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Critical Junctures and Transformative Events in Diaspora Mobilization for Kosovo and Palestinian Statehood

By Maria Koinova, Reader in International Relations,
University of Warwick

Abstract

Scholarship on conflict-generated diasporas has identified the need to consider diaspora mobilizations in multiple contexts and how they are affected by local and global processes. I argue that diasporas react with mobilizations to global events that take place not only in host-states and home-states but also in other locations to which diasporas are transnationally connected. I illustrate the theoretical concepts with empirical discussion about global diaspora activism for Kosovo and Palestinian statehood. Two categories of global events, critical junctures and transformative events, can be distinguished, with effects on diaspora mobilization depending on the sociospatial context in which diasporas are embedded. Critical junctures can transform international and state structures and institutions, and change the position of a strategic center from "outside" to "inside" a homeland territory and vice versa. Transformative events are less powerful and can change diaspora mobilization trajectories. In contexts where diasporas have relatively strong positionality vis-à-vis other actors in a transnational social field, diaspora mobilization is more likely to be sustained in response to critical junctures and transformative events.

Keywords: critical junctures, transformative events, transnational social field, positionality, social movements, contested sovereignty, statehood, non-state actors, Palestine, Kosovo

Introduction

Scholarship on diaspora mobilization is increasingly interested in theorizing about multiple contexts in which diasporas are embedded, and how diaspora mobilizations are affected by various local and global factors (Adamson and Demetriou 2007, Lyons and Mandaville 2010, Adamson 2016, Koinova 2012, 2014, Brkanic 2016, Brinkerhoff 2016, Cochrane 2015, Gabiam and Fiddian-Quasmiyeh 2016). Alongside domestic and external factors, specific *critical events* in the homeland have been found to be conducive to mobilizations. They have been related to conflict and regime change (Koopmans and Statham 2004), rapid popularization of nationalist movements (Sökefeld 2006), violence and grave violations of human rights (Demmers 2007, Koinova 2011), breakdown of peace processes (Orjuela 2008), elections (Pfeffer 2015), formation or opposition to legislation (Brinkerhoff 2008), referendums (Natali 2007, Koinova 2010), and truth commissions (Young and Park 2009), among others.

This article inaugurates a conversation about the effects of such events across the globe. I focus particularly on mobilization of conflict-generated diasporas, and on events associated with what path-dependence literature calls "critical junctures" (Collier and Collier 1991, Cappoccia and Kelemen 2007, Mahoney 2001, Pierson 2004) and social movements literature calls "transformative events" (McAdam and Sewell 2001, Morris 2004, Hess and Martin 2006) to generate significant collective action. I argue that by transforming international order and state structures and institutions, critical junctures have the capacity to change the position of the strategic center for pursuit of a homeland-oriented goal from "outside" to "inside" a homeland territory, and vice versa. Transformative events are less powerful and have the capacity primarily to change diaspora mobilization trajectories. Both are transmitted through the transnational social fields in which diasporas operate and the contexts in which they are embedded. Hence, critical events emerge from a variety of global locations, not simply host-states or home-states. Diaspora mobilization specificities are shaped by diasporas' geographical and sociospatial embeddedness in different global locations. In contexts where diasporas have relatively strong positionality vis-à-vis other actors in a transnational social field, diaspora mobilization is more likely to remain sustained in response to critical junctures and transformative events.

This article offers a theoretical discussion about the utility of "critical junctures" and "transformative events" to analyze diaspora collective action in various global locations. It also shows how the positionality of a diaspora in a transnational social field empowers differently diaspora entrepreneurs to mobilize in response to critical events in one part of the globe compared to another. It also draws empirical evidence from long-term diaspora transnational movements for Kosovo and Palestinian statehood.

Defining the Concepts

I use the definition of "diaspora" by Adamson and Demetriou (2007), emphasizing transnational connectivity and collective action: "a diaspora can be identified as a social collectivity that exists across state borders and that has succeeded over time to: 1) sustain a collective national, cultural or religious identity through a sense of internal cohesion and sustained ties with a real or imagined homeland and 2) display an ability to address the collective interests of members of the social collectivity through a developed internal organizational framework and transnational links" (2007:497).

A "diaspora entrepreneur" is a formal or informal leader in a certain diaspora group, who makes claims and organizes on behalf of the original homeland. They have what Brinkerhoff (2013, 2016) calls "in-between advantage," with their positioning between two worlds and ability to connect them in what social networks analysis calls a "brokerage" mechanism (Koinova 2011, Adamson 2013), and political geographers call in-between-ness of "here" and "there" (Mavroudi 2008), with a sense of "multi-centered belongings" (Gabiam and Fiddian-Qasmiyeh 2016). In line with Brubaker's (2005) assertion that *claim-making* is important in diaspora politics, I consider diaspora entrepreneurs only individuals who make claims on behalf of a homeland. Claims are understood as "units of strategic action," expressions of political opinion in physical or verbal form (Koopmans 2002, Koopmans et al. 2005). "Diaspora mobilization" denotes ideational frames and practices used by diaspora entrepreneurs who make claims and mobilize resources in support of homeland-oriented goals. For the purposes of this article, diaspora mobilization is operationalized on the duration in which it occurs, and can take place in *sustained* or *ad hoc* ways (Koinova 2016).

Critical Junctures and Transformative Events

Political events of great magnitude are not new, as century-long scholarship on revolutions, democratization, conflicts, and social movements has shown. The French revolution, beginnings and endings of world wars, comprehensive regime transformations such as the end of the Cold War, and the terrorist attacks of 9/11 have shaped decades of history. Short periods of time that bring about profound transformations and long-term legacies are defined as "critical junctures." As Collier and Collier 1991, Cappoccia and Kelemen 2007, Mahoney 2001, Pierson 2004 point out, contingencies during such short periods of uncertainty allow a variety of actors to shape events, decisions, and policies with long-term consequences. Elite-based, institutional, economic, and value-based changes transform international order, states, and societies. After critical junctures end, path-dependent processes ensue, reinforcing relationships and institutions established during this volatile period.

Critical junctures have not been studied systematically in transnational diaspora politics, not least because this is a relatively new research field. In more established research agendas of democratization and social revolutions, the analytical focus has been on domestic actors and their agency in institutional and value-based transformations, not on international actors, and even less so on diasporas as identity-based actors. The idea of "critical juncture" has been mentioned in association with diaspora politics, with attribution of different meanings. By contrast to political opportunity structures, with durable implications on diaspora behavior, critical junctures have been considered triggers of actions (Gertheiss 2016:76). Diasporas "tend to reconstitute themselves at the critical juncture between ontological ambivalence and an essentializing politics of identity" (Pibrhai 2009:16). The focused contributions of African-American writers and activists – such as W.E.B. Du Bois, Malcolm X, and Maya Angelou – are considered a critical juncture for the formation of African-American diaspora identity. Their writings formed durable discourses that later emerged in the self-definitions of African-Americans (Okpewho et al. 1999). The formation of a Tibetan identity has been considered a "critical juncture" for the expansion of diaspora activism (Hess, 2009).

This article builds on my earlier comparative work on path-dependence, showing that diasporas are not always consequential in shaping domestic politics.

During the collapse of communism (1989-1992), contingent decisions among domestic and international actors led to informal institutionalization of conflict dynamics in post-communist polities. But diasporas – unlike international organizations or kin-states – were not active agents in forming policy responses (Koinova 2013). The major difference between diasporas who were somewhat engaged in shaping homeland political affairs (Ukrainian diaspora, see also Djuric 2003 and Brkanic 2016 on the Croatian diaspora), and those who were not (Albanian, Armenian, Bulgarian, Macedonian, Serbian) was in whether they had established linkages with secessionist elites before the collapse of communism (Koinova 2011, 2013). During the Cold War, diasporas in Western countries and under communism were separated by the Iron Curtain, and had only rare exchanges with each other.

"Transformative events" are defined conceptually in scholarship on social movements. Despite certain semantic similarities, "transformative events" could not be deemed theoretically equal to "critical junctures," the latter profoundly reshaping polities rather than changing social movement trajectories. Transformative events are turning points in a social movement that dramatically increase or decrease mobilization (McAdam and Sewell 2001, Morris 2004, Hess and Martin 2006). They are "concentrated moments of political and cultural creativity when the logic of historical development is reconfigured by human action but by no means abolished" (McAdam and Sewell 2001:102). Transformative events could be part of protest cycles, be clustered as related sequences of events (Sewell 1996, Alimi 2007), and introduce or perfect a new tactic, or catapult a charismatic leader into the movement (Reed 2002). Even if protests could be routinized, some are "eventful" as they transform social movement trajectories, become an arena of creative debates, bring about network formation, and develop solidarity in action (Della Porta 2008:30-32).

For example, the French Revolution (1789-1799) was a critical juncture that punctuated the equilibrium of an international order based on monarchical power and paved the way for republicanism in domestic and international politics. A "transformative event" occurred when the revolutionaries took over the Bastille (14 July 1789). This event instilled a sense of material and symbolic victory over the outgoing regime, increased the confidence of revolutionaries, and helped the movement expand (Sewell 1996).

"Transformative events" have been mentioned sporadically in narratives, but not explicitly theorized in transnational diaspora politics. Sökefeld argues that critical events could be associated with formation of a diaspora. Construction of a separate Kashmiri diaspora in the UK could be attributed to the rise of anti-Indian insurgency and violence in Jammu and Kashmir in 1989 and diaspora association with Khalistan (2006:273). Violent events in Kosovo and Sri Lanka also galvanized their diasporas (Demmers 2007, Koinova 2011), as did the gradual breakdown of the peace process in Sri Lanka (Orjuela 2008). During a cease-fire, diaspora activists gained access to the militant Liberal Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) to exert moderate influence, but when war resumed the space for moderation shrank (Orjuela 2008). The 2009 final battle, which crushed the LTTE, also became a critical event for diaspora mobilization (Hess and Kopf 2014, see also Orjuela and Goodwin in this volume). Homeland crises can inspire renewed interest in later diaspora generations, as in the Afghani diaspora (Brinkerhoff 2004, Kerlin 2008), higher remittance rates as among Somalis abroad (Carling et al. 2012), and vibrant online activism (Brinkerhoff 2009).

Despite mentioning the strong effects of *crises* on diaspora mobilization, considered in their variety in the Introduction to this collection, these works do not explicitly theorize about transformative events. I argued that "transformative events relate to significant threats to diasporic identity – such as grave violations of human rights – or to threats to deeply entrenched diaspora interests – such as threats to the success of a secessionist movement" (2011:339). Before the 1998 killing of the extended family of a Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) leader in the town of Prekaz in Kosovo, the Albanian diaspora was engaged in sponsoring the Kosovo Albanian nonviolent movement and its parallel structures aiming to secede from Serbia. After 1998, diaspora mobilization expanded in scope and modes of operation, from nonviolent to violent actions. Radical actors became mainstream at home and abroad, and fund-raising and drafting of fighters expanded in Europe and the US (2011, 2013). The causal implications of this event became even clearer during the 2013 speech of former Kosovo Diaspora Minister Ibrahim Makkolli. He argued that Prekaz is a "holy place, where the separation of two historical epochs, that of slavery and free future,"

occurred.[1] The Prekaz event was not a critical juncture, as it did not change state institutions, social structures, or economic and international order. It was a transformative event, based on grave violations of human rights, that elevated the power of radical actors in Kosovo's clandestine politics and expanded the domestic and international scope of mobilization.

Three important conclusions emerge from this literature review. First is a wealth of arguments about critical events in the homeland that entice diasporas to engage with homeland political affairs, responding to political developments. Second, without systematic theorizing about critical junctures and transformative events for diaspora politics, the boundaries between the terms remain blurred. Whereas both critical junctures and transformative events are difficult to recognize while they are happening, the magnitude of changes they trigger in institutions, structures, and social actors speaks of how they could be classified: critical junctures can transform international and state institutions and societies and thereby reshape the role of a diaspora as a non-state actor and its relationship to the state; transformative events are limited to non-state actors' mobilization trajectories, in this case of diasporas. Transformative events may be part of critical junctures (taking over the Bastille during the French Revolution) or single events (the 1998 Drenica massacre in Kosovo), which expand an already organized diaspora movement. Third, most of the discussion still focuses on critical events in the original homeland without considering diasporas' contextual embeddedness in different global locations. Yet critical events in other contexts than the original homeland may still be important for diaspora mobilization.

Transnational Social Fields and Contested Sovereignty

In the early 2000s the transnationalism literature in anthropology and sociology developed an analytical perspective to account for the operation of migrants in "transnational social structures," independent of nation-states but embedded in them. The concept of a "transnational social field" added a transnational dimension to Bourdieu's ideas about the "social field" as a domain where repeated formal and informal interactions between individuals and institutions structure their positions of

[1] Koinova participant observation, Prekaz, Kosovo, 3 August 2013, G Brajshori translation of recorded speech by Minister Makolli..

power (Bourdieu 1985). Transnational migrants, embedded in networks stretching simultaneously across multiple states, reflect cultural production, identities, and social positions of power migrants occupy in multiple locations (Levitt and Glick-Schiller 2004). An adjacent term often used interchangeably, "transnational social spaces," emphasizes sustained ties of geographically mobile persons, networks, and institutions, where reciprocity, exchange, and solidarity take place (Faist 2000, Pries 2001). Both the "transnational social field" as a conglomeration of "personal networks" and the "transnational social space" as a conglomeration of "whole networks" are embedded in specific locations (Molina et al. 2014): host-states, home-states, and other global locations.

This article offers a continuation of theorizing started in the Introduction to this special issue about the need to consider analysis beyond a triangular model of relationships between home-states, host-states, and diasporas, and about diaspora responses to broader geopolitical events. In earlier work I have considered a specific conglomeration of factors I called a Politically Relevant Environment (PRE), affecting diaspora entrepreneurs in contextually specific ways. These factors stem from the homeland and host-land, but notably also from the transnational social field in which diasporas operate, and supranational and global levels of international affairs (Koinova 2014). The transnational social field is constituted of linkages and interactions among ethnonational and religious brethren in different locations. Diasporas may be long-term minorities or recent settlers in adjacent territories to a kin-state, or live in distant locations but associate with those territories or with a specific place in them, forming a translocal connection to it.[2]

Yet each PRE is context-specific. For example, diaspora entrepreneurs could be located physically in Brussels, and so geographically well positioned to lobby European institutions. But their positionality – the relative power they perceive or are perceived as deriving from their social positions in a specific context (Koinova 2012) – would be relatively weak in Brussels, if they maintain minimal or no social linkages to European institutions. They could be embedded in a powerful country or global power, but if the transnational social field is not widespread or diaspora activism is strongly suppressed,

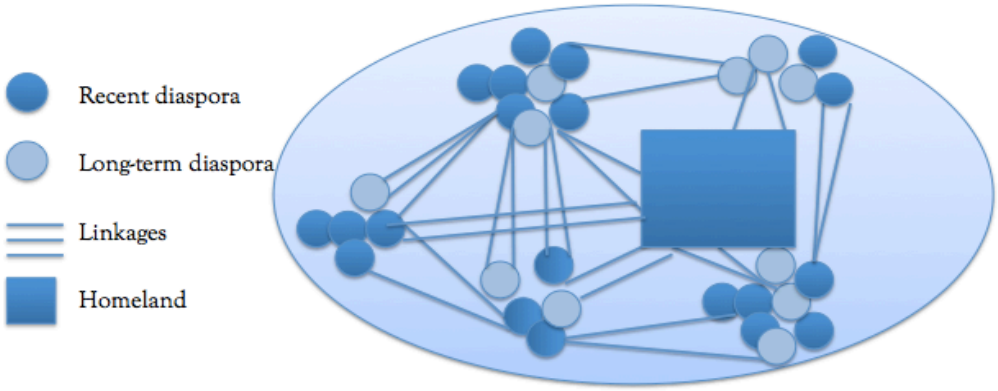
[2] On translocalism: Smith and Guarnizo 1998 in sociology; Karabegovic 2016 in political science. On distant vs. adjacent diasporas: Van Hear and Cohen 2016.

their positionality would remain weak and they would not be empowered. Consider, for example, the strong positionality of Kurdish diaspora entrepreneurs in Europe, where the transnational social field is widespread and dense linkages exist among diaspora activists and networks, versus their relatively weak positionality in Washington. Kurdish politics is much less important strategically for the US than for Europe unless it is related to the war on terrorism and ISIS.[3] Hence, it is important not only *where* diaspora entrepreneurs are located, but *how they are linked* to that context, relative to other actors in the field.

Critical junctures or transformative events do not emanate from a homeland or host-land only, but from different points of the transnational social field, observed by diaspora entrepreneurs also embedded in different parts of that field. Such effects are not confined to conflict-generated diasporas and their linkages to polities experiencing contested sovereignty, but are highly visible in such cases. This is because homelands with contested sovereignty are often historically split between ethnonational groups in their own state and minorities in adjacent territories. Original homelands can also be weak, fragile states, where authorities have no legitimate control over use of violence in the entire territory, and conflicts may be commonplace. If violence ensues, refugees flee from the kin-state and remain temporarily or more permanently in neighboring territories (Lischer 2005, Salehyan 2007), connecting to the diaspora from there. When a diaspora entrepreneur associates with territories external to the kin-state, the homeland is no longer the kin-state but a place in another state: an autonomous region, an enclave, or simply another place to which diaspora linkages exist. See Figure 1.

[3] On Kurdish diaspora politics in Europe see van Bruinessen 2000, Wahlbeck 2001, Østergaard-Nielsen 2006, Baser 2015, Demir 2015, Tas 2016. On Kurdish diaspora politics in the US see Danilovich 2016.

FIGURE 1: Transnational Social Field with Linkages between Homeland and Long-term and Recent Diasporas



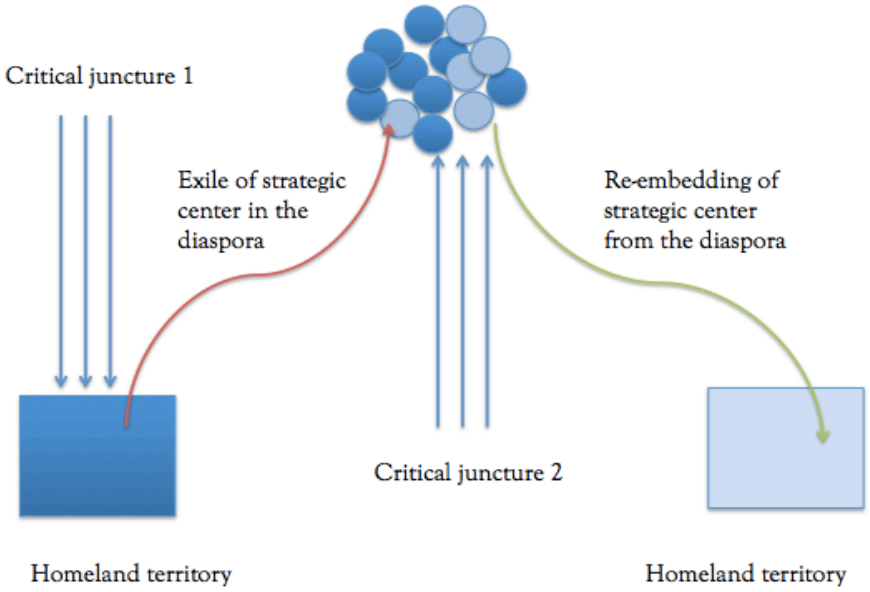
For example, Croats or Serbs in the diaspora need not associate their real or imaginary homeland with Croatia or Serbia proper. They might be translocally linked to Bosnia, Serbia, or other parts of the Croat and Serb transnational social fields. After the breakup of former Yugoslavia in 1991, Croatia, Serbia, and Bosnia-Herzegovina emerged as separate states. Yet the transnational social field of each diaspora incorporates Croats, Serbs, or Bosniaks in different global locations and is built on linkages formed primarily on a nationalist, not a citizenship principle. Even if there are exceptions, Bosnian Croats and Bosnian Serbs are not usually incorporated into Bosnian networks, but into the mainstream diaspora organizations of Croats and Serbs (Koinova 2016, Brkanic 2016), and hence into the Croat and Serb transnational social fields.

Similar examples can be given about other diasporas and their linkages to polities experiencing contested sovereignty. Kurds in Europe are linked to Kurds-inhabited areas of Turkey, Iraqi Kurdistan, areas in Iran, Syria, and more recently numerous European locations—Germany, Sweden, the UK, and the Netherlands (Baser 2015, Tas 2016). Armenians in the diaspora are linked to Turkey through activism for the recognition of the 1915 Armenian genocide, even though generations of them have not lived in those territories (Tölölyan 2000, Panossian 1998). Armenians can also be linked to Armenia proper and Nagorno-Karabakh and other areas in the Middle East – such as Lebanon and Iran – where many have been living as a result of the dispersal

during the genocide. Their transnational social field spans Europe and America (Koinova 2017).

Critical junctures and transformative events have different capacities to introduce change in diaspora mobilizations. With their profound effects on changes of international order, state structures, and societies, critical junctures can change the position of the strategic center to pursue a homeland-oriented goal from "outside" to "inside" a homeland territory, and vice versa. A strategic center can be formed outside a homeland territory after exiles are dispersed from the homeland as a result of revolution, regime change, large-scale persecution, and other political phenomena. This is the story of numerous exiled movements throughout human history. That movement could then act as a strategic center from "outside" a homeland territory, seeking to affect homeland political processes. As result of a critical juncture and the multiple uncertainties and volatilities it triggers in domestic and international politics, the strategic center could become embedded into a specific state or territory. For example, Armenian diaspora parties were formed after the 1915 Armenian genocide conducted by the collapsing Ottoman Empire. Banned from Soviet Armenia, they strategized from outside the state on how to affect processes within the state territory. They became embedded into Armenian state territory only after the end of the Cold War, a major critical juncture that transformed international order and created an opening for those parties to become territorially embedded in Armenia and Nagorno-Karabakh (Panossian 1998, Koinova 2011). See Figure 2.

Figure 2: Critical Junctures and Movement of Strategic Centers between "Inside" and "Outside" Homeland Territory



When critical junctures take place in international and domestic politics, diasporas in different contexts of the transnational social field become affected systemically, and their roles are likely to change drastically. Transformative events are less powerful, as they do not change societal and institutional structures domestically and internationally, but have the capacity to change primarily diaspora mobilization trajectories. Diasporas remain embedded where they are, but their strategies and tactics change in the pursuit of a homeland-oriented goal. Both critical junctures and transformative events are transmitted through transnational social fields in which diasporas operate, and emerge from a variety of global locations, not simply from host-states or home-states. Contextual sociospatial specificities then shape how such critical junctures and transformative events would be mobilized upon. Contexts in which diaspora entrepreneurs are empowered through relatively strong positionality vis-à-vis other actors in the field would be more conducive to sustained diaspora mobilization than those not experienced as empowering.

I further offer deeper exploration of selected critical junctures and transformative events in the political struggles of diaspora involvement for Kosovo and Palestinian statehood. These cases were selected for comparison, as both *de facto* states experiencing limited domestic and minimal external sovereignty. There is local governance in both Kosovo and Palestine through the Palestinian authority, but the proto-states have received only some degree of international recognition (with Kosovo

more advanced on the statehood recognition agenda than Palestine). Minorities and refugees living in adjacent territories to the homeland are numerous, hence building rich and multi-faceted transnational social fields in which diasporas operate and observe each other. Finally, both movements have been focused long-term on state recognition, thus offering multiple critical events to select from and analyze as either critical junctures or transformative events.

Diaspora Mobilization for Kosovo Statehood

A transnational social field built through interactions among Albanians has emerged due to long-term nationalist movements related to state formation in the 20th century, and subsequent emigration from Albanians-inhabited areas in the Balkans. The movement for Kosovo independence dates to the Treaty of London (1913), when territorial adjustments left almost half the Albanian population outside the borders of the newly established Albanian state (Malcolm 1998). The First and Second World Wars did not resolve the issue of Kosovo, an adjacent territory to the north of Albania, inhabited primarily by Albanians. Kosovo remained part of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia in the interwar period (1918–1939) and of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (SFRY) under communism (1945-1992). It declared independence for the first time in 1991, two years after its autonomy was curtailed in the SFRY, and for the second time in 2008, with US and EU endorsement. Throughout the long Kosovo state evolution process, emigration has been prevalent. The US started attracting immigrants in the early 20th century (Hockenos 2003). Switzerland and Germany became destinations in the late 1960s and 1970s, when interstate treaties sent "guest-workers" to support the rising West European postwar economies. Kosovo migration also took place after the 1981 Kosovo riots and their suppression (Malcolm 1998, Hockenos 2003), and especially during the 1990s, when Kosovo was an ethnically segregated territory within collapsing Yugoslavia.

Since much attention has been paid to the end of communism and Yugoslavia's disintegration (1987-1992) (Hockenos 2003, Perritt 2008, Koinova 2011, 2013a,b), I will refrain from further analyzing this critical juncture, and focus on other events. I select the critical juncture of NATO's 1999 military intervention in Kosovo, and two transformative events: the 2004 mob violence from within Kosovo as a homeland, and

the 2015 violence from outside Kosovo, in Kumanovo in the Albanian-inhabited areas of Macedonia.

NATO's intervention constitutes a *critical juncture* that fundamentally redefined Kosovo's sovereignty, even if it did not bring immediate recognition of statehood. Before 1999, Kosovo was legally an autonomous region within Serbia, with curtailed autonomy from 1989, and a segregated Albanian population dismissed from schools and public service positions. After NATO's 1999 military defeat of Serbia, Kosovo still remained officially part of it, but started being governed through what Krasner (2004) calls "shared sovereignty" and Fearon and Laitin (2004) call "neo-trusteeship": a conglomeration of emerging domestic institutions (local and central government, parliament) and international institutions, states, and domestic actors, governed by the UN Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) with assistance from the OSCE and EU.

The fundamental changes of international and domestic politics as a result of NATO's intervention also reconfigured the ways the diaspora related territorially to Kosovo as a homeland. Prior to 1999, diaspora activism was very strong "outside" the homeland territory, and a strategic center operated with Kosovo parallel institutions anchored in multiple countries in the Western hemisphere. In the 1990s, they were organized by the moderate Democratic League of Kosovo (LDK), with parallel government headquarters in Bonn, Germany. The diaspora was levied a 3% informal tax to support the parallel institutions. Further organizing and fund-raising campaigns took place in 1997-1999, when the radical KLA enhanced its influence in diaspora circles (Hockenos 2003, Perritt 2008, Koinova 2011).

After 1999, there was a fundamental reconfiguration of relations between diaspora and emerging homeland institutions, with diaspora mobilizations drastically subsiding from "outside" the de facto state. Several respondents in the US and Europe argued that the diaspora, exhausted from its concerted effort during the secessionist period, turned from supporting the emerging state and continued to helping their families rebuild homes and traumatized lives (Koinova 2011:449, R1, 2013, R2, 2013). Important political figures from the diaspora returned to Kosovo to become part of the parliament and government, most notably Hashim Thaci, who previously headed the KLA, and Bujar Bukoshi, who previously headed the LDK parallel government, as did numerous other political returnees previously involved in Kosovo's liberation struggle.

Hence, the critical juncture of NATO's 1999 intervention triggered simultaneously diaspora disengagement with homeland affairs and re-embedding of crucial diaspora agents in homeland territory, who started playing strategic roles from "inside" the de facto state.

Although relations between diaspora and homeland were fundamentally redefined in territorial terms, contextual specificities continued to shape diaspora mobilizations. Diaspora engagement with Kosovo remained more pronounced in contexts that had potential to further empower the Kosovo liberation struggle. Positionality of the US-based Albanian diaspora – the power diaspora entrepreneurs amass from a specific context vis-à-vis other actors in the transnational social field – remained relatively strong in pursuit of Kosovo's independence. Even if distant from Kosovo geographically, the US-based diaspora remained contiguous sociospatially. It was highly mobilized during the war, and its linkages with lobby groups in New York and Washington remained sustained. As discussed elsewhere, it was also embedded in the US as a global power, major supporter for NATO's intervention, which had a role to play for Kosovo's statehood recognition. The New-York based Albanian-American Civil League (AACL) and Washington-based National Albanian American Council (NAAC) continued to play an important role throughout the 2000s (Koinova 2013).

The Albanian diaspora in European countries – even if more geographically contiguous – remained embedded in contexts less empowering for the Kosovo diaspora in the pursuit of statehood. European politicians were less prone to empower further struggles in Kosovo, not least because European states have been traditionally more conservative regarding Kosovo independence Even in the UK, highly supportive of NATO's intervention, interest in the Kosovo issue waned, and was difficult to sustain by a relatively small diaspora (70,000-100,000) (Koinova 2013). As discussions with respondents during my fieldwork in continental Europe point out,[4] a much larger and well-mobilized diaspora in Switzerland (around 340,000/AD 2010) and Germany (around 550,000/AD 2010), remained largely disengaged in political terms. Political connections between Kosovo, Switzerland, and Germany were maintained between

[4] I undertook field trips to Kosovo (2013), Sweden (2013-2014), Netherlands (2013), and Germany (2015).

states and via international institutions rather than via the diaspora. Even less diaspora activity could be discerned in Sweden and the Netherlands.

By contrast to NATO's intervention as a critical juncture, the *2004* mob violence in Kosovo constituted a *transformative event* and reshaped the mobilization trajectory for Kosovo's self-determination struggle. In March 2004, violent Kosovar riots targeted the Serb minority in Kosovo, and destroyed their property and Orthodox churches, leading a UN official to compare these events to a "Kristallnacht," the 1938 pogroms against Jews in Germany (WT 9/04/2005). The violence in Kosovo sent urgent international messages: to avoid further violence, international powers needed to move further on "final status" negotiations. The 2004 events were transformative from the perspective of the social movements literature, because they changed the mobilization trajectories of those who mobilized for Kosovo recognition. The liberation struggle re-emerged on the policy agenda of the US and EU, revived claims for "final status" negotiations, and reactivated previously dormant diaspora networks. But they did not fundamentally redefine the relationship between diaspora and de facto state, as did the 1999 critical juncture.

These events did not have the same repercussions across different contexts. Positionality of diaspora entrepreneurs in some contexts was relatively stronger than in others, as certain contexts were more empowering to re-engage with issues of Kosovo statehood recognition. The effect was again strongest in the US, the global power, which could decisively impact final status negotiations. As pointed out elsewhere, former KLA fund-raiser Florin Krasniqi spoke openly how gaps in the system of US border security allowed weapons to be shipped to Albania and Kosovo (Klaartjie 2005). The Atlantic Battalion, which had earlier drafted US-based Albanian diaspora members to fight in Kosovo during the war, also issued a warning (Albanews Archives 2007). Most notably, Swiss billionaire Behgjet Pacolli contributed to independence by lobbying in Washington, where he established a group of paid lobbyists (Free Republic 2007). By contrast, minimal lobby activities followed in the UK (Koinova 2013). Conversations with interviewees in Germany also show that after the 2004 mob violence diaspora entrepreneurs sought to intensify contacts with Germany's parliament and government, but much less effort was spent in Sweden and the Netherlands. In short, the 2004 riots were not consequential in the same way for

diasporas in different contexts. They had a primary effect on diaspora individuals empowered by their embeddedness in powerful states with a say on Kosovo's future.

The final example speaks to the idea that critical events can have systemic effects from one part of the transnational social field to another; such events need not emanate from an original homeland, but can come from another part of the field. Violent events in Kumanovo in ethnically mixed neighboring Macedonia are the transformative event in point. In May 2015, ten Albanian gunmen, primarily associated with the dismantled KLA, and eight Macedonian police officers were killed in a two-day shootout with Macedonian police (Dimovski 2016). An incident in April preceded this event, when forty ethnic Albanians from Kosovo briefly seized a Macedonian police station in a village near the Kosovo border, and demanded creation of an Albanian state within Macedonia (BBC 11/05/2015).

Even if these events were not a critical juncture, they still sent shockwaves throughout the Albanian diaspora, whether linked to Macedonia, Kosovo, Albania, or Montenegro. They touched on an unresolved grievance in the larger Albanian space. Albanians in Macedonia have been discontented with the implementation of the Ohrid Framework Agreement (2001), which ended brief internal warfare between Albanians and Macedonians, but did not devolve power to the large Albanian minority in ways they envisaged. In the Albanian transnational social field also, a highly controversial statement was made by Albania's prime minister Edi Rama shortly before the Kumanovo events, that unification of Albania and Kosovo is "inevitable," whether through EU membership or outside it (Bytyci and Robinson 2015). Local tensions have been mounting and troubling the Albanian diaspora as a whole, considering ways to help (R4, 2015), and raising concerns about presumed ethnic Albanian unrest in the Balkans (UK Albanians 11/05/2015). Grievances and violence against Albanians in the Balkans has continued to fuel Albanians in the diaspora and their pan-Albanian sentiments (R3, 2015). Thus, even if these critical events did not have the power to transform the contentious trajectory completely, they added to a long-cherished nationalist dream in the diaspora to establish an unified Albanian state of all Albanian-inhabited territories.

Diaspora Mobilization for Palestinian Statehood

A transnational social field built through interactions among Palestinians emerged as a result of long-term conflicts in the Middle East and exodus of Palestinians due to warfare. The Palestinian issue dates back to the 1917 Balfour Declaration, pronouncing Britain's support for the "establishment of Palestine as the national home for the Jewish people" (Balfour Declaration 1917), in the context of the British Mandate of Palestine. In the Palestinian narrative, this is the first critical juncture to determine many of the traumatic events to follow during the 20th century. A second critical juncture occurred in 1948, when during the Israeli war of independence, Israeli forces killed and displaced an estimated 700,000 Palestinians from their homes, causing what Palestinians refer to as the "Nakbah" or "catastrophe." This is a defining traumatic experience for the Palestinian people, commemorated at home and abroad (Khalili 2009). The 1948 exodus sent many to neighboring Arab territories, primarily Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, and Iraq (Kabha 2014:141-151). A third critical juncture occurred during the 1967 war, when Israel won the so-called 1967 "Six Day War" with neighboring Arab governments, creating more than 300,000 Palestinian refugees and placing more than one million others under Israeli control in the West Bank, Gaza Strip, and East Jerusalem (Brynen and El-Rifai 2013:2, Encyclopedia Britannica 2015). Palestinians abroad eventually formed resistance groups; the most powerful became the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO), recognized by the UN as the "representative of the Palestinian people" (UN XXIX 3210, 1974). Other formations, reflecting the factionalism of national the movement included Fatah (a dominant PLO faction) and the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (Hiltermann 1991:50). Secret negotiations involving the PLO paved the way for the 1993 Oslo Peace agreement, permitting limited autonomy of West Bank and Gaza Palestinians.

These milestones of Palestinian history have been documented extensively, even if controversially. For space limitations, I focus here on two more recent critical junctures that redefined the relationship between the diaspora and the state: the 1993 Oslo Accords and the 2000 Second Intifada (known as Al-Aqsa Intifada) in conjuncture with the US 9/11 terrorist attacks. The Palestinian struggle witnessed numerous transformative events, such as the Gaza Flotilla raid (2010), several Israeli bombing campaigns of Gaza (2008-2009, 2010, 2012, 2014), and an upgrade of

Palestine to non-member observer state status in the UN (2012). I focus here on the 2014 Gaza War, which profoundly changed a diaspora mobilization trajectory, especially associated with the Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions (BDS) campaign, and catapulted it into a global movement.

The Oslo Accords constituted a critical juncture when a well-mobilized diaspora movement was re-embedded into homeland territory. Before 1993, the PLO operated for a long time "outside" the homeland territory, hosted by Arab governments until proving politically and militarily problematic for them. Recurrent violence between Palestinian fighters and Jordanian security forces (1970-1971) triggered the PLO expulsion from Jordan (Robinson 2009) and change of headquarters to Lebanon. Palestinian fighters became embroiled in the Lebanese civil war (1975-1990), and needed to change headquarters again after the 1982 Israeli invasion, this time to Tunisia (Kabha 2014:293). The 1987 First Intifada (uprising against Israeli occupation) exposed the PLO leadership shortcomings (Sayigh 1997:30), eventually bringing a realization that goals could not be achieved from abroad.

The Oslo Accords developed the fundamentals of a *de facto* state. They permitted Palestinian autonomous self-government in the West Bank and Gaza to incorporate administrative areas such as education, health, and social affairs, but put restrictions on autonomy in security and economic terms as Israel continued to exercise control over these areas (Schulz 2003:143). The Accords envisaged that final status negotiations on Palestinian statehood take place no later than five years after initiation of self-rule, or 1999 (142). The "center of gravity" (Hanafi 2005) of the movement changed from the diaspora to the West Bank and Gaza, and the state-building project assumed central importance, overshadowing concerns about the "right to return" embedded in UN Resolutions 194 and 3236, and previously vigorously pursued by the PLO.

The effects of the Oslo Accords did not yield uniform response across the Palestinian transnational social field. PLO remained anchored in diaspora circles, where its functions waned, as it became closely associated with the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) governing the Palestinian territories. In contrast, the Islamic group Hamas refused to be subsumed under the PNA governance, and chose a path of resistance against Israel instead (Kabha 2014:341). It started growing as a non-state

actor outside these territories, having been outlawed by Israel in 1989 and found refuge for its political decision-making body in Jordan (Tamimi 2009:192, 199, Seurat 2016). Hamas remained also popular in Gaza, and started actively building networks abroad. Resentment against the PLO and eventually PNA mounted also from other territorially dispersed Palestinians outside the negotiated territories, especially in Lebanon and Jordan. They considered that the West Bank and Gaza were "saved at the expense of the 1948 people" (Schulz 2003:147).

The uneven response to the Oslo Accords in the transnational social field was also due to how diaspora entrepreneurs became empowered through their positionalities in different contexts. Long-term established secular networks of business and professional communities existed, especially in Western countries, remained closer to PLO and PNA, as some of their members were earlier PLO activists. Professional communities were strong in the Gulf, US, Canada, and UK in the 1990s, and more recently established in France (Hanafi 2005a:583). But in the US, numerous diaspora members responded also with large-scale resentment against the Accords, considering it disregarding the refugee issue (Gertheiss 2016:134). North American communities, despite their more distant location, have been generally better connected to the Palestinian territories (Hanafi 2005b:145), hence more closely watching and associating with events in them.

Operating under the radar screen in foreign countries, after Oslo Hamas capitalized on its popular appeal in grassroots networks, and appeal through charitable social services and building communities abroad. As Katzman argues, both Hamas and Islamic Jihad relied on outside support to sustain their operations. Major financial support came from territorially adjacent areas, such as Iran, Syria, Jordan, and the Persian Gulf, but also from the US through individual diaspora members. Before Hamas was declared a terrorist organization by major Western countries in the mid-1990s, private money from the US and UK supplied Hamas with 33 to 40 percent of its budget (1995:33-38). Hamas also raised funds through illicit activity in the loosely governed Tri-Border Area in Latin America (Jacobson and Levitt 2009:7).

The second *critical juncture* analyzed here is the period 2000-2006, when prior mobilization of Hamas from "outside" the homeland territory became embedded inside it. The Second Intifada erupted in September 2000 as a result of the failure of the

Camp David negotiations to broker peace and establish the fundamentals of Palestinian statehood. The grassroots activism this time was "not a mass movement of resistance, as the First Intifada" (R4 2016), but a militarized action under Hamas tutelage. Had the Intifada (2000-2005) erupted at a different time from a year before the 9/11 terrorist attacks, it could probably be classified as a transformative event. It initially changed the movement trajectory by incorporating different tactics to pursue Palestinian statehood, renewing violent resistance against occupation. Yet this event did occur in short sequence with the 9/11 attacks, which intensified the global crackdown on Islamist extremism, and brought profound transformations to world politics. Hamas was blacklisted as a terrorist organization by the US in 1995 and the EU in 2001, with further restrictions imposed on charities considered "fronts" for illegal activities. Hamas became more constrained internationally, but global polarization empowered it domestically and in 2006 for the first time elected it to political power in Gaza. Through this new critical juncture, Islamic doctrine, which previously operated largely "outside" the homeland territory, became embedded in it, and started competing on a territorial basis with a secularist status quo.

During this critical juncture, diaspora activism was also empowered through different positionalities in the Palestinian transnational social field. Although the US was a global power with influential say on the Palestinian issue, a strong Israeli lobby and anti-terrorism measures created a context not conducive to diaspora mobilization for Palestinian statehood. In theoretical terms, the US positionality of the Palestinian diaspora was weakened vis-à-vis other diaspora actors in the transnational social field, while Palestinian diaspora actors became slightly better empowered in Europe. As Gertheiss points out, US suspicion against Arab-Americans rose significantly, with implicit or explicit allegations as accomplices of terrorism and anti-Americanism (Marrar 2009:108-109). Simultaneously, new organizations emerged, such as the grassroots Palestine Right of Return Coalition (Al-Awda) and the elite-based American Task Force for Palestine (ATFP), a lobby group in Washington. Nevertheless, their activism faced difficulties, as "some politicians even hid their ethnicity as they regarded it detrimental to their careers" (135). Certain charities were put on a terrorist list, and the Council of American-Islamic Relations (CAIR) became a repeated target of terrorism charges (Shane 2011). Following the 2006 Hamas electoral victory in Gaza,

the US and Israel imposed sanctions on the PNA and prohibited all Hamas-related financial transactions. Diaspora activists increasingly framed the Palestinian national interest in terms of American interests and values (Gertheiss 2016:134-138).

In contrast, Europe remained a more conducive context for diaspora mobilization. The EU defined Hamas' military wing as a terrorist organization in 2001, and put Hamas on its terrorist list in 2003. But these decisions were challenged in the European Court of Justice, leading to a 2014 court recommendation to remove Hamas from the list, subsequently appealed (Osborne 2016, EU:C:2016:722). As several interviewees in the Netherlands, Germany, Sweden, and France indicated, in a transnational social field encompassing other European countries, the UK was considered in a leadership position in Palestinian diaspora activism (R4, 2016, R5, 2013, R6, 2013, R7, 2015). The UK was an empowering context for several reasons. There was a strong grievance against the UK as a former colonial power, which paved the way with the 1917 Balfour Declaration for the creation of Israel. Palestinian activists in the UK have claimed Britain needs to "take the blame" and apologize (Nabulsi 2006:211, 241, 242; Safieh 2010:116, Koinova 2014). In July 2016, the PNA even started preparing a lawsuit against the UK government over the Balfour Declaration (*Times of Israel* 25/07/2016). Also, in the UK antiwar solidarity and Islamic networks remained strong. Palestine is "both a site for struggle to decolonize itself and a key node in the globally networked struggle to decolonize a world currently structured on inequality and injustice" (Collins 2011:18). The Stop the War Coalition and the Palestinian Solidarity Campaign have shown strong socialist inclinations in support of a campaign to boycott Israel. Islamic networks such as Interpal, Islamic Relief, Islamic Help, Viva Palestina, and other organizations have been highly active on mobilizing religious networks for the Palestinian issue and breaking the siege of Gaza (Koinova 2014). Also, the global city of London, considered a "media capital" of the Arab world, empowered Palestinians to use protests and enhance the visibility of their cause (Koinova 2012, Adamson and Koinova 2013).

The transformative event of theoretical interest here is the 2014 Gaza War between Israel and Hamas, which resulted in extraordinary destruction of homes, infrastructure, estimated 2,000 Palestinian deaths, and further civilian casualties. It triggered large-scale global protests, more than 1,200 in summer 2014, which occurred

on all continents, with concentrations in the UK, Netherlands, Sweden, France, US, and others in Australia, South Africa, and Latin America (Samidoun 2014). They often involved more than 10,000 people. Emergency financial appeals to support Palestinians in Gaza were launched in Islamic and non-Islamic networks too.

The Gaza War was a tipping point in a shift of a global sentiment, earlier less critical about Israel than after this war. Although "high politics" on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict have not changed significantly since, grassroots attitudes "from below" have been shifting the trajectory of the movement. The clearest shift in activism is observed in the growing global support for the BDS movement, seeking to boycott Israeli goods, services, and academic and cultural exchanges. The BDS was created in the early 2000s to resemble the earlier global campaign against apartheid in South Africa (Tutu 2013). Launched officially in 2005, it started serving as "the largest coalition of Palestinian civil society organizations inside historic Palestine and in exile" (Barghouti 2011:5, 61). Yet even from inception, the campaign has incorporated numerous non-Palestinians through solidarity networks.

The Gaza War created a major difference for the mobilization trajectory of the movement to amass more support for the economic, cultural, and academic boycott. The Congress of South African Trade Unions sought to intensify its support (News24, 26/08/2014), as did the Confédération des Syndicats Nationaux of Canada representing nearly 2,000 unions in 2015 (Houle 2016). In the UK, where the campaign has been exceptionally strong from the outset, numerous individuals and institutions joined the boycott. UK's Unite the Union joined the movement in July 2014 (Soffer 06/07/2014), as did London's School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS) after a university-wide referendum in February 2015 (Asfour 28/02/2015). BDS gained new support especially on college campuses in the US (Alterman 2016). Even though legally suppressed in France, it gathered numerous followers, many of them French citizens with no origins in the Middle East (R4, 2016).

Conclusions

This article draws attention to the need to analyze how critical events in one part of the globe affect diaspora mobilization in another in more theoretical depth. In the relatively new research agenda of diaspora mobilizations for conflicts and post-

conflict reconstruction, empirical evidence has shown that critical events affecting diaspora politics are often associated with crises in the homeland or inauguration of peace processes and democratization. "Critical junctures" have been mentioned to describe such events, but little has been done to understand their profound impact on the relationship between diasporas and states and to distinguish them from what the social movements literature calls "transformative events."

This article makes three important theoretical points. First, critical junctures and transformative events have different capacities to affect diaspora mobilization movements. Critical junctures are characterized by high volatility and contingency of decision-making in domestic and international politics, when there is an increased role for agents to influence volatile processes, including for diaspora entrepreneurs as non-state actors. During critical junctures, a strategic center pursuing a homeland-oriented goal, changes position from "outside" to "inside" a homeland territory, and vice versa. Transformative events are less powerful but have the capacity to change diaspora mobilization trajectories without fundamentally affecting the relationship between diaspora and homeland territory. Transformative events make diaspora entrepreneurs expand or contract their mobilizations while remaining embedded in the contexts in which they live.

Empirical evidence demonstrates the differential effects of critical junctures and transformative events. I showed how Kosovo Albanians, dispersed after the end of the Cold War from their homeland, were highly mobilized in the diaspora through strategic centers "outside" Kosovo. After the 1999 NATO military intervention, a critical juncture that transformed domestic and international institutions and structures, diaspora entrepreneurs managed to re-embed themselves "inside" homeland territory and assume governance functions. Similarly, the PLO was highly mobilized "outside" Palestinian territories before the 1993 Oslo Accords, yet through negotiations during the critical juncture managed to reinsert itself "inside" and assume important functions through the Palestinian Authority, even if officially remaining abroad. The outbreak of the Second Intifada in 2000 and the 9/11 US terrorist attacks, which came shortly thereafter, transformed the relationship between Hamas and the Palestinian state. While prior to 2000-2001, Hamas organized primarily outside Palestinian territories while remaining popular in Gaza, it managed to embed itself officially

"inside" the state through the 2006 election to power in Gaza. The 2004 mob violence in Kosovo, the 2015 violence in Kumanovo in Macedonia, and the 2014 war in Gaza were transformative events, which enhanced diaspora activism, but did not fundamentally redefine the relationship between diaspora and state.

The second theoretical point is to show that critical junctures and transformative events do not have the same effects across the transnational social field in which diasporas operate. Mobilizations depend on the sociospatial positionality of diaspora entrepreneurs in different contexts, especially vis-à-vis other actors in the field. I have shown how the US, as a global power with an important say for Kosovo's final status, remained an empowering context for diaspora mobilization for Kosovo's statehood in the 2000s, even though the diaspora had generally withdrawn its efforts to support Kosovo during this period. By contrast, US policies regarding the Palestinian issue were defined by the war on terrorism and suppression of movements and organizations after 9/11. Thus, the US became a less conducive context for Palestinian diaspora mobilization, unlike the UK, where Palestinians became empowered by a grievance against colonial decisions, London's Arab media scene, and multiple solidarity and Islamic networks.

The third theoretical point is that critical events do not take place simply in host-lands and homelands, as scholarship considering a triangular model of relationships between diasporas, home-states, and host-state tend to indicate. They take place in other areas of the transnational social field to which diasporas are sociospatially connected and which they observe from afar. I have shown briefly how violent events in Kumanovo in Macedonia have reinvigorated discussions about the larger Albanian space in the Albanian diaspora. This finding speaks even more broadly to the Palestinian case, where critical events "outside" the currently considered homeland in West Bank and Gaza have been even more numerous. Palestinians have been living, for decades in the refugee camps in Lebanon, and in Jordan and other Middle Eastern locations. Recent work by Gabiam and Fiddian-Qasmiyeh (2016), for example, shows how Palestinians abroad became mobilized regarding violent events in the Yarmuk refugee camp, attacked by ISIS, as it has been a space to which Palestinians abroad hold transnational linkages. In short, this article shows how in cases of diasporas related to polities experiencing contested sovereignty – such as Kosovo and Palestine – critical

events in different parts of the transnational social field have the capacity to change either relationships between diaspora and the state or to fundamentally transform their mobilization trajectories.

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