The Diplomacy of State Recognition: Discourse, Performance and Entanglement

Gëzim Visoka
Dublin City University

Abstract

How do emerging states obtain international recognition and secure membership of international organisations in contemporary world politics? This paper explores the everyday politics of becoming a sovereign state in world politics. Using the concept of 'metis', this paper explores the role of everyday prudent and situated discourses, diplomatic performances, and entanglements in the enactment of sovereign statehood and overcoming external contestation. In exploring the everyday politics of becoming a sovereign state, this paper explores Kosovo's diplomatic approach to becoming a sovereign state by obtaining international recognition and securing membership of international organisations. Drawing on institutional ethnographic research and first-hand observations, this paper argues that Kosovo's diplomatic success in consolidating its sovereign statehood has been the situational assemblage of multiple discourses, practiced through a broad variety of performative actions, and shaped by a complex entanglement with global assemblages of norms, actors, relations, and events. Accordingly, this study contributes to the conceptualisation of the everyday in diplomatic practice by offering an account of how micro-practices feed into macro-practices in world politics.

Keywords: metis diplomacy, the everyday, state-becoming, recognition, Kosovo

Introduction

Sovereignty is one the major concepts underpinning contemporary domestic and international politics, while states continue to remain core units of international society (James, 1999). Despite many critiques of the state, independent statehood remains an ontological solvent to achieve collective self-determination for many ethnic groups. Although there is extensive research on the

politics, legality and ethics of the right to self-determination, less work has been undertaken on the micro-politics and everyday practices of how independent statehood is achieved. Existing debates on state-becoming generally rest upon systemic factors, normative institutions, and the preferences of great powers (Krasner, 1999; Coggins, 2014), thereby ignoring the everyday agency of unrecognised subjects in world politics. The everyday turn in IR remains underdeveloped both theoretically and empirically. So far, the notion of everyday is mainly associated with peripheral sites of power and the exceptionality of sovereignty, as well as non-elite practices and knowledge. Yet, the everydayness of elites, institutions, and diplomatic practices where sovereignty is assembled, constituted, circulated, and articulated through linguistic and performative actions is insufficiently explored (see Sending, Pouliot and Neumann, 2015). Disentangling the everyday politics and diplomatic practices of new states is essential for understanding how new states build capacity to enter in international relations, which is one of the essential features of modern and recognisable statehood.

This paper seeks to expand the study of the everyday in IR by exploring the everyday practices of diplomatic elites in emerging states. Using James C. Scott's (1998) concept of 'métis' knowledge, this study puts forward 'metis diplomacy' as a conceptual sketch to depict the everyday prudent assemblage of situated and practical diplomatic knowledge and skills that guide the writing, performing, and entangling of sovereign statehood and overcoming external contestation. Metis signifies circumstantial and practical knowledge as a defining feature of bottom-up forms of social and political agency. Through the lenses of metis practices, this paper seeks to expand the study of the everyday by looking how elites, namely diplomatic corps, of emerging states practice state-becoming through everyday discourses, performances and entanglements with other states. discourse at the centre of the study of everyday politics of statehood not only helps seeing international relations as intertextual relations, but also reveals how state-making is first and foremost an everyday text-making endeavour (Epstein, 2008). Metaphorically, wording sovereignty plays a significant role in 'worlding' sovereignty. However, discourse without performance remains a textual artefact short of social power. Performativity is what gives life to sovereignty. Diplomatic performances rely on the art of circumstances, which entail using situational and tactical knowledge to maximise effects (Scott, 1998; Butler, 2010). While everyday discursive and performative practices capture diplomatic inter-actions and mutually constitutive dynamics, the everyday is the site where agencies entangle whereby intra-actions – namely related and unrelated actions, events, and processes – may produce effects without direct discursive and performative encounter (Aradau et al., 2015). In this regard, both situated and remote global assemblages are crucial for explaining the complex causation and entanglement that facilitates and obscures acting in world politics. Accordingly, the concept of metis diplomacy assists in demonstrating how the everyday is the site where language, performance, and agency not only challenges the existing international order but also contributes in the remaking of world politics.

This conceptual framework is applied to the case of Kosovo to explore the everyday dynamics of becoming a sovereign state under the conditions of limited international recognition and acceptance in international society (see Visoka, 2018). The absence of certain sovereign attributes of modern statehood make Kosovo a suitable case for understanding how sovereignty is enacted within the conditions of its absence. As Claire Monagle and Dimitris Vardoulakis (2013: 1) argue, "sovereignty exists only in moments of absence, only when referentiality is abandoned and the nothing is paramount". The analysis focus on how metis diplomacy is applied by Kosovo's diplomats in obtaining diplomatic recognition and membership of international organisations as two essential features of independent and legitimate sovereign statehood (Fabry, 2010). Although powerful states played an important role in strengthening Kosovo's international standing, Kosovo's own metis diplomacy has played a crucial role in generating momentum building on support from great powers to reach out to other countries and consolidate external sovereignty (see Hoxhaj, 2016). Under these circumstances, Kosovo's success in consolidating its sovereign statehood has been the assemblage and situational connectivity of multiple discourses, practiced through a broad variety of performative actions, and enabled and disenabled by a complex entanglement of different global assemblages. This in turn has sufficient implications for the existing international order and epistemological stances on sovereign statehood, which requires substantial theoretical and practical rethinking of international norms and politics

In the first part, this paper situates the everyday in IR and outlines three core features of everyday metis diplomacy. In the second part, the analysis uses Kosovo as a case study to illustrate the importance of everyday discourses, performances and entangled agency in overcoming external contestation and consolidation of external sovereignty. Accordingly, this study contributes to the conceptualisation of the everyday in diplomatic practice by offering an account of how micro-practices feed into macro-practices in world politics.

The Everyday in IR

The everyday has been taken for granted in mainstream IR debates. This has limited our understanding of the micro-politics and everyday practices that are constitutive of social and material aspects of international relations. While the everyday as an epistemological and methodological site has been the bedrock for many feminist studies on power, hierarchy, and inequality in world politics, the absence of the everyday is most notably evident in the study of the state and sovereign statehood. The dominant perspectives associated with the mainstream IR scholarship conceive sovereignty as ahistorical, static, given, and embedded in solid foundations, such as territoriality, power, anarchical equality, constitutional independence, and non-interference (Bartelson, 1995). These accounts offer a rationalist and realist explanation of the contemporary nature of sovereignty. For example, Alan James (1999) approaches sovereign statehood from an institutionalist perspective, which depicts sovereignty as an artefact of legal

arrangements that has the force of law, the possession of unlimited power and constitutional independence, and the control of internal and external policy flowing from a single unitary source. Such conceptions of state and sovereignty mainly draw their inferences from historical analysis or conceptual discussions from the observed practices and discourses of established sovereign states (Fabry, 2010; Coggins, 2014). They take the state and sovereignty as primitive and unproblematic starting points for analysis, while others take systemic factors as enablers of state formation. Consequently, mainstream institutionalist perspectives hide the human agency and everydayness of sovereignty by focusing on the structural and normative properties of sovereignty.

Contrary to these views, constructivist, critical and poststructuralist approaches consider sovereignty a historical product that emerges through specific struggles, interactions, practices of states, which produce norms, rules and institutions that form the structural foundation of the international order. Thomas Biersteker and Cynthia Weber (1996: 11) define the "state, as an identity or agent, and sovereignty, as an institution or discourse, [which] are mutually constitutive and constantly undergoing change and transformation". Endorsing ontological contingency, R.B.J. Walker (1993: 168) perceives the state as "constantly maintained, defended, attacked, reproduced, undermined, and relegitimised on a daily basis". Critical accounts of sovereignty and state-making offer meta-theoretical and conceptual critiques of Western democracies, ignoring thus new dynamics of statehood in global politics (Weber, 1998; Caspersen, 2012). While the constructivist constellations seek to break away from ahistorical views of sovereignty, they still are rooted in abstract inferences and normative frameworks of rule-based governance of political affairs. Across the board, these accounts on the changing nature of sovereignty do not explore sufficiently the everyday constitution, contestation, and transformation of sovereignty. Often critical scholars seek to navigate non-institutionalized sites of power and agency to make sense of the productive nature of subjectivities. By doing this, they risk not only omitting the everyday life of political organisations, but also ignoring spaces where political relations, social interactions, epistemic knowledge, and embedded practices and cultures clash, fuse, and produce new forms of symbolic power exemplified through textual interactions, performative practices, and entangled agencies (see Björkdahl and Buckley-Zistel, 2016). A significant missing link in IR is the study of everyday dynamics of diplomatic interactions and how micro-politics constitutive in the making of world politics.

Although the everyday has always been a subject in sociology and anthropology, in IR only recently we have seen a renewed interest in studying everyday forms of diplomatic agency, culture, and practice. The everyday is understood as "the spatiality of situated, mundane, and habitual practices, often little appreciated in IR because of their "routine" character versus the drive of crisis and globalist thinking" (Acuto, 2014: 346). The everyday as a site, level of analysis, and practice, is crucial for capturing the praxeological mutation of sovereignty with all its contradictions and entanglements. As Christian Krohn-Hansen and Knut G. Nustad (2005: 12) maintain "a modern

state must be understood as produced by a broad and continuously shifting field of power relationships, everyday practices and formations of meaning." Deriving from this, everyday diplomacy can be synonymised with "codes of indirection, listening skills, tact, coded gestures, staged performances and empathy" which take place in non-institutional…constellations (Constantinou, 2016: 24). While the notion of everyday has come to be associated with peripheral sites of power and the exceptionality of sovereignty, the everydayness of official politics and institutional life where power and state sovereignty is assembled, constituted, circulated, and articulated through linguistic and performative actions is insufficiently explored. Although the everyday is often associated with ordinary, repetitive, mundane, and vernacular practices, it is profoundly a political phenomenon as it entails the site, space, and scale where different forms of agencies (discursive, embodied, spatial, material, and relational) emerge, which can impact local, national, regional and international politics. Especially, the everyday making of sovereignty in contemporary examples of state formation with contested sovereignty, different degrees of international recognition, and external engagement and acceptance remains under-researched. Such new explorations would complement existing studies on the everyday nationhood and citizen performances of identity (Fox and Miller-Idriss, 2012; Hartmann, 2007). Therefore, new conceptual and empirical research is pivotal to look at the everyday life of sovereignty and its coming to become a social fact in world politics through discourses, performances, and entangled agencies. In this regard, the everyday diplomatic micro-practices are essential for explaining macro effects in world politics.

Metis Diplomacy: Discourse, Performance, and Entanglement

While the everyday represents the elementary space for social action, accounting for its constitutive patterns and practices is more complicated than it may initially appear (see Guillaume, 2011). This paper maintains that a proper examination of the everyday politics of state consolidation in world politics requires integrating together "the material and the symbolic, practices and discourse" (McConnell, 2016: 175). It requires seeing the state as an "emergent effect of an assemblage of discourses, performances, and objects" (Dittmer, 2017: 8), which is "produced through dynamic social processes and thus [are] constantly in emergence" (McConnell, 2016: 31). Discourse, practice, and agency are widely discussed in IR, but not sufficiently at the level of everyday diplomacy. In a recent study, Ole J. Sending, Vincent Pouliot, and Iver B. Neumann (2015: 7) argue that diplomacy "helps reproduce the state as the naturalized political arena for the generation of meaning and belonging", where the change of diplomatic practice may result in changing the meaning of statehood. For fledgling states, diplomacy can become constitutive of statehood by mediating the consolidation of external sovereignty through diplomatic recognition and access to multilateral bodies as basic prerequisites for entering international relations.

To conceptualise the diplomatic efforts of new fledgling states, the concept of metis diplomacy is proposed here as a three-tier concept which captures everyday situated knowledge (discourse), performance, and entangled agency. Metis signifies the knowledge "acquired through practice" and the practical skills "to adapt successfully to a shifting situation" (Scott, 1998: 313-315). The notion of metis synonymises practical knowledge that describes bottom-up forms of agency, ranging from local peasantry to diplomatic dissidence in world politics. Emerging states are located at the bottom of state hierarchies in world politics who suffer from limited diplomatic recognition and access to international organisations, including protection from international law. Metis knowledge is practiced through continuous, repetitive, and metaphoric actions linked to a local context and space (see Haraway, 1988), which signifies multiple "embodiments, experiences, personal knowledge of others, emotions and interests, know-how, cognitive styles, background knowledge and relations to others" (Kurki, 2015: 786). It is specific type of diplomatic knowledge and practices, which "requires constant adaptation to changing circumstances" (Scott, 1998: 178). In this regard, the concept of metis captures well the complexity, ambivalent, pluriversality, ambivalence, and messiness of the everyday, while still being able to account for the knowledge, performance, spaces, and relations that underpin the social and the political. Metis-laden perspectives in IR have recently appeared in Vincent Pouliot's (2016: 3) work on diplomatic practices, where he reveals the power of practical 'know-how' knowledge in defining the international hierarchical order and the work of Harry Gould (2016) on reflexivity and prudence. Yet, the concept hasn't been used explicitly to depict the diplomatic practices and dissident agency of unrecognised entities in world politics. In light of this, metis diplomacy will be used as a notion to explain a wide range of everyday prudent discourses, performances, and entanglements which appear to guide the diplomatic campaign of nascent states in world politics. Metis diplomacy is a specific type of diplomatic conduct which is embedded on prudence and situational adaptation of discourses and performances not driven by institutional knowledge and pre-determined strategies, but practical knowledge and expertise accumulated in the course of diplomatic deliberation and reproduced through improvisation and imitation of other consolidated states.

The first segment of metis diplomacy is everyday discourse and situated knowledge. In diplomatic studies and IR, the significance of discourse and its interplay with practices is evident in the work of Iver B. Neumann (2002), Lene Hansen (2006), and Rebecca Adler-Nissen (2016). Neumann (2002: 642) maintains that discourse is essential for diplomats and diplomatic institutions to steer their performances and frame their policy intentions. Discourses foreground diplomatic communication, which according to Adler-Nissen (2016: 96), "is probably the most fundamental form of diplomatic agency". In absence of political and material power, fledgling states turn to language to make the case why they are entitled to sovereign statehood; namely, why they deserve diplomatic recognition and admission to international organisations. Diplomatic discourse refers to a situational use of written and spoken language to convey certain messages and signal intentions (Hansen, 2006; Cornut, 2015). Discourse plays a central role in the enactment of

statehood because it has the power to constitute certain situations, produce and reproduce knowledge, and most importantly shape interests, identities, relationships, and norms. As Charlotte Epstein (2008: 246) rightly argues: "states do not interact with one another from a set of pregiven and fixed interests and identities; rather, their interests and their identities are shaped by the discourses in which they are immersed and the fields of interactions in which they take part." Sovereign statehood, as much as it is a matter of fact, it is also a textual practice and a by-product of the meaning attached to it. State sovereignty is a textually constructed social fact that is articulated through everyday acts of writing, talking, and performing speech acts. Inter-state relations are first and foremost inter-textual relations. Diplomatic text resonates agency as policy-making is an everyday text-making activity. In the context of fledgling states, metis-laden diplomatic discourse signifies ways how situated language, text and meaning is co-constituted through the practice of discursive harmonisation or differentiation for advancing political interests and creating new realities. Therefore, first type of agency generated by metis diplomacy is discursive agency, which has far-reaching implications for the realisation of political aspirations for membership in the conservative and gated society of sovereign states.

The second segment of metis diplomacy is the enactment of statehood through everyday performances. Mainstream institutionalist views on statehood perceive the existence of states as apriority to our practices, a social reality detached from everyday performances. Contrary to such views, becoming a state is a performative process that comprises patterned and/or discarded routines, repetition, practices, and spontaneous activities (Butler, 1993; Weber, 1998). States as ontological categories are not pre-given in world politics because "statehood has no ontological status apart from the claims, representations, assumptions and routines performing it in political and legal practices" (Grzybowski and Koskenniemi, 2015: 29). The recent practice-turn in IR has drawn extensively on performance theory to account that "a practice is a performance… that is, a process of doing something" (Adler and Pouliot, 2011: 6). The power of performativity lies in its ability to assemble linguistic, material, and affective segments, which jointly produce new features and effects, identities, frontiers, discourses, and material realities. As Pouliot (2016: 10) maintains, social world is emergent and practice is a key process involved in bringing the many facets of global life into being". Therefore, seeing the state from the perspective of performances not only challenges the "state as a unified actor or static form" but enables "understanding the state as improvised urges reflection on the unfolding of the state as a process always in motion" (Jeffrey, 2013: 176). As Scott (1998: 313) maintains, metis skills "are exceptionally difficult to teach apart from engaging in the activity itself". In a global ecology that lacks prescriptive rules on state formation, becoming a sovereign state requires acting as a sovereign state. States become sovereign through the enactment of policies, actions, and discourses. States are nothing but iterative practices.

Performative agency is the second type of agency generated by metis-laden everyday diplomatic practices. Diplomatic performances are what makes new states recognisable entitles in world politics. Equally important, performance helps to overcome essentialising discourses and solid perception of identity, thereby accounting for both continuity and change in the practices of actors (see Jeffrey 2013: 6). Exploring performances enables capturing "micro-geographies of habitual practices" (Nash, 2000: 656), which supplements the textual and discursive analysis of everyday diplomacies of state formation. Performative diplomacy highlights the power of diplomatic improvisation and creativity in destabilizing the current global order, in utilizing loopholes in the international legal and political order, and in overcoming conservative policies regarding who has the right to become a state (Visoka, 2018). Through performative acts, states gain internal and external legitimacy and generate global status. Power needs to be performed, and performance are acts of power. For these reasons, examining performativity is important to understand how statehood is performed in practice, and to identify the audience of diplomatic performances to trace the entangled agencies shaping the external legitimation of statehood. Exploring the performativity and enactment of statehood requires looking at a broad range of practices and events, such as press conferences, foreign policy speeches, diplomatic cables, and political meetings.

The third segment of metis diplomacy concerns everyday entanglement with global assemblages. A reality-adequate conception of diplomatic agency of new states make sense only if they are studied as global assemblages of entangled agencies. In IR, the concept of linkages, assemblages, and entanglements have been used to depict association and relatedness between unrelated agencies, discourses, practices, objects, and events (Sharp et al., 2000; Dittmer, 2014; Fierke, 2017). Assemblages are temporary groupings of expressive and material heterogenic components, not forming a seamless whole, whereby its contingent constitutive parts may the detached or already are components of another assemblage with different dynamics of interaction (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987; Abrahamsen and Williams, 2009; Acuto and Curtis 2014). As Jason Skeet (2014: 65) adds "assemblages are not predesigned by anyone, they are not brought about through a blueprint predetermining their makeup or what it is they can produce. In fact, assemblages have to be considered more along the lines of self-organizing entities". While performances predominantly are shaped by repetitive and mimetic processes with elements of anticipation, regularity, and preparedness, entanglements operate within broader temporary assemblages (see Marcus and Saka, 2006: 103). Karen Barad (2007: ix) argues that "[t]o be entangled is not simply to be intertwined with another, as in the joining of separate entities, but to lack an independent, self-contained existence…". Central to understanding diplomatic agency is to explore the entangling agencies and events which cause complementarity and diffraction on the discursive articulations and disruptions of performative practice. The causality in diplomatic entanglements is non-linear. There are multiple contributing factors, triggers, ontological entities, structures, relations, conditions and processes that contribute to the emergence of particular outcomes.

Equally important is practical mastery of diplomats who determine the status and standing of their state in the international relations (Pouliot, 2016: 57).

Diplomatic events and non-events are crucial to explore how they are used in practice to achieve foreign policy of recognition and membership of international organisations. In an entangled, complex, and non-linear world, remote and unrelated events and performances can influence and diffract the diplomatic processes elsewhere (see Aradau, et al. 2015: 75). In diplomatic assemblages, agency is not constituted upon the political strengths of involved actors, but on the monumental combination of political forces with fractural agency and emergent features (Visoka, 2018). While these assemblages co-constitute one another, they do not melt into a collective body; they remain fractural parts of a fluid whole. Karin Fierke (2017: 177) argues that "claims to independence express contestation through which not only norms but identity and forms of relationality and entanglement are produced through processes of co-constitution". Therefore, making sense of diplomatic practices requires exploring how exogenous and remote and unrelated agencies, events, relations, and dynamics entangle together to form temporary assemblages which simultaneously can facilitate or inhibit emerging states recognition and access in the international system. These entanglements that take place in everyday basis illustrate how everyday micro-practices have an amplifying effect and impact not only global macro-politics, but also unintentionally affect micro-practices elsewhere. In other words, the entangled character of world politics reveals how the everyday is international phenomena; hence all international relations activity takes place within the everyday.

Methodologically, accounting for the three segments of metis diplomacy requires using multiple methods and operating at different epistemological scales. It also requires endorsing methodological pluralism, which according to Patrick T. Jackson (2010: 210), permits blending together different methodological traditions as well as assembling different notions and conceptions from different philosophical wagers. Building on this, a suitable methodological combination is institutional ethnography, participant observation. and practice-tracing. Institutional ethnography enables capturing the everyday textual, relational, and performative aspects of power, institutions, and statehood (Smith, 2005). The everyday as a level of analysis represents the site where metis diplomacy is performed and where epistemological we can make sense of the formation and articulation of discourses, performances, and entangled relations. In terms of methods, institutional ethnography can be a useful methodological guide in understanding, mapping and exploring the everyday construction and practice of sovereignty within the institutional premises of newly established states that struggle to consolidate sovereignty through literary and interactionist practices.

However, capturing everyday discourses, performances, and entanglements requires in-depth situational knowledge, which can be mediated through participant observation and practice tracing

(Pouliot and Cornut, 2015: 303). Practice tracing as opposed to process-tracing seeks to capture observable practices without reducing to single or handful causal mechanisms. It enables making contingent casual claims and analytical generality. As Vincent Pouliot (2015: 239), puts "successful practice tracing should capture the generative links between various social processes". In tracing practices, Christian Burger and Manuel Mireanu (2015: 119) suggest that "a return to practice stresses the need for seeking proximity to the world of practitioners and their activities, and more carefully listen and talking to those lives are at stake". Hence, extended interviews, participant observation and proximity to the events are essential for tracing the known and unknown practices of becoming sovereign under the conditions of external contestation (Pouliot, 2016). This methodological combination jointly enables grasping metis diplomacy by unpacking discursive meaning-making, observing performative actions, and accounting for entangled agencies. The added value of this methodological combination is broadening of possibilities for uncovering often unobservable practices and opening up the existing debates to new sites, actors, and approaches of knowing and doing IR. It enables tracing discursive and performative fluidity, which is crucial for revisiting analytical assumption as well as adequately adjusting to empirical reality. This methodological combination is applied in the case of Kosovo based on the author's ethnographic research on Kosovo's diplomacy between 2013 and 2014, which consists of in-depth interviews with Kosovo's diplomats of all ranks, critical observations of everyday foreign policy making process, and usage of archival and unpublished diplomatic correspondence.

Becoming a Sovereign State: Exploring Kosovo's Metis Diplomacy

While Kosovo has been a crucial case for understanding international intervention and post-conflict peacebuilding, it is also an exceptional case in understanding the struggle for becoming a sovereign state through a complex process of international legitimation despite systemic and external political blockages and contestations (see Weller, 2009; Ker-Lindsay, 2012). Following the violent dissolution of Yugoslavia, Kosovo experienced a decade of suppression and state-orchestrated violence between 1989 and 1999, and over a decade of UN administration. In 2008, Kosovo declared independence in coordination with the United States and most European states, which followed the UN Security Council's failure to endorse the comprehensive proposal of the UN's Special Envoy for Kosovo who recommended supervised independence as the most viable solution to Kosovo's political status (UN Security Council, 2007; Assembly of Kosovo, 2008). Since the UN Security Council wasn't ready to endorse supervised independence for Kosovo, the fledgling state was forced to pursue a complex path aimed at consolidating external sovereignty, overcoming contestation, and joining the society of sovereign and independent states.

Recognition of states remains one of the most unregulated and de-centralised aspects of international relations (Grant, 2015: 204). Focusing on the recognition of sovereign statehood is important because it represents "the final obstacle facing those political entities in the international

system that want to be states" (Richards and Smith, 2015: 162). In this regard, diplomatic recognition plays a central role in the "conventional conferral of state legitimacy and functioning of the inter-state system" (McConnell, Moreau and Dittmer, 2012: 804). It also plays a role in boosting state's ontological security (Zarakol, 2017). Similarly, membership of international organisations has become another important pathway for admission into international society. In particular, "admission to full UN membership is tantamount to collective de jure recognition…[and]…is also likely to facilitate the entry of the new state into other multilateral Organizations" (Geldenhuys, 2009: 22). Between February 2008 and September 2017, Kosovo has been recognised by 115 sovereign states, has established diplomatic relations with over 80 countries, has become a member of over 50 international and regional organisations, and has signed contractual relations with the European Union as the first step towards full accession.[1] How has Kosovo managed to consolidate its statehood under conditions of contested statehood and transitional international order? Although Kosovo's quest for recognition is gradually receiving greater attention, existing accounts do not explore Kosovo's everyday diplomacy (see Ker-Lindsay, 2012; Caspersen, 2012). Using the conceptual framework of metis diplomacy, the remainder of this study examines Kosovo's campaign for obtaining diplomatic recognition and securing membership of international organisations as the two remaining frontiers for completing sovereign statehood (see Visoka, 2018). It seeks to demonstrate that exploring everyday metis-laden practices is crucial for making the diplomatic agency of emerging states visible and knowable, and illustrate how bottom-up and micro-forms of international diplomatic dissidence shape macro-politics of international society.

Everyday diplomatic discourse

Diplomatic texts have played an important role in the international affirmation of Kosovo's quest for statehood. Diplomatic discourses have their origins in everyday experiences, performances, and improvisation of individual diplomats. Kosovo's discursive diplomacy has embodied a fluid repertoire of knowing, envisaging, and talking about Kosovo's statehood. The linguistic component of Kosovo's everyday making of sovereignty consisted of an overarching dispositif of independence, which was constructed, constantly renewed, and integrated with other related discourses. The linguistic dimension of Kosovo's metis diplomacy was different from normal diplomatic conventions. Neumann (2005: 205) argues that central to diplomatic text is repetition of arguments; otherwise the consistency of foreign policy goals would be weakened. Writing of Kosovo's diplomatic text was undertaken by a small group of political advisors and diplomats who constantly adjusted diplomatic narrative in line with changing circumstances, to adapt to the diplomatic counterparts, and to maximise and leverage the impact of performative diplomacy.[2] From an early stage, Kosovo's foreign policy community realised that diplomatic recognition was purely a particularistic political process that lacked normative consensus and consistency.

Responding to this, Kosovo's diplomatic discourse combined historical and situational arguments why Kosovo deserves independence and recognition, how it satisfies the objective criteria of statehood, and how it is capable of positively fitting into the existing global order (MFA of Kosovo, 2013a). Most of Kosovo's diplomats relied on situational and practical knowledge, which was a process of making diplomatic arguments without undergoing centralised doctrinal training or instruction.[3] Kosovo's diplomatic texts are the product of tactical and practical knowledge, which was partially based on the textualisation of accumulative experiences and observations, and partially by drawing on other diplomatic contexts and practices. Kosovo's diplomatic discourse was assembled and presented in the form of strategic and policy documents, letters requesting recognition, non-papers and issue-specific position papers, and other diplomatic notes (MFA of Kosovo, 2011: 3). These documents contained the request for deepening bilateral cooperation and establishing diplomatic relations, a summary of Kosovo's recent diplomatic achievements, and an appendix with adjustable facts and arguments about Kosovo's independence.

Kosovo's campaign for consolidating statehood first and foremost was guided by a framework of discourses, which served to orient the everyday performances of Kosovo's new diplomatic corps, and to ensure that decisions and actions feed in to the long-term goals and values, as well as avoid mistakes and reduce uncertainties (Visoka, 2018). Kosovo's diplomatic discourse was organised along three distinct scalar orders. First-order discourse presented the case for remedial recognition grounded on historical and normative grounds, such as: violent dissolution of Yugoslavia; a remedial case of self-determination after the violent removal of Kosovo's autonomy by the Milošević regime; the endurance of a decade of state-sponsored violence and human rights abuses against the Albanian majority population in Kosovo; the failure of preventive diplomacy; the humanitarian intervention that paved the way for a UN transitional administration of Kosovo; and the failure of Serbia to accept the UN sponsored negotiations for defining Kosovo's final status (MFA of Kosovo, 2011). Second-order discourse invoked arguments regarding the satisfaction of core criteria and requirements of statehood, as outlined in the Montevideo Convention of 1933 and inscribed in general international law (Ibid.). Kosovo tried to demonstrate that it has a permanent population, a defined territory, effective government, and the competence and powers to enter external relations. Third-order discourse consisted of the discoursification of specific domestic and global events, which provided significant grounds for strengthening Kosovo's statehood (Ibid.). Over time, Kosovo's diplomatic discourse included: the ICJ's landmark ruling on the legality of Kosovo's declaration of independence in 2010; the end of supervised independence for Kosovo in 2012; the first EU-facilitated agreement for normalisation of relations with Serbia in 2013; and the advancement of EU integration in 2015 with the conclusion of the Stabilisation and Association Agreement (SAA) with the EU; and membership of regional and international organisations (see Hoxhaj, 2016). With the increase of global insecurity and hybrid threats, Kosovo made the case for recognition and UN admission to enforce international law and contribute to international security, thereby moving from being a receiver to provider of external security (Visoka, 2018).

Central to metis diplomacy was cultivating an art of circumstances, which entails using situational knowledge and changing strategy to improve the outcomes. It was tactical knowledge built on many similar or different moments from past embodied, condensed and hidden memories, experiences and events. As Kosovo hasn't completed its external sovereignty yet, its diplomatic narrative continues to evolve and adjust to circumstances hoping that it will gradually build international legitimacy through persuasion and discursive affinity. Over the years, the rehearsal of these diplomatic narratives turned into diplomatic storytelling practices as "chronologically structured narrative interpretation of reality around the constitutive or regulative ideas they seek to promote" (Bode, 2015: 5). As summarised in one of the position papers produced by Kosovo's MFA, the case for recognition was justified along the following lines:

> …the independence of Kosovo has not set any precedent, that its case has always been a special one, that it has greatly contributed to regional peace and stability and, therefore, served the best interests of the whole Western Balkans region and European continent, that its independence is legal under international law, its international legal personality confirmed by admission to various international organizations and recognition by a significant number of independent and sovereign States, and that, in order for the new State to further develop internally and consolidate internationally, including by securing its rightful place in the United Nations and other international organizations, new recognitions are crucial (MFA of Kosovo, 2013a: 4).

Kosovo's storytelling repertoire consisted of situated narratives adjusted to the type of interlocutors, their geographical, cultural, and foreign policy values. In this context, the everyday metis diplomacy took a spatial connotation, which signifies determinant role of space in diplomatic practices (see Björkdahl and Buckley-Zistel 2016). With Western states Kosovo used the discourse of successful statebuilding, with Asian states the discourse of sovereignty and non-interference in other countries affairs, with African and Latin American states the decolonisation discourse, and with other small states solidarist arguments.[4] Parallel to securing diplomatic recognition, seeking membership of international organisations represented a major priority in Kosovo's quest to consolidate its international sovereignty. Although membership of international organisations was primarily focused on strengthening statehood and expanding international legitimation and participation, Kosovo often used technical and procedural arguments to justify its bid for accession to such organisations.[5] As indicated by Kosovo's MFA in an internal paper, "full integration into the international community is only possible through a gradual integration, especially through a more intensified technical cooperation in the area of rule of law and human rights" (MFA of Kosovo, 2015: 2). For example, the discursive justification for Kosovo's application to join UNESCO was framed around "the desire of the people of Kosovo to establish and maintain closer cooperation with other nations in the field of education, science and culture" (Government of

Kosovo, 2015). These metis-laden examples demonstrate the creative, yet ambivalent and messy nature of everyday diplomacy that emerging states had to perform in order to gain recognition and access to international organisations. They help unpack how the micro-politics shape grant politics in IR and vice versa.

Everyday diplomatic performances

Diplomacy is largely a pre-mediated theatrical performance, in the protocol, rituals and pre-mediated expectations. As Kosovo did not have a solid bureaucratic tradition for foreign policy implementation, its diplomatic performativity relied on metis knowledge and practices actualised through daily improvisation, experimentation, and imitation of discourses, practices, and enactments that resembled sovereign states. As political-temporal-spatial acts, everyday diplomatic performances served the double purpose of acting like a state and simultaneously strengthening domestic and international attributes of statehood. Kosovo's everyday diplomatic performances consisted of official and unofficial visits and meetings, public speeches, visiting important sites, ceremonies, press conferences, and social media.[6] At the heart of Kosovo's metis diplomacy was a performative struggle of making choices based on available resources, capacities, and the likelihood for success. The added value of this metis-laden performative diplomacy was the successful adaptation of shifting political circumstances and the ability to decide what course of action to take as events unfolded, especially how to seek alternative trajectories for overcoming the external impediments to statehood (see Scott, 1998: 313). As strategic as it may sound, this was a by-product of a daily struggle to cope with the obstacles of the existing inhospitable environment for the birth of new states in the international system.

Dominant perspectives on state recognition conceive recognition as a single act expressed in a specific time, space and with explicit declarative intent and consequential effects. From the perspective of metis diplomacy, recognition is not a single and formal act but a complex process, which consists of multiple variations and stages (Visoka, 2018). Similarly, diplomatic affairs of states often end up in a state of ambivalence hiding the agency of individual diplomats. During its campaign for recognition, a small group of Kosovar diplomats devised a processual approach to diplomatic recognition, which consisted in reaching out to other states individually and engage with them for as long as necessary, using both diplomatic and undiplomatic means to encourage the state to confer recognition on Kosovo.[7] As a Kosovo diplomat puts:

> "there is no single formula that Kosovo has used to secure recognition. In some cases, it is a matter of luck. In other cases, it depends on the agency of diplomatic interlocutors and their influence within their government. Ultimately, the mood of foreign ministers and heads of states also plays a critical role in the recognition process."[8]

Performing the request for recognition required combining convention and unconventional diplomatic practices and habits.[9] The first stage of seeking recognition occurred as Kosovo submitted requests for recognition and the establishment of diplomatic relations. Kosovo's diplomatic discourse highlighted that "prior to the establishment of diplomatic relations, the natural requisite step would be the recognition of Kosovo's independence, an act that would enormously help the new State and its people to prosper and join the world's family of free nations" (MFA of Kosovo, 2013a: 1). Kosovo has regularly made diplomatic overtures to countries across the world with the purpose of renewing the request for establishing diplomatic relations, expressing congratulations on national days, offering sympathy at times of national tragedy, and extending an invitation to visit Kosovo or vote in favour of Kosovo's membership of international bodies. On certain occasions the request was made indirectly via another powerful and influential state, regional organization, or influential personality. However, countries rarely granted Kosovo diplomatic recognition on the basis of the initial request for recognition.

The second stage in the recognition process involved direct contacts, whereby Kosovar diplomats met formally or informally with representatives of states that was seeking recognition in bilateral or multilateral settings, or exchanging letters for a conventional or non-conventional event. Each year, Kosovo's foreign minister identified five to ten 'priority' states from whom to seek recognition.[10] The effectiveness of Kosovo's metis diplomacy has been disregarding diplomatic protocols and using unconventional spaces for lobbying for recognition. In almost daily basis, Kosovo's foreign minister and other senior diplomats performed new practices of meeting and conversing with their foreign homologues in unconventional sites and through innovative methods. This metis-laden diplomatic opportunism and flexibility gave rise to an effective approach including unplanned meetings with foreign ministers and heads of states at multilateral gatherings, and unexpected encounters in corridors and lobbies of sites where events took place. In establishing initial contact with states who had not yet recognised it, Kosovo used multilateral events, such as the annual session of the UN General Assembly or region-specific gatherings.[11] Face-to-face encounters provided spaces for performing personal diplomacy which represents "a form of diplomatic encounters and interactions among individual leaders in which persuasion, personal 'chemistry', mutual trust, gestures, and convictions often play an important role" (Vogt, 2017: 9). The face-to-face meeting with Fijian Foreign Minister, who was sympathetic to Kosovo's independent statehood apparently was been essential for securing their recognition.

The third stage involved establishing official communication where bilateral discussions of recognition and establishment of diplomatic relations proceeded. The metis diplomacy guiding these visits consisted of consisted of speech acts, visual segments, press release, and social media appearance. Haiti is an example of the power of metis diplomacy whereby Kosovo's foreign minister and his team of advisors managed to obtain diplomatic recognition during the same visit. During the meeting in Port-au-Prince, Kosovo's Foreign Minister Enver Hoxhaj used his

persuasion tactics and managed to convince his Haitian homologue to recognise Kosovo's independence during the same visit. He later commented that "one of the most important aspects of Kosovo's foreign policy has been personal diplomacy, which entailed mobilizing Kosovo's political leadership to communicate with influential international personalities" (Hoxhaj, 2016: 136). For most of the time, these mundane diplomatic actions remained as non-events because Kosovo had to operate under the radar to reduce the risk of countermeasures by its international opponents. Yet, when possible, crucial to Kosovo's performative diplomacy has been the documentation of meeting with photographs and other audio-visual means, where handshakes, flags and the body gestures have played a crucial role in legitimating Kosovo's independence. In this regard, visual diplomacy demonstrated that Kosovo is an accepted member of the international community and intended to put pressure on countries who have not recognised Kosovo to do so, while also enhancing country's domestic ontological security and boosting foreign policy leaders' popularity.

Following this, if the recognition did not follow immediately, intermediary measures and signs of mutual acceptance were performed, which as: recognising Kosovo's passport; regular diplomatic exchanges in bilateral and multilateral settings; undertaking arrangements for economic cooperation; operating liaison offices; officially receiving Kosovo's most senior government and diplomatic officials; and supporting Kosovo's membership of regional and international organisations. Recognition by Singapore took almost two years and the entry point was deepening institutional cooperation as an incremental process towards full diplomatic recognition through mutual recognition of passports and economic exchange. Finally, when the internal and external conditions were fulfilled and reached a tipping point, formal recognition occurred: this had a textual and performative dimension, by sending the official recognition letter or signing diplomatic relations. In certain cases, the recognition letter concluded the process, while in other cases a ceremonial event was organised. For example, when Guyana took the decision to recognise Kosovo, Kosovo's Foreign Minister was required to visit this country to establish diplomatic relations as a condition for granting recognition. Similarly, Togo's Foreign Minister requested to visit Kosovo to communicate the decision for recognizing Kosovo and establishing diplomatic relations. These performative acts were repeated and modified to other contexts, demonstrating the significance of persistence in consolidating sovereign statehood in the international arena.

Another important segment of Kosovo's metis diplomacy was the rehearsal of membership in international organisations, which was part of performative agency of statehood. As Fiona McConnell (2016: 2) argues, "rehearsal has an inherent but ambiguous temporality: rehearsal is done in anticipation of the 'real' event, but could be indefinite". Kosovo's diplomatic rehearsing has taken place through applying for membership of regional organizations with less political significance in preparation for eventual application for admission to the UN and other major intergovernmental organisations. To ensure its entry into international society 'through the

backdoor', Kosovo diplomats constantly improvised its intentions, capacities, and strategies for membership of international organisations. Kosovo's metis diplomacy for membership of international organisations consisted of a hybrid approach of adapting to and complying with certain norms, rules and institutions, while challenging, changing, and subverting other international norms and practices in pursuit of its diplomatic goals.[12] The lack of codified rules on state recognition, has enabled Kosovo to exploit the loopholes of the existing conservative international order and orthodoxies surrounding self-determination, sovereignty, and the admission of new states to international society. Kosovo's approach for obtaining membership of international organizations has involved pursuing membership of: organizations where it could secure consensus and sufficient votes; organizations that have strategically served Kosovo's economic and political interests, and organizations that could pave the way to join more important organizations.[13] As part of its long-term campaign to join the Council of Europe, Kosovo first became a member of the Council of Europe Development Bank and the Venice Commission. The rehearsal process helped Kosovo accumulate a distinct strand of situational knowledge beyond rulebooks of diplomacy. Regardless of their political significance in global politics, Kosovo's MFA viewed membership of these international organisations as "strengthening further Kosovo's subjectivity, strengthening the state identity in international politics, advancing the country's role and position in international affairs, and improving its global image" (MFA of Kosovo, 2013c: 3).

Everyday diplomatic entanglements

The third segment of Kosovo's metis diplomacy of statehood was entanglement with broader global diplomatic assemblages of actors, relations, and events that have simultaneously enabled and obstructed the enactment of independent statehood. While to "assemblages are ad hoc groupings of diverse elements" which "are not governed by any central head" (Bennett, 2010: 23-24), entanglements represent "processes of domination and resistance which are always implicated in, and mutually constitutive of, one another" (Sharp, et al. 2000: 1). Diplomatic assemblages are a "product of multiple determinations that are not reducible to a single logic" (Ong and Collier, 2005: 12). Notably, recognition by the U.S. or other major global and regional powers gives the recipient state stronger international and domestic legitimacy. Brigid Coggins (2014: 42) finds that recognitions by great powers "constitute the most critical of the critical mass required to surpass the threshold to secure external sovereignty." The U.S. envoy for Kosovo's final status, Ambassador Frank G. Wisner (2008: 194) maintains that "Kosovo would not be independent today without strong American involvement". The U.S. and leading European powers coordinated their efforts in support of Kosovo's recognition through actions ranging from: sending diplomatic demarches; facilitating Kosovo's participation in international events; and using their bilateral diplomacy and multilateral influence in pressing other states to recognise Kosovo's statehood. Kosovo's foreign affairs leadership has openly admitted that "American support in our external

and internal affairs has been one of the basic preconditions for a successful statebuilding process" (Hoxhaj, 2016: 266). Though, international support for Kosovo has come with strings attached, whereby in exchange for strengthening Kosovo's international standing, U.S. and European partners have forced Kosovo to undertake domestic reforms and comply with externally-set political, economic, and geo-political agendas.

Kosovo's diplomatic recognition was neither determined entirely by great power politics nor by normative considerations, but by metis-laden situational entanglements and performative processes and enabling and disabling global assemblages. Support from great powers is often a by-product of the diplomatic agency of the aspirant state and a by-product of complex entanglements of domestic and global assemblages of discourses, events, and practices. The degree to which the aspirant state mobilises and its ability and resourcefulness to build alliances with great powers influences the extent of diplomatic support from the international community, including global and regional powers. After 2011, external assistance for Kosovo's recognition reduced significantly due to changing global circumstances, shift of foreign policy priorities, and emergence of more urgent global crisis, leaving Kosovo's own diplomatic abilities and skills to advance further its recognition campaign. At the heart of Kosovo's metis diplomacy was the individual agency of Kosovo's foreign policy leaders and diplomats who honed their diplomatic skills during the very process of requesting diplomatic recognition from other states. Kosovo's diplomatic team consisted of foreign minister, close aides, and self-motivated and active diplomats of different ranks.

Kosovo's metis diplomacy signified that the everyday and the international are inseparable. In a globally connected world, the effectiveness of Kosovo's metis diplomacy was to mobilise support in daily basis from regional and global powers and entangle Kosovo's interests with other countries' foreign policy interests. The interconnected nature of states and alliances in the international system influences the foreign policy behaviour of states and shapes countries' attitudes towards recognition. Analogies played an important part in securing diplomatic recognition. Former Foreign Minister Hoxhaj (2016: 131) stated that Kosovo's diplomacy needed "to understand which countries have greater influence in specific regions and to mobilise adequate people to secure recognition". Recognition of Kosovo by leaders of pecking orders within multilateral organisations, geographical regions, and alliances played an important role in influencing the decision of other states for extending diplomatic recognition to Kosovo (see Pouliot, 2016). For example, each new wave of recognitions was partially a merit of previous wave of recognitions, while subsequently influencing the proceeding wave. Often, changes in government or strategic geopolitical shifts opened the possibility for establishing direct diplomatic contacts with foreign governments. For example, Kosovo benefited from the power reshuffle in the Muslim world following the Arab Spring, which opened the possibility for recognition from Egypt, Yemen, and Libya (see Hoxhaj, 2016). These macro-diplomatic effects where directly

influenced by everyday micro-politics of state recognition performed through discursive, bodily, and relational agency.

However, the very same logic of global entanglements often worked against Kosovo's foreign policy interests. Kosovo's former Foreign Minister Skender Hyseni admitted that "the global crises" has "indirectly had a negative impact on the recognition process" (Assembly of Kosovo 2009). Major disenabling entanglements such as counter-recognition campaign by former host state and their great power allies and association with harmful precedents and other secessionist conflicts and regions have significantly undermined Kosovo's pace to full integration in the international system. Global political entanglements and rivalries among dominant powers also had a negative effect on Kosovo's international standing, not only by slowing the anticipated pace of completing international recognition but also by bringing to the forefront the possibility for de-recognition of Kosovo's independence. Robert Gates (2014), former U.S. Secretary of Defence, suggested that disagreements between the U.S. and Russia on the placement of a missile defence system in Europe played a role in Russia's decision to block Kosovo's independence at the UN Security Council in 2008. Moreover, the process of diplomatic recognition is entangled with broader global analogies and dissimilar cases of state-like entities seeking international recognition. While many states were sympathetic towards the Kosovo issue, nearly 40 countries withheld the recognition of Kosovo due to problems with their own domestic secessionist groups and fears for setting self-harming precedents. In certain cases, the recognition process was delayed or reversed by sudden international changes, such as the outburst of violent conflicts, governmental and regime change, the emergence of new contested and unrecognised states, and the reshuffling of regional and global power relations. Moreover, recognition of Kosovo's independence by one political bloc of states has significantly politicised and complicated the recognition process in a broader perspective. Kosovo has received wide recognition from most states belonging to the Euro-Atlantic community, while no recognition has been received from other emerging powers and those who are positioned behind Russia on the question of Kosovo's independence.

Kosovo's campaign for membership of international organisations was directly influenced by global and remote diplomatic entanglements. Kosovo has secured membership of World Bank and the International Monetary Fund as well as several other regional banks thanks to the globalisation and global economic connectivity. However, in other instances, Kosovo has suffered from the hyper-connected international order. In 2015, Kosovo failed to secure membership in UNESCO, which intended to serve as a processual step towards full admission to the UN. Although the campaign was well presented as far as public diplomacy is concerned, the strategic actions and diplomatic entanglements were miscalculated.[14] The precedence set by Palestine's membership in UNESCO harmed Kosovo's prospects as many countries wanted to avoid the further politicisation of the UN system, fearing that major contributing countries would withdraw their funding. In such diplomatic assemblages. agency is not constituted upon the political strengths of involved actors

but on the monumental combination of political forces with fractural agency and emergent features. Therefore, acts of performance themselves performed the function of defining Kosovo's foreign policy interests and values, and most significantly diplomatic arguments and moves deemed appropriate to obtain diplomatic recognition and secure votes for membership of international organisations. This signifies that Kosovo's international legitimation was a product of multiple determinants that cannot be reduced to a single discursive and normative framework, nor to the strength of internal and external actors, systematic factors, or historical moments and events.

What impact did this metis-driven diplomacy have on the number of recognitions and membership of international bodies? Kosovo's multi-stranded arguments for recognition served as soft power to persuade other countries to change their political and legal position on Kosovo. Recognition of Kosovo's sovereignty and independence first and foremost was a recognition of its diplomatic agency obtained in and through diplomatic discourse and performances. The effectiveness of Kosovo's metis diplomacy can be traced in the 115 recognition statements and membership in over 50 international organisations. Kosovo's discursive diplomacy also contributed to transforming the country's international image and succeeded in maintaining international support for independence and deepening bilateral relations. Everyday diplomatic competences of meeting with foreign diplomats, sending requests for recognition, and lobbying for admission in multilateral organisations have been essential activities for securing diplomatic recognition and obtaining membership of international organisations. As a direct result of Kosovo's pro-active diplomacy, in certain instances, recognition and votes in multilateral organisations were secured through pre-performative exchanges, such as diplomatic notes or lobbying through friendly states. However, in most cases, international support was secured after all stages of performative diplomacy were utilised. Yet, global entanglements have constantly intervened playing an unpredictable role – in certain cases boosting Kosovo's international standings while in other cases producing undesired effects. Overall, Kosovo's metis diplomacy has been significant in completing the missing features of sovereign statehood – namely recognition and membership of international organisations – and in maintaining international support and counter-balancing opposing forces for survival in an interdependent state system.

Conclusion

This paper examined the everyday politics of becoming a sovereign state through metis-laden prudent and situational discourses, performances, and entangled agency. While the main protagonists of international studies are sovereign states, other aspirant states that struggle to enter the international society are discriminated not only politically by the conservative global order, but also epistemologically by the existing Western-centric scholarship. The analysis in this paper revealed that the everyday is one of the most promising sites for capturing the praxeological

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mutation of sovereignty with all its contradictions and entanglements. Exploring the everyday diplomatic practices, especially how situational discourses, performances, and agential entanglements come to become, help discover new vocabulary of practices that deconstructs and disentangles the changing nature of state sovereignty. Advances regarding Kosovo's independence are often explained with reference to great power support, normative arguments, and its geopolitical location. While these have undoubtedly played an important role, the most significant driver in terms of the everyday making of sovereignty was the personal agency of Kosovo's diplomats in conjunction with the support provided by foreign diplomats and various other highly-ranked international personalities. The everyday making of Kosovo's statehood illustrates that it is not sufficient to merely have the classical attributes of statehood, such as territory, population, and effective government to become a sovereign state and act like a state. What is also required is a proactive discourse-based performative agency for securing international recognition and engagement in international relations.

Metis diplomacy demonstrates the function of discourses as epistemic battlefields, the power of performative actions in generating agency and challenging existing international orders, norms and rules governing the diplomacy and state relations. The diplomatic rules and procedures are constantly improvised and renegotiated. Intentions and interests are often revealed and formed by the very act of performance, while action is constrained by situational global entanglements and assemblages. Through the lenses of metis diplomacy, this paper illustrated the interplay of agents' knowledge, situational imitation and improvising, influence of identity and habitus, and the circulation of power and agency from the personal to the social and the global. It also showed how the everyday is constitutive of the international. Kosovo's quest statehood became meaningful only when it was performed via different diplomatic actions. For fledgling states, metis-laden diplomacy facilitated opportunities to reach out to other states and adjust diplomatic discourse and tactics to the specifies of interlocutors. Such efforts were rather driven by situational circumstances, external factors, and chance. Face-to-face diplomacy enabled building personal relationships with foreign ministers of other countries and diplomatic prudence permitted Kosovo to use unconventional and informal channels of communication to overcome the barriers set by conventional diplomatic practices, institutions, and rules. Sovereignty, as an inherently a social construct, comes to being through improvisations and performative acts based on available resources and capacities. Nevertheless, practices are not routines for they are deeply connected with both pre-existing discursive and experiential repertoires, which are adjusted and reconstituted to situational circumstances.

What does Kosovo's everyday metis diplomacy suggest about broader developments in global politics? The everyday is often associated with peripheral sites and resistant agencies in IR. Critical studies in IR have appropriated the notion of the everyday and often affiliate it with non-elite knowledge and power disrupting practices (see Vaughan-Williams and Stevens 2016). Stretching

this further, we can observe from the case of Kosovo that the everyday is not necessarily a site for capturing resistance to existing world order - in the post-colonial and critical sense of objecting, challenging, or transforming - but a pragmatic navigation of the possibilities for assembling and articulating agency in an interconnected world. Kosovo's experience suggests that it is not necessarily broad normative and legal rules or structural factors, which determine the prospects for recognition, but metis-laden discourses, performances and entangled actions, events and chance play a far more significant role than acknowledged in the literature. By looking at the everyday practices, this paper highlighted the importance of practicality over formality, especially practical knowledge gained and articulated in the course of diplomatic improvisation and experimentation. Most research on post-conflict societies and newly established states focuses on international intervention and the question of how the international shapes local peace, polity and society. Metis diplomacy illustrates the reverse process, namely how nascent states intervene in the international system to defy and modify norms, values, practices, and orthodoxies concerning international law, sovereign statehood, diplomatic recognition, and the admission to international organisations. Through performative improvisations, Kosovo has mimicked the existing knowledge of sovereign statehood, but also tried to reinvent the norms and practices of state-becoming through everyday metis-laden tactics. Hence, by exploring everyday diplomatic practices of these nascent states, we can uncover disruptive and dissident practices, which shape world politics in everyday basis but tend to be overlooked by both mainstream and critical debates in IR.

The international society is hierarchical and emerging states are at the bottom of the ladder (see Lake, 2009). Studying discourses, practices, and assemblages in their everyday and mundane expression helps uncover new modes of diplomatic dissidence in world politics to navigate and overcome existing blockages posed by international norms, rules, and institutions. Everyday struggles for international legitimisation are important as they confront the existing sovereignty entrapments in world politics and open up the space for new forms of political subjectivity materialised through alternative integration in the international society. They provide insights on how norms, institutions and practices of sovereign statehood operate transversally at local, national and international levels. Moreover, this demonstrates the significance of exploring the everyday in IR to expand epistemological spaces for reconstructing a more pluralist IR and reshuffling our knowledge of what counts as a legitimate and recognised state in world politics, who deserves to achieve external self-determination, and how to redefine the cartography of states that alleviated the structural and overt violence by the existing international, norms, rules, and regimes. The everyday is a promising site for reshaping our knowledge of world politics, thereby revealing the limits of rationality and power, and unearthing the power of unknowns, uncertainty, and transversity.

Notes

[1] Interview 6, July 2017, Pristina.
[2] Interview 4, July 2015, Pristina.
[3] Interview 5, March 2017, Pristina.
[4] Interview 3, May 2013, Pristina.
[5] Interview 8, April 2017, Pristina.
[6] Interview 4, July 2015, Pristina.
[7] Interview 5, March 2017, Pristina.
[8] Ibid.
[9] Ibid.
[10] Interview 1, April 2016, Pristina.
[11] Interview 3, May 2017, Pristina.
[12] Interview 6, July 2017, Pristina.
[13] Interview 7, September 2013, Pristina.
[14] Interview 10, April 2017, Pristina.

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