sera*, *ABC* and *Die Welt*. As examples of the liberal press were chosen; *Le Monde*, *The Guardian*, *La Repubblica*, *El Pais* and *Frankfurter Rundschau*. Savarese found *The Guardian* was similar to *The Times*, in that they were characterized by a balancing of opinions, particularly in comparison to the Spanish newspapers, *El Pais* and *ABC*, who Savarese found to be extremely partisan in their support for the NATO campaign. Savarese found there was a strong narrative scheme in the British papers, and that NATO was seen as heroes and the Serbs as anti-heroes, with NATO's main value objects being a democracy, equality, liberty, independence and cultural independence, while the latter were authoritarianism, justice, peace, and nationalism. Savarese found that in the non-Spanish newspapers: 'Half the authors of the articles, although not necessarily journalists, declared themselves to be against intervention in as much as they believe that the operation is not (in this order) successful, or rapid, or effective, or necessary, or indispensable,' with the other half in favor of action for the opposite reasons. The author thought that those against the action either believed the Serbs were legitimately defending their rights in Kosovo; were worried that Russia and China might enter the war on the Serbs' side, or believed that diplomacy should have been used. Those in favor of the NATO campaign emphasized the fact that human rights had been violated; Milosevic was authoritarian, and that the UN had been blocked from taking action by vetoes. Savarese did not find any distinct differences between the coverage of liberal and conservative newspapers across the different countries, (Savarese, 2000: 369-379) and there was more difference found between the different countries' coverage.

Stig A. Nohrstedt, Sophia Kaitatzi-Whitlock, Rene Ottosen and Kristina Riegert looked at the coverage of the first three days of the NATO air strikes in newspapers from four countries: *The Daily Telegraph* from the UK, *Ta Nea* from Greece, *Aftenposten* from Norway, and *Dagens Nyheter* from Sweden.⁴ The focus is on the degree to which the propaganda image of the conflict laid out by President Clinton in his speeches on 23 and 24 March, when the first air attacks were launched, was also present in the European media, and also to what extent it was criticized and opposed. This is accomplished by comparing daily newspapers discourse in this countries in terms of their construction of the following themes: (1) the Clinton speeches; (2) the image of Milosevic; (3) the consequences of the air attacks; and (4) the positioning of

⁴ Of the countries included in this study, two – Norway and the UK – took active part in the NATO operations, but the former only to a minor extent (they supplied fighter planes for support, but were not involved in the actual bombings) while the UK was a major contributor (involved in the bombing campaign as well as in propaganda activities). Greece, neighboring the conflict area, was one of the NATO members not involved in the military operations, and promoted a political and diplomatic solution. Sweden as non-aligned country did not participate in the NATO operations in any way. As an EU member the Swedish government stood behind the EU declaration on the Kosovo conflict, but did not take a position on the military operations (Nohrstedt et al., 2000: 388-389).

the home country, i.e. the median country. The analysis found that *The Daily Telegraph* differed from the other papers because it depicted Tony Blair as the dominant NATO leader, rather than Bill Clinton. *The Daily Telegraph* was also found to have followed Clinton and Blair in personalizing the war around Milosevic more than the other papers and blamed him for all the troubles in the Balkans over the previous ten years. The analysts concluded that only *Ta Nea* consistently questioned the NATO discourse. Their research also found that *The Daily Telegraph* did not question the legality of the NATO air strikes as much as the other papers; criticized the bombing most for its lack of efficiency and discussed whether ground troops were the answer much more than the other three papers. In general terms and with respect to two central elements in Clinton's speeches, i.e. (1) the necessity of the bombings to make Milosevic stop ethnic cleansing and (2) that the responsibility for the hostilities lies solely with Milosevic, the NATO/US propaganda view was privileged and even reinforced by the dailies from Norway, Sweden and the UK in our sample. In one instance — the association between Milosevic and Hitler as indicated by Clinton — is even further elaborated on by the media. A third element, i.e. the peace-enforcing objective of the NATO involvement, is on the whole uncritically promoted in the British and Norwegian dailies, but strongly questioned in the Swedish and the Greek newspapers. The Greek daily, however, is the only one in the sample where the NATO/US discourse is directly countered by a predominantly critical discourse entirely questioning its rationality and legitimacy (Nohrstedt, Kaitatzi-Whitlock, Ottosen, & Riegert, 2000: 391-401).

When we look in British press exanimated by Hammond, British newspaper except for the *Independent* on Sunday took a pro-war line in its editorial column, there were, broadly speaking, two types press support for the NATO attack. Politically conservative newspapers, such as *The Times*, *Telegraph*, *Express* and *Daily Mail*, voiced their customary stout support for the British military. At the same time, however, these papers expressed a certain caution about the wisdom and goals of NATO action, particularly in the early days of the war. For the *Daily Mail*'s leader-writer, it surely came naturally to emphasize 'unequivocal support' for the British and NATO armed forces (25 March). By contrast, for the more liberal section of the press, particularly the *Guardian* and *Independent*, to whom a pro-military stance is not such a traditional reflex response, it was NATO's proclaimed moral mission which captured the imagination. With the help of the media, Blair created a temporary 'national moral purpose' over Kosovo. Taking their cue from his talk of Good versus Evil, many journalists celebrated the bombing as a just war for victims of oppression, simplifying and distorting the reality of

the conflict. As the Christian Crusades needed the Infidel, Blairite moral crusading requires antisocial barbarians who must be taught about tolerance, by violence if necessary (Hammond, 2000: 124-130).

The conflict in Kosovo was given priority by the BBC, which had established a presence in Pristina a year prior to the outbreak of the conflict. The coverage of the NATO bombing was the largest logistical media operation mounted by the BBC. By the time KFOR troops entered Kosovo on 13 June 1999, there was an estimated 60-70 BBC personnel on the ground in Pristina. The journalists agreed that the Kosovo conflict represented a much more sophisticated approach to media management than in previous conflicts involving Great Britain. There was less overt censorship and control, instead, there was an ever-increasing flow of information: more press briefings, better 'stage-managed' events, (i.e., the 'Interview of the Day'), more special off-the-record-briefings, than ever before (Riegert, 2003: 112-117). On BBC news, bombing of Kosovo was reported as 'the sound of angels' (Pilger, 2000: 132). The microstructural analysis demonstrated that NATO's aims, justifications, and motives remain unquestioned by the British media. The time spots covered four days before the initiation of the bombing and three days into the bombing, where such aims and motives should be most prominent. The analysis of the macrostructure of the British press and television demonstrated some typical differences between the media. Television focused on the action: NATO going into battle, the flight of Kosovo Albanian refugees and the reaction in Belgrade (Riegert, 2003: 131).

French media coverage of the Kosovo crisis was the continuation of a crusade begun over Bosnia, in which ideological suppositions excluded unwelcome facts and indignation silenced questioning. The leading role in shaping the French attitude toward the Yugoslav conflicts has unquestionably been played by the newspaper *Le Monde* whose influence is perhaps without equivalent in any other country as the newspaper of the mandarins. In France, an intellectual is sometimes defined as a person who reads *Le Monde*. In government ministries, universities, in all the places where 'public opinion' is developed, people read *Le Monde*, or *Libération*, and the weekly, *Le Nouvel Observateur*. And they watch television. All these media purvey the same center-left apology for neoliberalism (Johnstone, 2000: 141).

German reporting on the NATO, according to Thomas Deichmann, war was no better than elsewhere in the West. There were exceptional journalists who attempted to give a balanced picture, but they were scarcely heard. What people remembered afterward was largely the one-sided condemnation of the Serbs. Although questions were raised about the devastating effects of NATO bombing, criticism was limited to the conduct of the war; its legitimacy was rarely

called into question. For the most part, the media parroted official justifications of the war and even offered arguments and rhetoric of their own to legitimize the air strikes. German politicians claimed NATO was not waging a war but defending human rights and attempting to thwart a genocide Milosevic had long planned. Such claims were not only repeated uncritically but actively promoted by journalists who were openly partisan (Deichmann, 2000: 153-154). Toward the end of the war, reporting was focused around Fischer's diplomatic efforts to resolve the conflict. Unimpressed, NATO meanwhile escalated the bombing day after day. In this respect, German coverage deviated from that in the US and Britain. While the German media stimulated hopes for an immediate end to the air war, CNN, for example, offered a more realistic analysis. Meetings between Fischer and Russian negotiators were much reported in Germany but were often not even worth mentioning in the American media. The spotlight on Fischer's diplomacy corresponded to a change in strategy in the German Foreign Office, which was reflected immediately in media reports (Deichmann, 2000: 161).

In the PhD thesis made by Margit Viola Wunsch on the German press making quantitative comparisons in five daily newspapers, namely *Die Welt*, *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, *Frankfurter Rundschau*, *die tageszeitung*, *BILD-Zeitung*, *Der Spiegel*, *Junge Freiheit*, *Konkret* and *Allgemeine Jüdische Wochenzeitung* concluded that coverage was high due to NATO intervention during the Kosovo War, which could be attributed to the deployment of German soldiers in active combat for the first time since World War II, which transformed a conflict external to one of the inner importance. According to Wunsch the selection of primary sources for this thesis was construed to allow a broad comparison of discourses ranging from extreme-left to extreme-right. Further qualitative conclusions can be drawn with regard to the four larger themes which have been traced throughout the entire thesis. Firstly, the changing perceptions of the German press regarding the Serbian President Slobodan Milošević and who was to blame for the conflicts; secondly, how the armed forces, including the Yugoslav Peoples' Army and the Kosovo Liberation Army were presented in the German press; thirdly, the persistent presence of the Second World War in the press' reporting, as well as the Holocaust and how they shaped the press' interpretation of the violence; and lastly, how Germany's role in the region was evaluated by the national press – both in the realms of diplomacy and military intervention (Wunsch, 2012: 314-319).

Starting with the first theme, the near-exclusive focus on Milošević during the Kosovo conflict partially stemmed from his role in the preceding war in Bosnia and especially the Srebrenica Massacre. This underlines the influence of the Bosnian War on the journalists' interpretation of the violence in Kosovo. The second theme, one-sided focus on the Serbian

forces was mirrored in the coverage of the initial violence in Kosovo, which embellished KLA's belligerence. Indeed some publications displayed a tendency to 'spare' the KLA by explaining their actions with the Kosovo-Albanian civilian suffering. However, a few months later, in early 1999, the KLA was portrayed perhaps more realistically as an organized, heavily-armed force, especially in pictures. The third theme traced throughout this thesis, namely the presence of the Second World War in the German press coverage revealed an interesting interplay between the war itself and the collective memory of the Holocaust as well as its influence on the foreign political debate. On the one hand, the Second World War continuously influenced the German press' word-choice in reporting on the wars in Bosnia and Kosovo. While in the reporting on Kosovo, 'concentration camps' and 'genocide' were used regularly, even when the terms were inaccurate or blatantly wrong in some cases (Wunsch, 2012: 319-322).

Media discourses in Sweden and Norway, according to Højjer, Nohrstedt, & Ottosen, were equally occupied by the fate of the civilian population and their suffering due both to terror on the ground and to the NATO air attacks. In other respects, the Norwegian and Swedish media discourses differed. The authors concluded that in particular, the NATO bombing operations were initially given remarkably opposite coverage, but later the two media discourses converged towards a rather critical image. From the start, the media in Norway, the NATO country in this comparison, had a low profile with respect to the effects of the air strikes, but they were generally described as necessary in order to restore peace in Kosovo. The Swedish media, on the contrary, had a much more outspoken and critical voice, emphasizing the potential risks of the conflict spreading out over the entire Balkans and eventually into a third world war. Under the impact of subsequent events, and especially the misdirected attacks on Albanian refugees, the media news discourses in both countries turned into a mainly critical image of the NATO bombings. In this case, the explanation we would suggest is that the combined effect of journalists' access to civilians' experiences on both sides in addition to the impact of the compassion discourse led to increased counter-pressure on the attempts of NATO to dominate the media discourses. The Norwegian media were even more sensitive to this and also more movable because of its initially less critical view than the Swedish (Højjer, Nohrstedt, & Ottosen, 2002: 15-16). According to Røn, in reality, every Norwegian newspaper took a pro-war stance in its editorial column, with exception of the leftist *Klassekampen*, which has a circulation of only 6,500. Furthermore, the press went to great lengths to emphasise Norway's role in the conflict, taking a strongly patriotic line despite the absence of any clear

national interest. It is therefore perhaps not surprising that the majority of Norwegian public opinion supported the war (Røn, 2000: 164).

The debate within the Russian media about the proper response to the war led to contradictions, inconsistencies and mutual recriminations. Much of the discussion was focused on Western reporting and NATO propaganda. While the Western media presented ethnic Albanian refugees as obvious victims of Serb atrocities and ‘ethnic cleansing’, describing the exodus as a ‘humanitarian catastrophe’, Russian journalists pointed out that people were fleeing from NATO bombing, and that air raids supposedly designed to protect the Kosovo Albanians had only made their situation worse. The Russian press argued the Western media were fighting a propaganda war on the side of their own governments, targeting domestic public opinion and Yugoslavia itself. Western journalists were censured by their Russian counterparts for their one-sided reporting, and NATO’s conduct of a ‘ruthless’ propaganda war was frequently criticized (Hammond, Nizamova, & Savelieva, 2000: 181-182)

The Kosovo war acted as a prism, refracting domestic political views and prompting a re-evaluation of Russia’s role in the world. Virtually all the Russian media were concerned by the role assigned to Russia in the conflict – or more precisely, the lack of a role. As seen from Russia, there were two main stages to the conflict: ‘without Russia’s participation’ and ‘with Russia’s presence’. This was reflected in media coverage, which at the start of the crisis featured sharp disapproval of ‘NATO aggression’ and support for ‘sovereign Yugoslavia’. Yet after the ‘role of Russia’ was recognized, most newspapers adopted a more neutral tone, carrying more articles about the Albanian refugees and the excesses of the Milosevic regime, and fewer reports on ‘brother Serbs’ (Hammond et al., 2000: 184)

According to Lalli’s study of the Italian press, studies on Italian media information about NATO’s military action in Kosovo highlight some relevant aspects. Regarding television news, it has been observed that emotional engagement in media representation was very high, also because of a new sense of disorientation of anchormen and correspondents, both challenged by the severe control of information operated by institutional sources. It was very difficult to find sure alternative sources, and also to check the truth and the reliability of the available information; moreover, this sense of distance and uncertainty was strengthened by the shortage of visual supplies witnessing what was really happening in Serbia and Kosovo. In newspapers, Lalli find two main rhetorical frames of debating and reporting war facts: on the one hand the humanitarian legitimation of the NATO’s military action, and on the other hand, the contemporaneous difficulty in accepting such a bloody way to react to a civil war fought in a foreign country. Along these newspaper’s frames, there also were more faceted aspects of

reporting and justifying the different episodes of the war; but, at last, we can say that the Italian media representation of the Kosovo war - except for some “militant” left-oriented newspaper - constantly fluctuated between some kind of bewilderment in front of such a massive military engagement of western powers, and the attempt to construct and release a “story” of this engagement being as reassuring and consensual as possible (Lalli, 2002: 2).

A study published in the Journal of Gender Studies reports that women were generalized into six specific frame through imagery in Western media during the Kosovo War: The Passive Refugee, The Waiting Wife, The Female Body Torn Apart, The Rape Survivor, The Touchy-Feely Peace Activist and The Non-Stereotypic Woman in War (del Zotto, 2002: 149). This study applies textual and visual media analysis to the coverage of women’s experiences in the Kosovo conflict of 1998–99. It argues that mainstream global media constructed a gendered interpretation of that war. The study illustrates how the application of a masculinist narrative served to omit many important issues involving female agency in Kosovo. An empirically structured contextual/visual analysis was applied to a wide body of media material generated over a four-month period. Three hundred and sixty major news items were gleaned between 1 February and 30 May of 1999, representing twenty-one countries. Additionally, thirty broadcasts from CNN, CBC, BBC and Univision were monitored during this same time, period. Newspapers used in this analysis were considered to be the most widely read, mainstream papers in their respective countries. They ranged from the U.S. *New York Times*, Germany’s *Deutsche Presse-Agentur* and Mexico’s *La Jornada* in the ‘West’ to Israel’s *Jerusalem Post* and China’s *Xinhua* in the ‘East’. Nations represented for the survey were the United States, Canada, Mexico, Cuba, Colombia, Argentina, United Kingdom, Ireland, Germany, France, Egypt, Israel, Iran, Pakistan, India, Malaysia, Taiwan, Japan, People’s Republic of China, South Africa and Australia. A rigorous context analysis model was applied to all articles and news programs from these countries’ coverage of the war in Kosovo (del Zotto, 2002: 144). Del Zotto concluded that Media representation of women in Kosovo supports the theory that popular culture still upholds a masculinist paradigm of war. Indeed, women as passive victims rather than as activists and combatants have been the staple of war coverage for decades. Traditionalism, commercialism and nationalism inform mainstream media, contributing to a gendered coverage of war. Five out of the six constructs of women in Kosovo, generated by media, are products of these three characteristics. Furthermore, women’s experiences in world events generally do not conform to linear, compartmentalized structures of mass media nor are they generated through ‘official sources’ (del Zotto, 2002: 149).

5. The Kosovo war in Balkans Press

Raptis, in study of Greek press wrote that, before the bombing began the situation in Kosovo was reported almost daily in the Greek media, but this was largely based on stories from Western news agencies. *Eleftherotypia*, for example, kept an almost equal distance from the KLA, which is considered as bearing ‘a great part of the responsibility for the conflict’, and from the ‘atrocities by the Serbs’. However, most editorials argued that ethnic Albanians were intensifying the conflict in order to ‘invite’ NATO into Kosovo. In reporting the Kosovo crisis, Greek journalists had the implicit assistance of the Greek population, who were not duped by NATO’s ‘humanitarianism’ into classifying the Albanians as the ‘good guys’ and the Serbs as the ‘bad guys’. Although, as expected, the Greek government complied with the wishes of the US, the ‘participation’ of the Greek population in the Kosovo crisis can be found in their resistance to the US/NATO intervention (Raptis, 2000: 171-175).

The clear departure of the Greek stance from the coverage that prevailed in other countries during the air operations makes the issue of the Greek media framework of coverage and interpretation of the events surrounding the Kosovo crisis an important case for a number of reasons. First, because the media in Greece, a NATO member country, “deviated” from the mainstream media coverage found in the clear majority of NATO and other western countries. Second, predictably, as “journalists around the world grappled with the news angle of this conflict [in Kosovo] to make it relevant to their markets” (Goff, 1999: 27), the Greek media perceived the NATO air campaign against Serbia in ways dictated by their own environment (Kondopoulou, 2002: 2).

According to Margarita Kondopoulou, from the onset of the NATO air strikes against Serbia in spring 1999 and throughout the campaign, the Greek media maintained a distinct and uncompromising anti-war outlook on the events taking place, both in the airspace and on the ground of former Yugoslavia. This view was different from most media perspectives in other NATO member states. It was infused with reports and interpretations that contrasted with the mainstream coverage in other countries, was rather disapproving of the Greek government’s position, seen as shaped by NATO orders, and provoked accusations by many foreign commentators of being pro-Serbian. The content and angle of the Greek media coverage (both print and broadcast) undeniably suggest that the general framework was anti-NATO. Regardless of voices calling for a less fervent reaction, especially in the press, the focus was placed on the victimization of the Serbs by the Alliance (mainly via graphics and evocative television footage), which not only “pretentiously” used “alleged atrocities” as a pretext to intervene in order to serve its geopolitical goals, but also created more problems for the overall

region (including the widespread refugee problem). Kondopoulou concluded that, the general Greek media viewpoint was founded on a distinctive approach that saw the NATO operation as an act of aggression not only against Serbia, but also against the geopolitical order in the Balkans. Furthermore, the professed common cultural and religious characteristics shared by Greece and Serbia led to a view, adopted mainly – but not only – by right-wing newspapers, which evoked nationalistic sentiments and sided with the Serbs. These features, coupled with typically popular opposition to American influence in Greece, appeared to guide Greek media coverage to a great extent. The endorsement of the fairly nationalistic discourse by a large proportion of the media was decidedly promoted by Greek journalists. Even though some journalists expressed different opinions, blaming Serbian authorities for crimes committed against Kosovo-Albanians, a great majority of the profession, especially on the official level, has continued to defend Greek coverage of the Kosovo crisis (Kondopoulou, 2002: 9-10).

Ekatarina Balabanova looks at the relationship between the print media and policymaking in Bulgaria at the time of the Kosovo conflict. First, it analyses the print media coverage of the Kosovo conflict during the two time periods – 24 February–25 March 1999 and 15 April–15 May 1999. In purely quantitative terms the Kosovo crisis enjoyed extensive media coverage in the period directly prior to the NATO military involvement. Between 24 February and 25 March 1999 725 articles in *24 Chasa*, *Trud*, *Demokracia*, *Duma*, *Pari*, *Sega*, *Standart* and *Kapital* made significant reference to the situation in Kosovo. Four of these newspapers – *Sega*, *Standart*, *Demokracia* and *24 Chasa* – circulated a special issue, in addition to the regular one, on the 25 March 1999 devoted to the Kosovo crisis and the beginning of the air strikes. On the whole, *Standart* (third in readership figures, but significantly behind the leading two and considered an independent publication) was the newspaper that offered the most extensive coverage with 125 articles making reference to different aspects of the conflict over the 30-day period. This averages to 4.16 articles per issue on the Kosovo crisis. Not many of those made it to the first page, though. Only 11 articles appeared on the front page of the newspaper. Quite similar conclusions can be drawn regarding the media attention during the second observation period – 15 April 1999–15 May 1999. In the middle of the NATO air campaign the media coverage was vast with a total of 3,286 articles making significant reference to the Kosovo crisis in the eight newspapers selected for analysis. This translates into 106 articles per day on the topic in the main print media and clearly speaks of the absolute dominance of the issue in the news agenda. Some differences are observable here among the dailies in terms of location of articles – only *Standart* places a slightly higher amount than in the previous period on the front page. (Balabanova, 2007: 75).

During the February/March period, Bulgarian print media framed its reports in neutral and subsequently, during the April/May period, critical way when the questions discussed related to the governmental position on the Kosovo crisis and the NATO air strikes. The Reports referring to refugees and the devastation of the war were empathy-framed. Hence, the result of the application of the media-policy interaction model to the Bulgarian press coverage and foreign policy-making suggests that the print media did not have any substantial impact on the Bulgarian government's position on the Kosovo conflict during both examined periods. What is of more interest here, however, especially during the first analyzed period, was the discovery of neutral media coverage on a topic of extreme importance for Bulgaria – the countries position on the Kosovo conflict, in particular, its support for the NATO air campaign against the FRY. This was the case with the Bulgarian press coverage that was framed in a neutral way towards the NATO decision to launch air strikes against the FRY and the Bulgarian government's position to support this decision (Balabanova, 2007: 148).

According to a study made by Devrim Deniz Erol about Yugoslavia wars, the newspaper's focused on Bosnia and Kosovo war. Accordingly, newspaper's chose to be on the side of Bosnia and Kosovo. Quantitative research's show that in a newspaper published a lot of photos especially civilians photos. Erol concluded that both religion and history of living together in the past indicated that in Turkey's newspapers Kosovo war (and Bosnia) was given more attention (Erol, 2013: 326-327). The findings of newspaper show that, especially for Bosnians and Albanians, the historical, religious and cultural ties that existed since the Ottomans have also influenced Turkey's foreign policy. In this context, Turkey's foreign policy, especially in the fighting in Bosnia and Kosovo, has been influenced by newspapers (Erol, 2013: 357-358).

In a study made by Aşkın, in scanning held during March 24 to June 9, 1999, in the digital archives of *Hürriyet* newspaper with keyword "NATO" and "Kosovo" was found 442 articles. However, the basic research 5 (US, Spain, France, Germany) scans made with the same range of the same keyword in 6 newspapers of the country (*Washington Post*, *The New York Times*, *Financial Times*, *El Pais*, *Die Welt*, *Le Monde*), has been identified a total of 260 reports. Taking much more news in one newspaper than the sum of six newspaper should be considered as a sign of great interest in NATO's Kosovo campaign in Turkey (Aşkın, 2014: 126).

6. Conclusion

The media of the dominant NATO states did not break this tradition of support in their coverage of the Kosovo crisis and war. It is noteworthy that in a marginal NATO country such as Bulgaria - where press coverage was framed in a neutral way towards the NATO decision to launch air strikes against the FRY and the Bulgarian government's position to support this

decision - and Greece, where maintained a uncompromising anti-war outlook, “deviated” from the mainstream media coverage found in the clear majority of NATO and other western countries. The media of the dominant NATO powers more than ever reached across the globe, seeking to influence people and governments outside their own borders. The coverage of all media of NATO members (Germany, Britain, Italy and France) shows that all played as a partisan media and play the role NATO’s spokesman. Their main reason was that there was violence in Kosovo and intervention was indispensable. NATO wanted the media to focus on Serb atrocities and the media obliged, with gusto and gullibility.

Also, the findings show that the CNN effect was only one factor pressuring policy toward intervention during the Kosovo war. Overall, CNN served as NATO's de facto public information arm during Operation Allied Force. The US newspaper framed the air strikes as a humanistic aid to Albanians to stop the ethnic cleansing initiated by Serbians.

While the Chinese newspapers framed the air strikes as an intervention of Yugoslavia’s sovereignty and territory, in Russia there were two main stages to the conflict: ‘without Russia’s participation’ - media coverage featured sharp disapproval of ‘NATO aggression’ and support for ‘sovereign Yugoslavia’ - and ‘with Russia’s presence’ - most newspapers adopted a more neutral tone.

Each of the research pieces have taken a critical analysis of the media and the role they played in the Kosovo conflict. They each imply that the dominant narratives running through media reporting of the conflict was overwhelmingly supportive of the official NATO line, and failed to meaningfully critique and analyses the information that they were provided by ‘official sources.’ In fact the power of the media definitely influenced the conflict in Kosovo: its initiation, its escalation and its outcome, so we can consider that the real victory belongs to the media.

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