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Università degli Studi di Udine - Università di Klagenfurt - Università MGIMO di Mosca -
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XXV CICLO DEL

DOTTORATO DI RICERCA IN

POLITICHE TRANSFRONTALIERE PER LA VITA QUOTIDIANA
TRANSBORDER POLICIES FOR DAILY LIFE

THE ROLE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO END A
WAR IN BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA: 1992.-1995.

(International Relations)

DOTTORANDO:
Šemso Osmanović

RELATORE:
Prof. Luigi Bonante

CORRELATORE:
Prof. Alberto Gasparini

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Preface

“Those who do not learn the lessons of History are doomed to repeat them.”

I was born on 4th of April 1982 in a small village Poznanovici, nearby Srebrenica. Only ten years later, Srebrenica will become the target of Serbian nationalists and their dream of a Greater Serbia Project.

I am the eyewitness of the extremely ill-intentioned attempt of denying and falsifying the horrible genocide against Bosniaks (Muslim Slavs), committed by the Greater-Serbia military and police forces in Srebrenica during July 1995.

According to the data collected up to now, more than 8,372 innocent people were killed. Among them were mothers with newly-born babies, pregnant women, under aged boys and girls, old men, ill and injured people. . . , and this was done in the cruellest way.

Much is living testimony to such insanity, from the numerous written documents, photos, and films found to the many mass graves opened up till now and above all the Memorial Center in Potocari, where the remains of the identified victims of the Srebrenica genocide have been buried. Among them was my older brother Abdulah Osmanovic.

Wishing to cover up the crimes, criminals have been digging many of those mass execution sites, destroying the mortal remains, and displacing them on other locations. Considering that this is an additional crime to the already committed crime or, better yet, **“crime against crime”**, those directly responsible for these crimes are the authorities of the Serb Republic, which evidently did not wish to prevent it, although they could and should have done so.

One should also keep in mind that as early as 1993, the area of Srebrenica was proclaimed the United Nations Safe Area. International military forces, responsible for the safety of the completely isolated Bosniak population, were stationed there for that purpose.

Nevertheless, only this UN safe area was occupied by Serb forces in spite of the UN soldiers presence. One must not forget the outright rejection to activate the NATO

aviation on part of the French General Janvier, the then Theatre Force Commander of the United Nations Peace Forces in former Yugoslavia, although he had full powers to do so and which was also required by the field officers who subordinated to him. Thereby, the genocide against the Bosniak population would surely be prevented.

So Srebrenica, the well-known place located by ores and mineral waters since ancient Roman times became the symbol of not only genocide over the Bosniak people in Bosnia and Herzegovina, but also of the most appalling crime that had happened on the area of Europe in the second half of the 20th century.

Eighteen long years have passed since then and both Karadzic and Mladic are finally in the Hague the supreme and military commanders of that criminal operation, but also of the general barbarism in Bosnia and Herzegovina starting from the beginning of the war in 1992 till the end of 1995. It is true that in the meantime, for the crimes in Srebrenica including the crimes of “**genocide**”, some of the officers from the Serb Republic have been trialled and validly sentenced by the International Tribunal in The Hague. The trial of evidence of other guilty officers of another indicted group is in its course. Finally, those who are most responsible, the above-mentioned Karadzic and Mladic, had end up in prison so some “satisfaction” can be acceptable for the victims of the genocide against the Bosniaks in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

This is just one small piece of evidence clearly testifying the character and scale of the “**ethnic cleansing**” and “**genocide**” during the war 1992-1995 in Bosnia and Herzegovina over the Bosniak population living in the UN safe areas: Sarajevo, Zenica, Tuzla, Bihac, Gorazde, Zepa, and Srebrenica.

Srebrenica is not the only symbol of Bosnia and Bosniaks suffering, it is also the document of shameful attitude of both Europe and the world toward such crime.

Instead of the conclusion, I shall quote the famous syntagm of a well-known chronicler from Sarajevo (Baseskija), which reads as follows: “**What is written shall remain further on, and what is remembered, shall disappear**”.

The genocide against the Bosniaks in Srebrenica is too abhorring for anyone to even dare think of the silence around it.

Trieste, June 2013.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My thanks go to my friend, the teacher David Sutcliffe, for his help, and to my tutor, the sociologist Professor Alberto Gasparini, for his support at the University of Trieste.

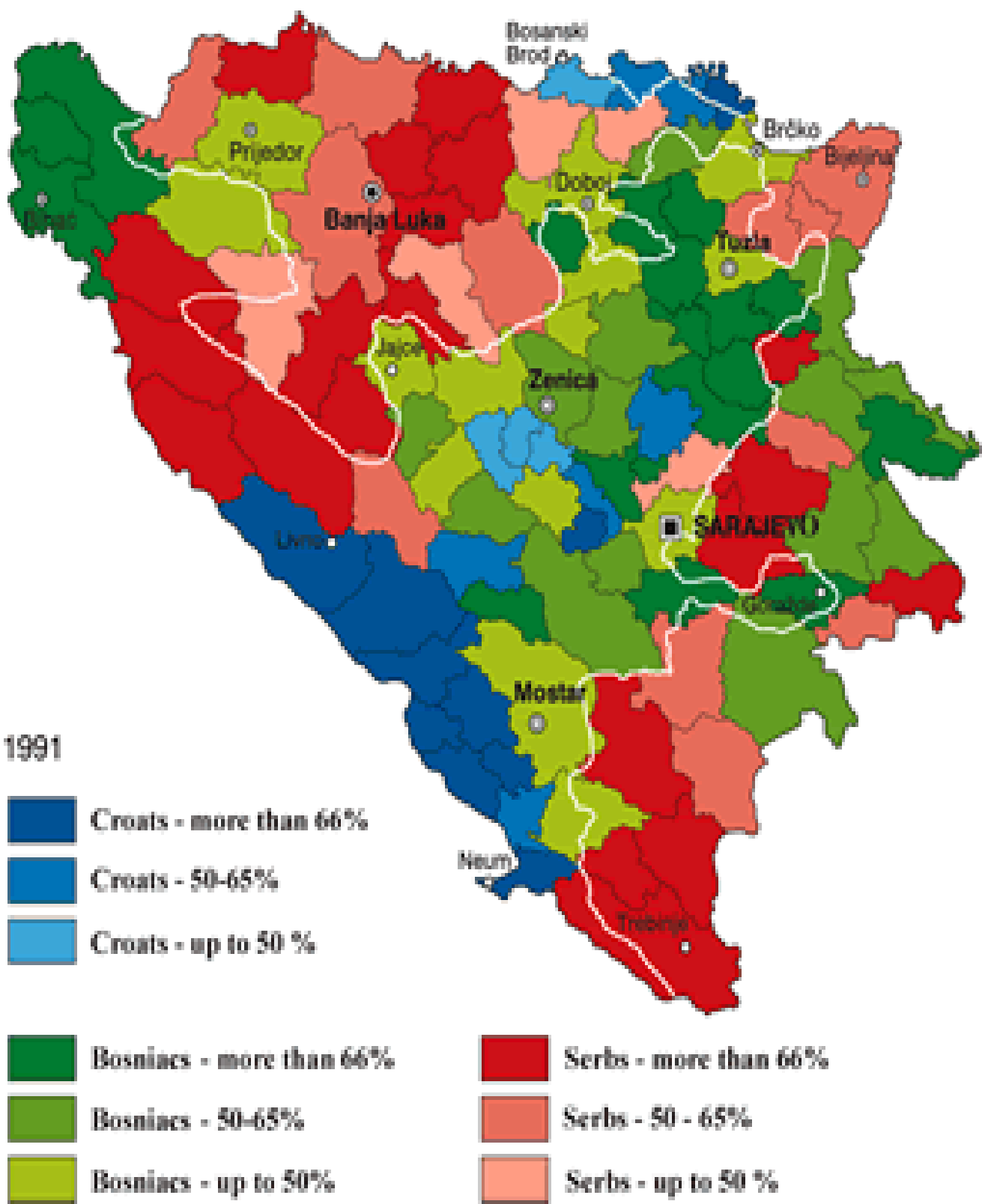
I dedicate this work to all those individuals whose hearts persuade them that no one who has known goodness even once is ever wholly lost.

I am also deeply grateful to the Bosnian historian, Prof. Dr. Smail Cekic, the Director of the INSTITUTE FOR THE RESEARCH OF CRIMES AGAINST HUMANITY AND INTERNATIONAL LAW IN SARAJEVO, for his pieces of advice on how to find the material necessary to write this thesis.

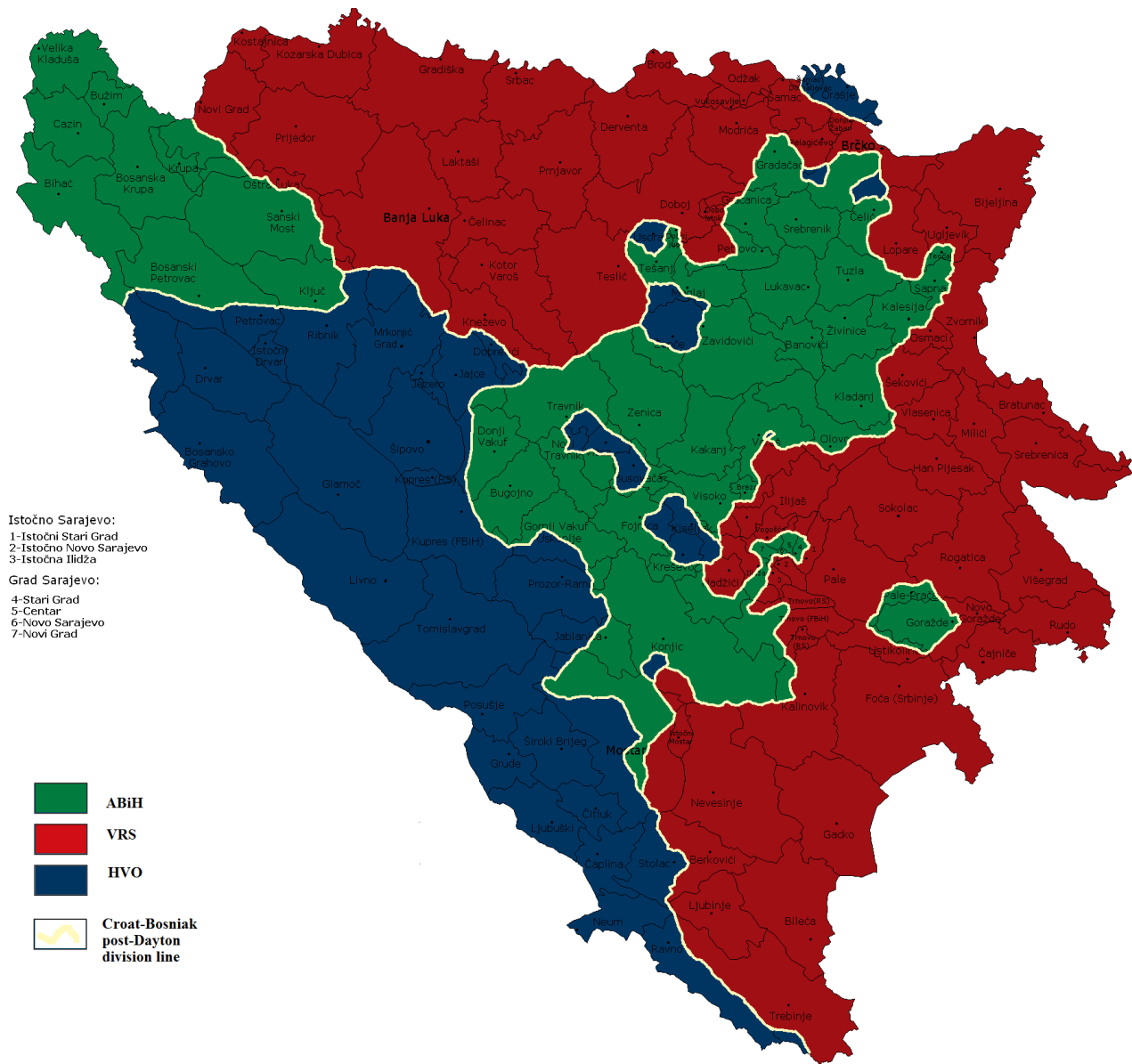
Former Yugoslavia (1990)



Ethnic composition before the war in BiH (1991)



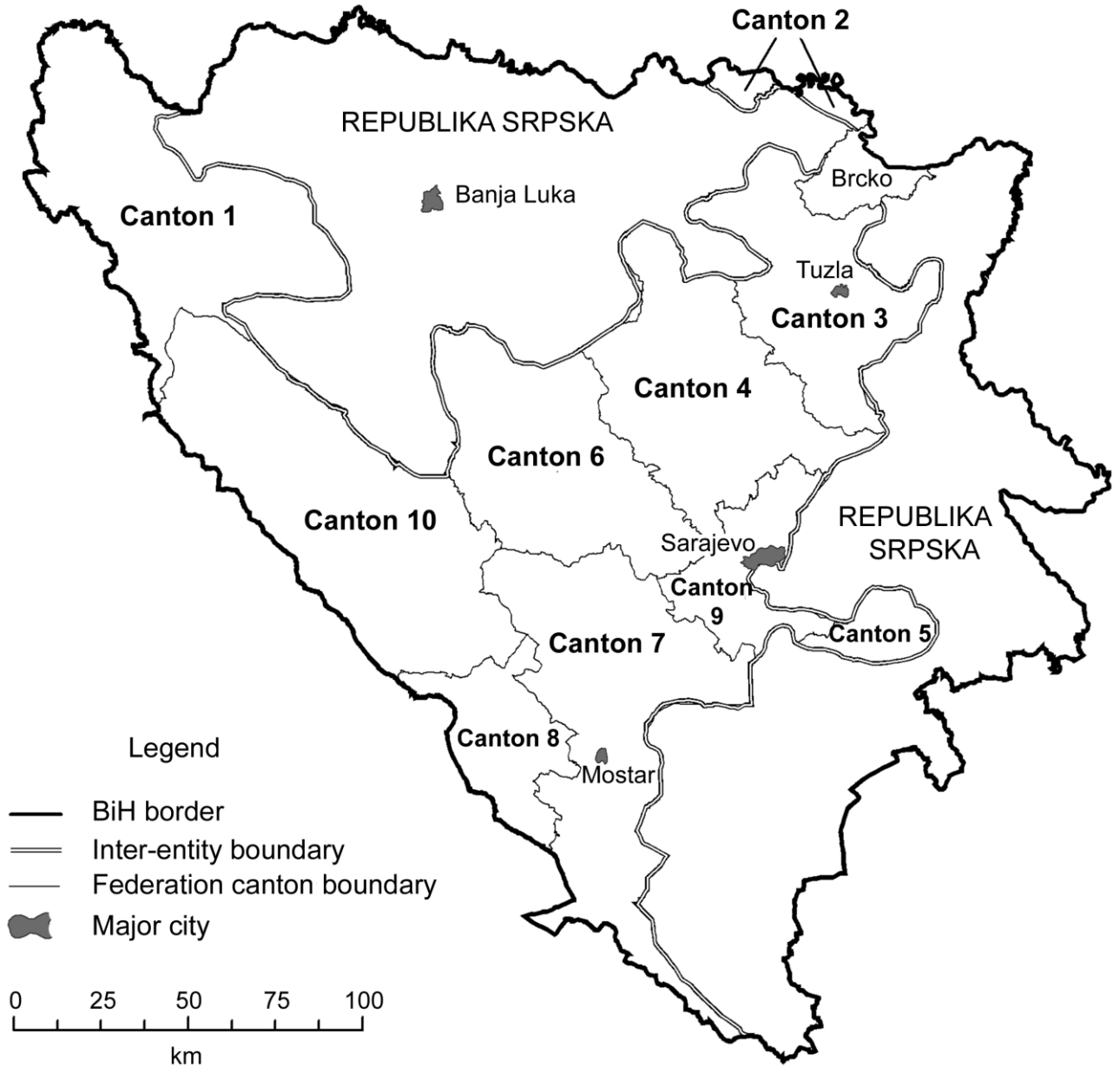
Bosnia and Herzegovina before Dayton Peace Agreement (1995)



Post-Dayton Political Map of Bosnia and Herzegovina



Map of Bosnia and Herzegovina showing entity boundaries and Federation canton divisions



Chronology:

Following is a chronology of key events in the former Yugoslavia leading up to war, during the war, and after the end of hostilities:

1990

First multiparty elections in six republics of former Yugoslavia. Serbian Communist Party leader Slobodan Milosevic elected Serbian President in December 1990.

1991

June 25 - Following months of talks among six republics, Slovenia and Croatia declare independence.

June 27 - Yugoslav army attacks Slovenia.

July 18 - Yugoslav army announces withdrawal from Slovenia.

July - Serb-Croat skirmishes going on since early 1991 escalate into war between Croats and rebel Serbs, backed by the Yugoslav army, in Croatia.

September - United Nations imposes arms embargo on all of former Yugoslavia.

December - European Community, under pressure from Germany, says it will recognize Croatia and Slovenia.

1992

Jan. 2 - U.N. mediator Cyrus Vance negotiates cease-fire for Croatia; U.N. peacekeepers will patrol it, with headquarters in Sarajevo, in attempt to stave off conflict in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Feb. 21 - The U.N. Security Council sends 14,000 peacekeeping troops to Croatia.

Feb. 29 - Bosnia-Herzegovina declares independence. Bosnian Serbs proclaim separate state. Fighting spreads.

April - Bosnian Serb gunners begin their siege of Sarajevo.

April 6 - European Community recognizes Bosnia and Herzegovina. Washington follows April 7. Intense fighting in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

May 3 - Bosnia's Muslim president, Alija Izetbegovic, taken hostage by Yugoslav troops on return from peace talks in Lisbon. Freed following day.

May 5 - Yugoslav army relinquishes command of its estimated 100,000 troops in Bosnia, effectively creating a Bosnian Serb army.

May 27 - A mortar attack on a bread line in Sarajevo kills 16. More die later.

May 30 - United Nations imposes sanctions on a new, smaller Yugoslavia made up of Serbia and Montenegro, for fomenting war in Bosnia and Croatia.

June 29 - Peacekeepers hoist U.N. flag at Sarajevo airport after Serbs leave.

July 3 - International airlift begins to Sarajevo.

August - Major international conference on Yugoslavia in London. Agreements on aid, cease-fire, never implemented.

Sept. 19 - U.N. Security Council drops Yugoslavia from General Assembly.

Nov. 16 - U.N. Security Council authorizes naval blockade of Serbia and Montenegro.

1993

Jan. 2 - International mediators Cyrus Vance and Lord Owen unveil plan to divide Bosnia into 10 provinces, mostly along ethnic lines.

Jan. 8 - Bosnian Deputy Prime Minister Hakija Turajlic killed by Serb soldier in U.N. armoured vehicle near Sarajevo airport.

Feb. 22 - Security Council sets up a war crimes tribunal for former Yugoslavia.

March 25 - Izetbegovic signs Vance-Owen peace plan in New York.

March - Bosnian Croats and Muslims begin fighting over the 30 percent of Bosnia not seized by Bosnian Serbs.

April 12 - NATO jets begin to enforce U.N. no-fly zone over Bosnia and Herzegovina.

April 26 - Tighter U.N. trade sanctions against Yugoslavia.

April and May - Following Serb assault on Srebrenica and dramatic crisis of refugees arriving in Tuzla, Security Council declares six "safe areas" for Bosnian Muslims: Sarajevo, Tuzla, Bihac, Srebrenica, Zepa and Gorazde.

May 2 - Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic signs Vance-Owen plan in Greece, but his assembly rejects it.

May 15-16 - In a referendum, Bosnian Serbs overwhelmingly reject Vance-Owen plan in favour of an independent Bosnian Serb state.

May 31 - Yugoslav federal Parliament ousts Dobrica Cosic, seen as too peaceable by Milosevic, as Yugoslav federal president. Thousands demonstrate, clash with police in Belgrade.

June 16 - Mediators meet with Milosevic, Izetbegovic, Croatian President Franjo Tudjman and Bosnian leaders in Geneva. Plan emerges to split Bosnia three ways. Izetbegovic walks out.

June 23 - First U.S. ambassador to Bosnia, Victor Jackovich, goes to Sarajevo, presents credentials, leaves for his Vienna base.

July 30 - Warring sides reach preliminary agreement in Geneva on Union of Republics of Bosnia and Herzegovina with three states and three peoples. Izetbegovic walks out Aug. 2 after Serbs violate cease-fire.

Sept. 1 - Geneva peace talks finally collapse.

Nov. 9 - Croat shelling destroys centuries-old bridge at Mostar, symbol of past of ethnic unity.

Dec. 19 - Early parliamentary elections in Serbia called by Milosevic leave his Socialists as largest party.

1994

Feb. 5 - More than 60 people killed and some 200 wounded as a mortar shell slams into downtown marketplace in Sarajevo.

Feb. 9 - NATO gives Bosnian Serbs 10 days to withdraw heavy guns from Sarajevo region or face air strikes.

Feb. 17 - Karadzic agrees to remove guns from around Sarajevo if soldiers from Russia, a historical Serb ally, join peacekeeping mission.

Feb. 20 - Russian peacekeepers arrive. NATO deadline expires; U.N. says it is satisfied heavy guns are being removed.

Feb. 28 - U.S. F-16 fighters, flying for NATO, down four Bosnian Serb warplanes violating "no-fly" zone. The shots were the first fired by NATO.

March 18 - Bosnia's Muslim-led government and Bosnian Croats sign a U.S.-brokered accord, ending a yearlong war.

April 22 - After two air strikes against Serbs advancing on Gorazde, NATO delivers fresh ultimatum to Serbs to stop firing and pull back or face air strikes.

April 27 - U.N. says the Serbs have mostly complied with NATO ultimatum.

May 13 - The five-nation Contact Group announce new peace plan, including a four-month cease-fire and eventual partition of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

July 20 - Serbs refuse the Contact Group plan.

Aug. 4 - Milosevic cuts ties with Bosnian Serbs for rejecting plan.

Oct. 29 - Bosnian government forces score their biggest victory of the war around Bihac, northwest Bosnia. Fierce Serb counterattack a week later.

Nov. 21 - NATO launches its largest action ever, about 50 jets and support planes attacking Serb airfield, but fail to take out Serb jets attacking Bihac.

Nov. 25 - Serbs detain 55 Canadian peacekeepers against further air strikes. Eventually more than 400 peacekeepers held. NATO attempts air strike on Serbs near Bihac. Mission called off after U.N. fails to pinpoint targets.

Dec. 20 - Former U.S. President Jimmy Carter ends mediating mission with announcement of Bosnian cease-fire.

1995

Jan. 1 - Four-month, nationwide truce takes effect. Bihac is never quiet; elsewhere, fighting dies down or stops.

April 8 - U.S. aid plane hit by gunfire, all U.N. aid flights to Sarajevo cancelled.

May 1 - U.N. efforts to extend the truce fail, and cease-fire expires. Croatia launches blitz offensive to recapture chunk of land from rebel Serbs. Serbs retaliate by rocketing Zagreb; six killed, nearly 200 wounded.

May 24 - U.N. orders Serbs to return heavy weapons to U.N. control and remove all heavy weapons around Sarajevo.

May 25 - Serbs ignore U.N. order. NATO attacks Serb ammunition depot. Serbs respond by shelling "safe areas," including Tuzla, where 71 people are killed and over 150 injured.

May 26 - NATO warplanes attack more ammunition depots. Serbs take U.N. peacekeepers hostage. Eventually more than 370 seized.

May 28 - Bosnian Foreign Minister Irfan Ljubijankic shot down by rebel Serbs near Bihac.

France, Britain and United States send thousands more troops toward Bosnia.

June 2 - Serbs shoot down U.S. F-16 over northern Bosnia, release 121 U.N. hostages.

June 3 - NATO defence chiefs, meeting in Paris, agree on rapid reaction force to bolster U.N. peacekeepers in Bosnia.

June 6 - U.S. envoy Robert Frasure fails to agree after weeks of talks with Milosevic on Serbia recognizing Bosnia and Herzegovina.

June 7 - Serbs release 111 more U.N. hostages.

June 8 - U.S. Marines rescue downed pilot of U.S. F-16.

NATO approves new rapid reaction force, but also says peacekeepers will leave Bosnia by fall if rebel Serbs don't accept new force. Complex evacuation plan approved.

June 14 - All but last 26 U.N. hostages released.

June 15 - Government launches offensive to break siege of Sarajevo. Offensive gradually stalls; Serbs step up shelling of Sarajevo and other "safe areas."

June 18 - Last 26 U.N. hostages released.

June 28 - Serb rocket hits TV building in Sarajevo, adjacent apartment block. Five die, dozens wounded.

June 30 - Bosnian government, increasingly bitter, demands review of U.N. mission

German parliament approves deployment of fighter jets for rapid reaction force.

July 2 - French peacekeepers start to use 120 mm mortar - biggest calibre against Serbs all war - on lone road into Sarajevo.

July 11 - Serbs overrun Srebrenica "safe area" after last-minute NATO airstrikes fail to stop advance.

July 12-13 - Some 20,000 Muslim women, children and elderly expelled to Tuzla, bringing tales of atrocities.

July 16-17 - Some 4,000 Muslim men who marched through Serb-held land reach government-held Tuzla; another 11,000 thought missing.

July 21 - Western allies, meeting in London, promise "decisive and substantial" air strikes to protect Gorazde; early use of Rapid Reaction Force.

July 23 - Serbs kill two French peacekeepers; U.N. threatens punishment from Rapid Reaction Force.

July 25 - Serb troops take Zepa, sending thousands of civilians fleeing.

War crimes tribunal indicts Karadzic, Mladic for genocide, crimes against humanity. Martić charged with war crimes for bombing Zagreb.

July 28 - Croat army cuts key supply route to rebel Serbs along Bosnia's western border, take towns of Grahovo and Glamoc.

July 31 - Croats shell outskirts of Knin.

Aug. 1 - NATO threatens airstrikes to protect all safe areas.

Aug. 3 - Offer by rebel Serbs to bow to some Croatian authority rejected by government. Serbs shell Dubrovnik area.

Aug. 4 - Croatia launches its massive assault on rebel Serbs in Knin, shelling U.N. peacekeepers and civilians. Recaptures most of Serb-held lands in four days.

Thousands of Serb civilians beginning stream toward Bosnia. Eventually more than 180,000 flee their homes.

NATO warplanes fire missiles at Croatian Serb radar site after being threatened by surface-to-air missiles.

Aug. 7 - Column of Serb refugees attacked by military jet; at least five killed.

Aug. 9 - Mobs of Croats batter Serb refugees with bricks, chunks of concrete in Sisak.

Aug. 10 - U.S. ambassador to U.N. calls for war crimes tribunal investigation after spy photographs show evidence of mass graves of executed Bosnian Muslims.

Aug. 18 - U.S. diplomats shuttle between Serb and Croat leaders with peace plan. Peacekeepers begin pull out from Gorazde.

Aug. 19 - Three key diplomats for U.S. peace initiative, Robert Frasure, Joseph Kruzal and Nelson Drew, killed when armoured personnel carrier slips off Mount Igman road. Three other Americans and three French injured.

Aug. 20 - Human rights investigators suspect at least four mass graves exist around Knin.

Aug. 22 - Serbs shell Sarajevo region, killing six and wounding 38, including six Egyptian peacekeepers, after government shells Serb arms factory.

Aug. 23 - Clinton names Robert Owen, Brig. Gen. Donald Kerrick, James Pardew and Christopher Hill to replace diplomats killed in Igman accident.

Aug. 28 - Bosnian Serbs fire shell into a busy Sarajevo market area, killing 37 and wounding scores.

U.N. secretly pulls out last peacekeepers of Gorazde enclave.

Aug. 30 - NATO planes, supported by ground troops of the U.N. rapid reaction force, launch massive airstrikes to silence Serb guns around Sarajevo. Serbs shell Sarajevo in response.

Sept. 1 - NATO suspends attacks: U.S. announces that hostile parties agree to a discuss permanent peace.

Sept. 5 - NATO resumes attacks to force withdrawal of Serb guns around Sarajevo

Sept. 8 - Warring factions agree to formally maintain Bosnia but sub-divide it into Serb and Muslim-Croat sections.

Sept. 13 - Croats and Muslims advance on Serbs in central and western Bosnia.

Sept. 14 - NATO suspends attacks. Milosevic pledges that Bosnian Serbs will withdraw guns from around Sarajevo. Red Cross says about 8,000 Muslims from Srebrenica missing and unaccounted for.

Sept. 15 - Serbs let Sarajevo airport reopen for the first time in five months.

Sept. 26 - Bosnian factions agree on basic outlines of peace plan.

Sept. 29 - European Union accuses Croatian army of murder, mass looting, arson.

Oct. 3 - Rebel Serbs in Croatia agree to give up last swath of territory they hold there.

Oct. 5 - Warring Bosnian parties agree to a 60-day cease-fire.

Nov. 1 - Bosnian peace talks open in Dayton, Ohio.

Nov. 16 - Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic and Gen. Ratko Mladic, his military commander, indicted for war crimes for their alleged roles in Srebrenica massacres.

Nov. 21 - Balkan leaders initial peace accord, granting 51 percent of Bosnian territory to Muslim-Croat federation; 49 percent to Serbs.

Nov. 22 - Security Council suspends sanctions against Serbia, eases arms embargo against former Yugoslavian states.

Nov. 23 - Karadzic accepts peace plan after meeting with Milosevic.

Nov. 30 - U.N. votes to end peacekeeping mission by Jan. 31.

Dec. 1 - NATO authorizes deploying 60,000 troops to Bosnia; appoints Javier Solana NATO secretary general.

Dec. 4 - British, U.S. troops land in former Yugoslavia to begin groundwork for peacekeeping mission.

Dec. 5 - Polls show majority of Americans oppose sending troops to Bosnia.

Dec. 12 - Bosnian Serbs release captured French pilots.

Dec. 13 - Senate defeats measure to cut off funds for US troops in Bosnia.

Dec. 14 - Presidents of warring parties sign peace plan, setting stage for deployment of 60,000 NATO troops.

Bosnian, Serb governments agree to formal diplomatic recognition.

Dec. 15 - U.N. Security Council transfers peacekeeping duties to NATO.

Dec. 16 - Joulwan issues order for 60,000 NATO troops to enter Bosnia.

Dec. 18 - Break in fog allows 14 U.S. flights to arrive in Tuzla.

Dec. 19 - Assistant Secretary of State Richard C. Holbrooke, chief American negotiator of the Dayton agreement, announces he'll step down next year, to be succeeded by career diplomat John Kornblum.

Dec. 20 - NATO takes over command of Bosnia peace mission.

Dec. 22 - Thousands of Serbs flee Sarajevo suburbs, many carrying coffins of relatives.

Dec. 24 - First American helicopters arrive in Tuzla, while French extend control in Sarajevo.

Dec. 27 - Government, rebel Serb troops pull back from area around Sarajevo to meet first deadline of peace accord.

Dec. 28 - Flooding, mud slows U.S. efforts to build bridge across Sava River.

Dec. 31 - First U.S. tanks roll across pontoon bridge over Sava.

1995

- 21 November BiH, Croatia and FRY successfully conclude peace negotiations in Dayton, Ohio
- 8-9 December Peace Implementation Conference in London; the Peace Implementation Council (PIC) and its Steering Board are established
- 12 December Implementation Force (IFOR) begins deployment in Bosnia and Herzegovina
- 14 December Dayton Peace Agreement is signed in Paris
- 18 December First meeting of PIC Steering Board
- 20-21 First EU/World Bank Donors' Conference for BiH in Brussels launches the
- December \$5.1 billion Priority Reconstruction Program. An initial \$600 million is pledged

1996

- January First High Representative, Carl Bildt, and his German Deputy Michael Steiner arrive in Sarajevo; the Sarajevo OHR Office is established.
- 9 January The humanitarian airlift to Sarajevo, the longest airlift ever, ends.
- 3 Feb-19 March Transfer from one Entity to the other of areas specified in the DPA, notably around Sarajevo.
- 13 April Second EU/World Bank Donors' Conference for BiH in Brussels, boycotted by the RS. Pledges made: \$ 1.3 billion.

- 7 May First international war crimes trial since Nuremberg and Tokyo begins at the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) in The Hague; the defendant is Dusan Tadic, a Bosnian Serb prison camp guard. In January 2000, after completion of the appeals process, he is sentenced to 20 years imprisonment.
- 13-14 June PIC Conference in Florence.
- 19 July Radovan Karadzic resigns from public and party offices.
- 31 August Formal deadline for dissolution of "Herceg-Bosna".
- 7 September OBN (Open Broadcast Network), BiH's first independent, cross-entity TV network, goes on air.
- 14 September General elections in BiH. Alija Izetbegovic (SDA), Momcilo Krajsnik (SDS) and Kresimir Zubak (HDZ) are elected to the BiH Presidency; Biljana Plavsic (SDS) is elected President of the RS.
- 20 December IFOR officially hands over its duties to the Stabilisation Forces (SFOR).

1997

- 14 February Roberts Owen declares interim international supervision of the Brcko area for not less than one year.
 - 7 March US Ambassador Bill Farrand is named international Supervisor for Brcko.
 - 13 April First ever visit to Sarajevo by Pope John Paul II.
 - 23 May First working session of the BiH Constitutional Court.
 - 30 May PIC Steering Board meets at the ministerial level in Sintra, Portugal; the High Representative is directed to suspend media that violate the DPA.
 - 1 June US Secretary of State, Madeleine Albright pays her first visit to BiH.
 - 1 June The Standing Committee on Military Matters, the last of the remaining common institutions to be set up, is established.
 - 18 June Carlos Westendorp arrives in Sarajevo to take over from Carl Bildt as High Representative in BiH.
 - 30 June War-crimes suspect Radovan Karadzic is discovered to have registered to vote. As a result the Provisional Election Commission amends its Rules and Regulations disallowing such persons to vote.
 - 3 July RS President Biljana Plavsic dissolves the RSNA and calls for new RS parliamentary elections, sparking a power struggle in the RS.
 - 10 July SFOR detain Milan Kovacevic, an indicted war criminal, in Prijedor. Simo Drljaca is killed when he opens fire on SFOR.
 - 15 July Slobodan Milosevic elected as FRY President.
 - 23-24 July Third EU/World Bank Donors' Conference in Brussels. Pledges made: \$1.24 billion.
 - 11 August BiH Constitutional Court is set up.
- The Central Bank of Bosnia and Herzegovina officially commences operations.
- 28 August OSCE confirms that more than 2.5 million people have registered to vote in the municipal elections in BiH on 13 and 14 September.
 - 5 September Creation of BiH Department of Civil Aviation.
 - 13-14 September Municipal elections in BiH.

On **17 September 1997**, five members of the OHR - Senior Deputy High Representative Gerd Wagner, Charles Morpeth, Leah Melnick, Thomas Reinhardt and Juergen Schauf - and seven members of UNMIBH lost their lives in a helicopter crash near Fojnica in central Bosnia. On the first anniversary in 1998, a memorial monument was erected near the crash site.

- 19 September BiH Presidency session, Lukavica - adoption of the Decision on 30 appointments for ambassadors. Additional consultations would be held for three further appointments.
- 19 September The European Commission opens a number of inter-Entity telephone lines for local subscribers.
- 26 September Border crossing points connecting BiH and Croatia at Gradiska, Samac, Dubica and Brod opened.
- 1 October SFOR takes control of Serb Radio-Television (SRT) transmitters in the RS; Banja Luka becomes SRT main office, SRT restructuring begins.
- 6 October Ten Bosnian Croats indicted for war crimes surrender to the International Criminal Tribunal in The Hague.
- 21 October Opposition leader Milo Djukanovic wins elections in Montenegro.
- 18 November Banja Luka airport reopens for commercial air traffic.
- 22-23 November Early National Assembly elections in the RS; SDS/ SRS lose majority.
- 9-10 December PIC Conference in Bonn; the High Representative is asked to dismiss obstructive public officials and impose legislation if BiH's legislative bodies fail to do so.
- 22 December President Clinton visits Sarajevo and meets US troops in Tuzla.

1998

- 17 January Milorad Dodik is elected new RS Prime Minister by the RS National Assembly.
- 17 January The International Commission for Missing Persons, chaired by US Senator Bob Dole, visits Sarajevo.
- 31 January RS Parliament session in Banja Luka – new RS government sworn in and the Parliament votes to move the seat of the government from Pale to Banja Luka.
- 2 February Launch of neutral car license plates in BiH.
- 3 February Sarajevo Conference: adoption of the Sarajevo Declaration, which promotes minority return to Sarajevo and calls for Sarajevo to become a model of multi-ethnic tolerance.
- 6 February New flag of BiH raised outside the UN Headquarters in New York.
- 6 April Agreement on the establishment of the public BiH Railway Corporation signed.
- 20 April Exhumations of mass graves near Srebrenica start.
- 7-8 May Fourth Donors' Conference for BiH in Brussels. Pledges made: \$1.24 billion.
- 11 June Independent Media Commission (IMC) established. The IMC regulates both technical and editorial aspects of electronic broadcasting in BiH.
- 7 July Opening of Mostar Airport.
- 22 July Privatisation framework of Enterprises and Banks in BiH introduced.
- 27 July Start of regular passenger service on the Sarajevo-Capljina train route.
- 9 September Agreement between BiH and Republic of Croatia on the use of Ploce Harbour initialed.

- 12-13 September General elections in BiH. Alija Izetbegovic (SDA), Ante Jelavic (HDZ) and Zivko Radisic (SPRS) elected to the BiH Presidency; Nikola Poplasen (SRS) elected RS President.
- 18 November Two Commissions for Missing Persons from the Federation, for the first time, jointly exhume a mass grave, in Modrica.
- 2 December General Radoslav Krstic detained by SFOR.

1999

- 19 February Command of the Armed Forces in BiH transferred to the BiH Presidency.
- 5 March HR removes Nikola Poplasen from the office of RS President.
- 5 March Brcko Arbitration Tribunal announces Final Arbitration Award: the pre-war municipality of Brcko is given the status of a district to be held by the two Entities as a condominium, and administered by independent district authorities.
- 15 March Regular bus lines from Sarajevo to Brcko and Bijeljina opened.
- 16 March Federation Deputy Minister of Interior Jozo Leutar fatally wounded in a car bomb blast in Sarajevo.
- 24 March NATO begins air strikes against military targets in the FRY.
- 20-21 May Fifth Donors' Conference for BiH in Brussels. Pledges made: \$1.05 billion.
- 27 May The ICTY Tribunal in the Hague indicts Slobodan Milosevic for murder, persecution and deportation in Kosovo.
- 7 June Inaugural session of the Municipal Assembly in Srebrenica following the 1997 municipal elections is finally held after OSCE-brokered agreement.
- 6 August Opening ceremony of Dubrovnik-Trebinje border crossing.
- 9 August Bosnian Croat war-crimes suspect Vinko Martinovic "Stela" surrendered to ICTY in The Hague by the Republic of Croatia.
- 16 August Wolfgang Petritsch takes up his duties as High Representative.
- 27 October Property and housing legislation in the Entities finalised, providing the authorities with detailed instructions on the application of relevant laws.
- 15 November Joint BiH Presidency submit a Declaration to the UN Security Council committing themselves, *inter alia*, to the establishment of a Border Service, Bosnia and Herzegovina's integration in Europe and the full implementation of the property and housing laws.
- 10 December Croatian President Franjo Tudjman dies; in 1995 Tudjman signed the Dayton Peace Agreement on behalf of the Republic of Croatia.

2000

- 21 January BiH's upper air space turned over to local civilian aviation authorities.
- 3 April SFOR detain Momcilo Krajisnik, who was under a sealed indictment by the ICTY for war crimes.
- 8 April Municipal Elections held in BiH.
- 16 April BiH Auditors appointed, providing an independent system of auditing financial activities.
- 16 June Entity Ministers of Education establish Higher Education Coordination Board.
- 4 July BiH Constitutional Court announces Decision interpreting the BiH Constitution in relation to the Constitutions of the Entities.
- 27 July BiH CoM approves single BiH passport.

- 8 September High Representative removes 15 Public Officials for Obstructing Property Law.
- 26 September Education Ministers agree to teach both Cyrillic and Latin script in BiH schools.
- 25 October High Representative Decision allocating a site for the Srebrenica cemetery and memorial.
- 11 November General Elections in BiH.
- 15 December Bosnia and Herzegovina establishes diplomatic relations with FR Yugoslavia.

2001

- 9 January Biljana Plavsic surrenders voluntarily to The Hague after being presented with an ICTY indictment for war crimes.
- 19 January FRY President Vojislav Kostunica pays his first official visit to BiH.
- 28 February Ante Jelavic, the Croat member of the BiH Presidency and the leader of the HDZ, proclaims that the Federation is from now on a solely Bosniak Entity.
- 2 March Single Communications Regulator for Bosnia and Herzegovina (CRA) established from the IMC.
- 3 March At a session in Mostar, the Croat National Assembly (HNS) declares interim "Croat self-rule" in BiH.
- 7 March High Representatives removes Ante Jelavic from his positions as a member of the Presidency of BiH.
- 26 March BiH State Border Service officially takes over three border crossings – rail, road and river in Brcko District.
- 1 April Former Yugoslav leader Slobodan Milosevic arrested in Belgrade.
- 6 April High Representative Appoints Provisional Administrator for Hercegovacka Banka.
- 7 May PBS and Federation Radio launched.
- 7 May Violent outbreaks in Banja Luka organised to prevent the laying of the corner stone of the Ferhadija Mosque. Murat Badic, attending the ceremony, is injured and dies three weeks later as a result.
- 25 May The five successor states to the former Socialist Federative Republic of Yugoslavia initial an Agreement on Succession in Vienna.
- 9 May BiH Council of Ministers adopts the Citizens' Identification Protection System – CIPS.
- 18 June With the assistance of senior RS officials and security provided by more than 2000 police, the Islamic Community holds the cornerstone-laying ceremony for the reconstruction of the Ferhadija Mosque in Banja Luka.
- 28 June Slobodan Milosevic transferred to The Hague.
- 29 June The Foreign Ministers of BiH, FRY, Croatia, Slovenia and Macedonia sign in Vienna the framework agreement on the succession to the former Socialistic Federative Republic of Yugoslavia (SFRY).
- 23 August BiH Election Law adopted in both houses of BiH Parliament.

2002

- 24 April BiH Accession to the Council of Europe.
- 9 May Court of BiH established.
- 27 May Paddy Ashdown becomes High Representative.
- 30 July PIC and BiH Council of Ministers agree on the five "Jobs and Justice" reform

	priorities.
7 August	BiH Prosecutor's Office established.
22 August	High Representative harmonises the Prosecutorial systems in the FBiH, the Cantons and the RS.
2 September	High Judicial and Prosecutorial Council becomes operational.
12 September	OHR opens all advertised positions to BiH citizens.
5 October	First elections organised by the BiH authorities under BiH Election Law
12 November	"Bulldozer" initiative – to remove or amend laws that act as barriers to business – launched.
4 December	High Representative testifies against Radoslav Brdjanin and Momir Talic before the ICTY.

2003

1 January	EUPM launched.
13 January	OHR, ICTY and BiH experts begin talks on prosecuting war crimes in BiH.
27 January	Court of BiH opens.
6 February	BiH Civil Service Agency becomes fully operational.
12 February	Indirect Tax Policy Commission established.
25 February	Bulldozer Committee completes first list of bureaucratic roadblocks to business in BiH.
7 March	High Representative acts to undermine networks that support war criminals. The US and EU follow up with Presidential orders and visa bans.
8 May	HR Decision establishes Defence Reform Commission.
29 May	HR Decision establishes Intelligence Reform Commission.
18 June	BiH Security Policy reviewed and accepted by BiH Presidency outlining for the first time BiH state policy objectives and aspirations within this sphere.
7 July	High Representative freezes the assets of 14 people deemed to have helped indicted war criminals evade arrest.
25 September	Defence Reform Commission members sign a Report outlining legislation required for BiH PFP membership that establishes state level command and control of the armed forces.
30 October	Donors Raise 15.7 million Euros to establish War Crimes Chamber in the BiH Court.
12 November	Implementation of Property Laws in BiH reaches 90 percent.
19 November	European Commission agrees a Feasibility Study for BiH.
3 December	Defence Reform Laws approved in Entity and State Parliaments.
29 December	BiH Parliament adopts Indirect Taxation Authority reform Laws.
30 December	BiH Institutions assume responsibility for the return process.

2004

15 March	Mostar Administration unified as one City.
23 March	BiH Parliament adopts Law on a single Intelligence and Security Agency.
16 April	High Representative announces measures to support the work of the RS Srebrenica Commission.
19 April	Radoslav Krstic sentenced to 35 years' imprisonment. Confirmed genocide verdict.
21 May	BiH Parliament Adopts Law on Single BiH HJPC.
30 June	HR announces measures against those preventing BiH meeting its

	international obligations to the ICTY.
5 July	Police Restructuring Commission established.
19 July	High Representative extends deadline for RS Srebrenica Commission to complete its work.
24 August	OHR Announces Downsizing in line with BiH's Progress towards full statehood.
2 October	Municipal Elections in Bosnia and Herzegovina, including the Brcko District, the first local elections since the founding of the District in March 2000.
16 November	EU Assets Freeze on all ICTY indictees.
2 December	NATO successfully concludes the mission of the Stabilisation Force (SFOR) and the European Union launches EUFOR Operation Althea.
16 December	High Representative maps out Process to Tackle War Criminal Networks and to Reform BiH's Security Institutions (includes: removals of 9 officials, blocking of bank accounts).
31 December	HR Decision to extend the Defence Reform Commission until 31 December 2005.
2005	
12 January	BiH House of Representatives adopts the VAT law, at a single 17 percent rate
16 January	Transfer by the authorities of Republika Srpska of ICTY indictee Savo Todovic to ICTY, first such transfer in nine years.
31 January	HR brings to an end the International Community supervisory regimes in Zepce and Gornji Vakuf-Uskoplje municipalities.
4 April	BiH Election Commission fully nationalized.
13 April	European Commission approves Feasibility Report assessing the readiness of Serbia and Montenegro to negotiate a Stabilisation and Association Agreement.
16 April	Incidents in Manjaca and Bileca at the occasion of taking solemn oath during military induction ceremonies.
20 May	DRC agrees to a new defence structure to replace the Entity MODs and to transfer all control of the armed forces to the state level.
9 June	HR lifts ban on participating in political life for Nikola Grabovac and Blasko Jevric.
10 June	Budget for Mostar city adopted.
17 July	Mostar's Old Bridge and Old Town included in UNESCO's list of world heritage sites.
18 July	DRC members sign DRC Report "AFBiH: A Single Military Force for the 21st Century" creating a single army with no Entity components.
19 July	High Representative announces proposal to transform the OHR to an EU-Led Mission.
22 August	OHR announces further downsizing, OHR's budget is reduced.
31 August	RSNA adopts transfer of Entity defence powers to the state level.
29 September	Transfer of Radovan Stanković from the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY) to the BiH Court 's War Crimes Chamber. This is the first case referred to the jurisdiction of a domestic court in one of the countries of the Former Yugoslavia.
5 October	BiH Parliamentary Assembly passes the legislation necessary for the creation of a BiH single and unified army.

6 October RSNA adopts police reform in accordance with EC Principles.
 21 October European Commission recommends that EU Member States open negotiations on a Stabilisation and Association Agreement with BiH.
 21 November EU Member States give the European Commission the green light to start Stabilisation and Association negotiations.
 25 November EU Commissioner for Enlargement Olli Rehn travels to Sarajevo to open SAA negotiations.
 28 November High Representative allows removed officials to hold non-managerial public positions.
 8 December Ante Gotovina arrested.
 14-15 December PIC Steering Board Political Directors meeting in Paris appoint Christian Schwarz-Schilling as HR.

2006

1 January Bosnia and Herzegovina 's new VAT system launched.
 26 January The First meeting of BiH Directorate for Police Restructuring.
 1 February Christian Schwarz-Schilling takes up Mandate as High Representative in BiH.
 1 February High Representative Chairs Roundtable on BiH Civil Society.
 9 March High Representative organizes meeting of German and BiH businesses at CEBIT.
 10 March HR lobbies EU states for EU Visa Regime relaxation in order to boost BiH competitiveness and create jobs.
 11 March Slobodan Milosevic, former FRY President and a co-signatory of the Dayton Peace Agreement, dies in his prison cell in The Hague.
 15 March PIC Steering Board Political Directors meeting in Vienna say the time for transition from the OHR to an EUSR Office is approaching; they encourage the HR to cooperate closely with the EU in preparing the transition.
 18 March Constitutional Reform Agreement agreed by 6 leading political Parties in BiH.
 21 March High Representative's press conference announcing new removal repeal measures.
 23 March US lifts Lautenberg sanctions on Foca.
 24 March HR at a meeting of the BiH Economic Coordination Board emphasises that job creation is the number-one priority.
 27 March HR calls on civil society to hold political parties accountable, at a seminar on civil society organized in Sarajevo by the Heinrich-Boell Foundation.
 4 April HR Decision further limiting the scope of the ban from public office in the removal Decisions issued by the HR.
 13 April Brcko District Office established within CoM BiH.
 27 April BiH House of Representatives fails to adopt constitutional amendments.
 21 May Montenegro independence referendum. Montenegro ends its union with Serbia.
 24 May HR first address to the BiH Parliament - 100 Days to Make History.
 1 June State-level Draft Law on Higher Education, an obligation for BiH within the European Partnership context is adopted.
 21 July BiH Council of Ministers issues Opinion on the Law on Settlement of Frozen Foreign Currency Accounts and calls on BiH parliamentarians to act in the best interest of the country.
 4 August Brcko Supervisor Susan Johnson issues Supervisory Order abolishing the

- application of Entity legislation in Brcko District.
- 17 August High Representative Christian Schwarz-Schilling lifts bans on holding public office against Ivan Mandic, Emin Skopljak, Ahmed Smajic and Mirko Stojcinovic.
- 3 September Raffi Gregorian is appointed Brcko Supervisor and Deputy High Representative.
- 1 October General elections in BiH.
- 5 October Senior Deputy High Representative Peter Bas-Backer and Deputy EUFOR Commander Brigadier Aylwin-Foster visit BiH Armed Forces ammunition storage sites to highlight the need for proper supervision of weapons, ammunition and military equipment in BiH.
- 11 November Senior Deputy High Representative Peter Bas-Backer calls for separation of religion and politics in BiH, at a conference on political-religious dialogue in Bratislava.
- 15 November Principal Deputy High Representative Larry Butler meets with FBiH Finance Minister Dragan Vrankic to call for affordable settlement of Frozen Foreign Currency Accounts.
- 22 December BiH CoM announces a national review mechanism for police officers denied certification by the UN's International Police Task Force. The PIC Steering Board expresses its concern over this move.

2007

- 4 January BiH Presidency nominates Nikola Spiric as Chair of the CoM following agreement among representatives of seven political parties to form state-level government.
- 9 February New BiH government is formed by Prime Minister Nikola Špirić.
- 29 March PDHR Gregorian stresses the need for full cooperation with the ICTY, during visit to Zvornik.
- 30 April UN Security Council Presidency lifts lifetime ban on employment in law enforcement agencies for former police officers denied certification by the UN/IPTF Mission.
- 1 June ICTY indictee Zdravko Tolimir arrested.
- 5 June Brcko District Spatial Plan adopted.
- 15 June HR Christian Schwarz-Schilling amends the BiH Law on the High Judicial and Prosecutorial Council.
- 2 July Miroslav Lajčák succeeds Christian Schwarz-Schilling as High Representative and EU Special Representative.
- 9 July HR Lajcak signs a series of Orders and Decisions that will make it easier for BiH prosecutors and police to investigate and prosecute persons suspected of war crimes and those who help them evade justice.
- 13 July FBiH Government adopts new Public Broadcasting legislation.
- 18 July RS National Assembly amends Criminal Code on the Law on Execution of Criminal Sanctions, bringing the Entity's legislation in line with state-level legislation.
- 30 July Higher Education Law adopted by BiH Parliament.
- 20 September HR Lajcak meets Croatian President Stjepan Mesic during his visit to Bosnia.
- 30 September RS President Mladen Jelic dies.
- 30 November Both BiH Houses of the Parliament approve a deal to bring their Rules of

Procedure in line with the Constitution ending a month of political instability.

3 December BiH Council of Ministers adopts Mostar Declaration and Action Plan on Police Reform.

4 December European Enlargement Commissioner Olli Rehn initials Stabilization and Association Agreement with BiH.

2008

1 January Slovenia assumes chairmanship of EU Presidency.

1 January Serge Brammertz succeeds Carla Del Ponte as Chief Prosecutor at the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia.

8 January HR Lajcak amends Law on Indirect Taxation System and re-appoints Peter Nicholl as Chair of the Indirect Taxation Authority's Governing Board.

15 February The reci.ba website goes online giving citizens the opportunity to voice their opinions and put questions directly to HR/EUSR Lajcak.

22 February RS National Assembly passes a resolution that claims the right to organize a referendum on its legal status.

27 March State and Entity Government representatives sign an Agreement on movable defense property.

28 March Brcko District Assembly adopts new Law on Primary and Secondary Education, making it the first in BiH to have a law on education that meets the requirements of the European Partnership Program.

3 April NATO leaders in Bucharest grant BiH "Intensified Dialogue" status.

11 April BiH House of Representatives adopts police reform laws, opening the way for the signature of the Stabilization and Association Agreement with the EU

6 May Brcko Supervisor Raffi Gregorian issues Supervisory Order improving functionality in the Brcko District Assembly.

7 May Both Houses of BiH Parliament adopt changes to the BiH Election Law enabling all former residents of Srebrenica to vote in this municipality in the October 2008 elections, regardless of where they are currently registered.

30 May HR Lajcak orders seizure of travel documents of 16 individuals linked to ICTY indictee at large Stojan Zupljanin.

11 June Stojan Zupljanin, indicted by the ICTY in December 1999, arrested and transferred to The Hague.

16 June Bosnia and Herzegovina signs Stabilization Association Agreement with the EU in Luxemburg.

24-25 June PIC Steering Board meets in Sarajevo.

List of Abbreviations

BiH	Bosnia and Herzegovina
CBBiH	Central Bank of Bosnia and Herzegovina
CoE	Council of Europe
DPA	Dayton Peace Accords
EC	European Commission
ECHR	European Convention on Human Rights
ECtHR	European Court of Human Rights
EP	European Parliament
EU	European Union
EUFOR	European Force 'Mission Althea'
EUPM	European Union Police Mission to BiH
EUSR	Special Representative of the EU to BiH
FBiH	Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (Entity of the Bosnian state)
FIPA	Foreign Investment Promotion Agency (Bosnian state agency)
FYROM	Former Yugoslavian Republic of Macedonia
IEBL	Inter-Entity Boundary Line
HDZ-BiH	Croatian Democratic Union of BiH (Bosnian party)
HDZ-1990	Croatian Democratic Union 1990 (Bosnian party)
HR	High Representative
ICG	International Crisis Group
ICTY	International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia
IFOR	Peace Implementation Force (NATO)
MEP	Member of the European Parliament
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization

ODIHR	Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (OSCE)
OHR	Office of the High Representative
OSCE	Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe
PDP	Party of Democratic Progress (Bosnian party)
PIC	Peace Implementation Council
PIC-SB	Steering Board of the Peace Implementation Council
RS	Republika Srpska (Entity of the Bosnian state)
RSNA	National Assembly of Republika Srpska
RP	Responsibility to Protect
RS	Republika Srpska
SAA	Stabilization and Association Agreement
SAP	Stabilization and Association Process
SBiH	Party for Bosnia and Herzegovina (Bosnian party)
SDA	Party of Democratic Action (Bosnian party)
SDP	Social Democratic Party of Bosnia and Herzegovina (Bosnian party)
SDS	Serbian Democratic Party (Bosnian party)
SEE	South-East Europe
SFOR	Peace Stabilization Force (NATO)
SIPA	State Investigation and Protection Agency (Bosnian state agency)
SNSD	Alliance of Independent Social Democrats (Bosnian party)
SoS	Secretary of State (US Department of State)
UNMIBH	United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina
UNSC	United Nations Security Council
USIP	U.S. Institute for Peace

Abstract

Between 1991 and 1995, close to three hundred thousand people were killed in the former Yugoslavia. The international responses to this catastrophe was at best uncertain and at worst appalling. While both the United States and the European Union initially viewed the Balkan wars as a European problem, the Europeans chose not to take a strong stand, restricting themselves to dispatching U.N. "peacekeepers" to a country where there was no peace keep, and withholding from them the means and the authority to stop the fighting.

In Bosnia the Europe sought to avoid military involvement, citing every excuse she could think of not to intervene to prevent the genocide of 250.000 Bosnian Muslims, who ultimately died at the hands of their Serbian tormentors. The British and French, too, who had primarily responsibility for dealing with this European problem, had persuaded the United Nations to impose an arms embargo on both sides in the Bosnian war. As often happens, the embargo did little damage to Serbia's military capacities, since their army had inherited the extensive military hardware Yugoslavia had amassed under its former Communist regime. But the embargo did deny the means of self-defense to the poorly equipped majority Muslim population in Bosnia. Unarmed, they could do little to repel the invaders or to protect their villages. Some European leaders were not eager to have a Muslim state in the heart of the Balkans, fearing it might become a base for exporting extremism, a result that their neglect made more, not less, likely.

However, from the beginning of Yugoslavia's collapse, Americans divided into two groups, broadly defined: those who thought that Americans should intervene for either moral or strategic reasons, and those who feared that if they did, they would become entangled in a Vietnam-like quagmire. As awareness of ethnic cleansing and genocide spread, the proportion of those who wanted the United States to "do something" increased, but they probably never constituted a majority.

Nevertheless, when the situation seemed most hopeless in July 1995 - the United States put its prestige on the line with a rapid and dramatic series of high-risk actions: an all-out diplomatic effort in August, heavy NATO bombing in September, a cease-fire

in October, Dayton in November, and, in December, the deployment of twenty thousand American troops to Bosnia.

Finally, in late 1995, in the face of growing atrocities and new Bosnian Serb threats, the United States decided to take part in Bosnia, the war was over and the America's role in post-Cold War Europe redefined.

There is a lesson here to be learned by Europe that Bosnian Muslims are the best Christians in the world. The policy-makers cannot have a double heart, one for love and other for hate because some European leaders were not eager to have a Muslim state in the heart of Europe. They spoke of a painful but realistic restoration of Christian Europe. Of course Christianity, like any other religion has nothing to do with the barbarities and the greatest collective failure of Europe. The lesson that Western civilization thought it had drawn from the genocide of World War II – “Never again!”- must now be qualified to read: “except when politically inconvenient.”

Background to the Conflict in Bosnia

It is hard to know when to start in summarizing events that may be relevant to the Bosnian war. We start in 1980, when President Tito died, and power began to be held by an unstable collective presidency that rotated among leaders selected by the assemblies of Yugoslavia's six republics and two autonomous regions. Tito had suppressed the voicing of ethnic sentiments in politics and the new regime was marked by a rise in nationalist sentiment. In 1985, the Serbian Academy of Sciences drafted a memo that condemned Tito and the Party state for three decades of anti-Serb policies. The Academy blamed these policies for regional disparities in income and accused the Albanian majority in Kosovo of "genocidal" anti-Serb policies. Nationalist sentiment intensified when Slobodan Milosevic, heading the Serbian Communist party, made a powerful speech in Kosovo that rallied enough popular support to allow him to crack down on his opposition and purge the party of reformist rivals. Milosevic, as president of Serbia, spearheaded the decision to curtail Kosovo's autonomy.

In 1990, Serbia dissolved the Kosovo assembly and the province was ruled directly from Belgrade. In response, ethnic Albanian legislators in the province declared Kosovo a Republic. In January, the League of Communists split along ethnic lines. This was a mark of growing nationalist intolerance in the country, foreshadowing the oncoming conflict. Federal elections that Ante Markovic, then the federal prime minister, wanted were never held, because Slovenia and Serbia boycotted the idea. The message to political elites was that they did not need to make broad appeals; it was enough for them to win locally (in their own republic).

In April 1990, elections in Slovenia led to a dramatic victory by a Center-Right coalition, which immediately began drafting a new constitution that would allow Slovenia to secede. In Croatia, nationalist leader Franjo Tudjman and the Croatian Democratic Union won a majority. In response to these developments, the Krajina Serbs, a long-established Serbian minority on Croatian territory, started campaigning for autonomy in August, arguing that if Croatia could secede from Yugoslavia, they should also be allowed to secede from Croatia. Local Serb militias mobilized and set up roadblocks to stop official Croatian interference in a referendum. Milosevic

announced that if Yugoslavia disintegrated, some border changes would be required to keep all Serbs under a single nation. Amidst intensifying conflict, in March 1991, Serbs in the Croatian Krajina region declared themselves autonomous and were recognized by Serbia. The power-sharing arrangement at the Center collapsed when Serbs refused to accept a Croat as president, violating the terms of Yugoslavia's rotating presidency.

In June 1991, both Croatia and Slovenia proclaimed their independence from Yugoslavia. The Yugoslav National Army (JNA) did not put up much resistance and withdrew from Slovenia's territory, but its reaction vis-à-vis Croatia's secession was very different. In August 1991, war broke out in Croatia between Croatian militias and local Serbs and the JNA, which attempted to take control of the strategically important cities of Vukovar and Dubrovnik.

By September 1991, the UN had authorized a 14,000-man peacekeeping force for the region and imposed an economic embargo on Serbia and Montenegro (under Security Council Resolution 713). The Secretary General launched a mediation effort, headed by former U.S. Secretary of State Cyrus Vance, leading to a cease-fire agreement in Croatia in early 1992 and the deployment of the first UN peacekeepers during the winter of 1992. The main task for the peacekeepers was to help extract JNA units from Croatian territory and temporarily establish UN Protected Areas (UNPAs).

In January 1992, preempted by Germany's support for Croatian independence, the European Community decided to recognize Croatia and Slovenia, but deferred action on Bosnia, where nationalist conflict was also brewing, pending the results of a referendum on independence. In March, a Muslim majority, with a significant Serb majority dissenting, voted for independence. As soon as the votes were counted, Serbs set up roadblocks around major cities, cutting them off from the mostly Serbian countryside. The Serb-controlled JNA assisted Bosnian Serbs, who began leaving the cities. A Bosnian Serb parliament was set up. In April, the Europeans recognized Bosnia, as did the United States. In response to continued Serb aggression, the UN Security Council imposed economic sanctions against Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) at the end of May. During the summer of 1992, a growing humanitarian

crisis in Bosnia led to the deployment of UN peacekeepers to facilitate the delivery of humanitarian relief. The UN imposed a “no-fly zone” over Bosnia in October 1992 and UN peacekeepers were preventively deployed to the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM) in 1993. In May 1993, the UN declared Sarajevo and five other Muslim enclaves “safe areas” under UN protection. NATO agreed in June to use air power to protect UN forces if attacked. In August, NATO declared its readiness to respond with air strikes, in coordination with the UN, in the event that UN safe areas, including Sarajevo, came under siege. This decision temporarily ended the strangulation of Sarajevo. The UN peacekeeping mission was transformed into an enforcement mission, under chapter VII of the UN Charter. But that was not the end of the violence.

In February 1994, in response to a Bosnian Serb attack that killed 68 civilians in a Sarajevo marketplace, NATO issued an ultimatum that if Bosnian Serb heavy weapons were not withdrawn from UN-monitored exclusion zones around the capital, Bosnian Serb forces would be subject to air strikes. In early 1994, with UN-EU diplomatic efforts stalled over territorial issues, the United States began more active efforts to encourage a settlement. In March 1994, U.S. mediation produced an agreement between the Bosnian government, Bosnian Croats, and the government of Croatia to establish a federation between Muslims and Croats in Bosnia. Fighting between the two sides ceased. In April, NATO employed its first air strikes against Bosnian Serb forces to halt a Serb attack on the eastern enclave and UN safe area of Gorazde. In the spring of 1994, the United States, Russia, Britain, France, and Germany established a five-nation Contact Group, with the goal of brokering a settlement between the federation and Bosnian Serbs. On May 6, the UN, under Security Council Resolution 824, declared Sarajevo, Tuzla, Zepa, Gorazde, Bihac, Srebrenica, and their surroundings as safe areas to deter armed attacks by the Bosnian Serb forces. Later in the year, new fighting erupted between the Bosnian government, antigovernment Muslims in Bihac (supported by Krajina Serbs), and Bosnian Serbs. NATO responded by expanding the range for air strikes into Serb-controlled Croatia. In December, with the help of former U.S. President Jimmy Carter, the sides agreed to a four-month cessation of hostilities. When the period expired, fighting resumed, and in May, the Bosnian Serb forces renewed attacks on Sarajevo and began threatening Srebrenica.

In the spring of 1995, Bosnian Serb attacks on the safe areas led to a massacre of Bosnian Muslims in Srebrenica and prompted U.S. President Clinton to insist that NATO and the UN make good on their commitment to protect the remaining safe areas. The Allies threatened broad-based air strikes if the safe areas were attacked again. When the Bosnian Serbs tested this ultimatum, NATO undertook an intensive month-long bombing campaign. United States-led mediation produced an agreement by the parties to basic principles of a settlement as well as a cease-fire, which went into effect in October. Proximity peace talks toward settlement began in Dayton, Ohio on November 1. The parties agreed to the Dayton settlement on November 21 and the terms of the treaty were signed in Paris on December 14, 1995. That was the end of the Bosnian war and the start of a long period of UN peacekeeping and peacebuilding in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Research questions

If there is one word that is not appropriate to Bosnia and its history. It is “democracy“. Bosnia has never experienced stable liberal democracy. The land that makes up today's Bosnia was under the domination of the Ottoman Empire (1463-1878), the Austro-Hungarian Empire (1878-1918), then monarchical rule under the First Yugoslavia (1918-1941) followed by integration into the quisling Croatian state during Second World War, then Yugoslav communism until free elections in 1990 and the fragmentation of Yugoslavia, followed by internationally recognized independence in 1992, the war and aggression by Serbia and Croatia and the imposition of an external international administration in 1995 by Dayton Peace Agreement. The international community would appear to be in little doubt that a transitional international trusteeship is essential to establish democracy in this small state and to set up the rules for the road to EU.

However, Bosnian President Alija Izetbegovic pointed out at Dayton that it is unjust peace: And to my people, I say, this may not be a just peace, but it is more just than a continuation of war. In the situation as it is and in the world as it is, a better peace could not have been achieved. God is our witness that we have done everything in our power so that the extent of injustice for our people and our country would be decreased.

The key question of this study is: What were the motives that pushed the United States into action in Bosnia? Can Bosnia survive as a single multiethnic country, as called for in Dayton, or it will eventually divide into two or three ethnically based states? Did Dayton bring peace to Bosnia, or only the absence of war? What might have been done better? Why Europe failed to prevent destruction of Bosnia. Will there be others Bosnias in our lives, and the world will look to America the next time we face challenge to peace in Europe.

The most serious criticism of the Dayton Peace Agreement came from Henry Kissinger, who argued that Bosnia had never existed as an independent nation and that they should not try to create it now. He thought that United States should encourage the partition of Bosnia along ethnic lines. But the negotiating team at Dayton did not share his view because there was a moral issue: the United States and its European allies could not be party to create more refugees and legitimizing the Serb aggression.

The Dayton was a successful cease-fire agreement because its political provisions gave refugees the right to return home and affirming a single country and a central government. Skeptics had warned that it could never be implemented and that it will be impossible for a multiethnic state to survive in Bosnia. But every other choice was worse. Dividing the country along ethnic lines would create massive new refugees flows. It would provoke mass migration and further bloodshed and the fighting would not be confined to Bosnia. The spectacle of a partitioned Bosnia would hearten every separatist in the Balkans especially in areas of ethnic instability like Macedonia and Kosovo.

The final report card on Dayton is not yet possible. Bosnia would remain as a single state, within recognized borders, thus conforming to the internationally held view that such borders should not be changed by force. The Croat-Muslim Federation would have 51% of the territory including Sarajevo while the Serb Republic would control the remaining 49%. Bosnia, in short, is one state, with one capital, but two entities.

No one knew the weaknesses of Dayton better than Richard Holbrooke who had participated in the negotiations. The most serious flaw in the Dayton Peace Agreement according to him was that it left the Serb portion of Bosnia to retain the name "Republika Srpska". Republic does not connote an independent country in the Balkans and Eastern Europe, but nonetheless, to permit the Serbs to keep the name they had invented was a more of a concession than he then realized.

Skeptics are arguing that Dayton pointed strongly in the direction of de facto partition, leading to the secession of the Serb Republic – a secession which, if contested by the Federation, would lead one again to war. The de facto division of Bosnia, on one hand, and its de jure preservation on the other hand still exist. While hard feelings and bitterness remain, and foreign peacekeepers help assure stability, there is no fighting – just a struggle to overcome the legacies of the past and to develop democracy and free-market economies. And Radovan Karadzic and General Ratko Mladic, two men who helped instigate and direct Bosnian war, are undergoing a war crimes trial by a UN-mandated international tribunal at The Hague.

In trying to forecast Bosnia's future path, one must begin by recognizing that the new Bosnian constitution contains the seeds of both unification and partition. On the one hand, it allows for Bosnia's two component Entities to establish special parallel

relationships with neighboring states and to enter into agreements with states and international organizations. On the other hand, it provides for the establishment of all-Bosnia institutions with responsibility for such things as foreign policy, foreign trade policy, and monetary policy. To date the tide has been going against closer integration. Against these disuniting trends stand some limited steps toward integration. Bosnia's parliament has passed the laws to create a central bank, common currency, customs union and common external tariffs. Muslims, Croats and Serbs have agreed to joint army- an important step toward unifying Bosnia and Herzegovina. The international community should press ahead IMF credits and reconstruction funds to increased cooperation among the parties; the West has a certain degree of influence over Bosnia's institutionalization process.

Whether partition or unification holds the key to peace in Balkans is open to debate. Some have made the case that the best course forward is to organize the peaceful partition of Bosnia. Refugees should be returned to areas in which they would be majority, accords should be negotiated on safe passage through disputed territories, and the notion of a multiethnic state should be abandoned. According to this view, Dayton was about ending the war and finding a formula by which Serbs, Croats and Muslims could divide up land because to reverse ethnic cleansing would require a second Balkan war.

Others argue that partition, while in broad terms a seemingly attractive option, is more complicated in its details. None of the parties are satisfied with the parcel of land given to them by Dayton. Partition, in short, could also involve a second Balkan war. If not partition or unification then what? The Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina was the official name of the county before Dayton. Bosnia's most plausible short-term future sees the two themes of the Bosnian constitution continuing their uneasy coexistence. The international community will be compelled to continue its direct engagement in Bosnia. As a result, some sort of an international military presence will remain in Bosnia beyond June 2014. Only over time and perhaps quite a long time will the final shape of the peace emerge in this war-torn region.

We are now at a decisive moment in the Bosnia peace process after Dayton. The success of NATO so far is now threatened by Milorad Dodik (President of Serb Republic) success in defying the political portions of Dayton. If he continues to thwart

the Dayton powers, the peace process will fail. This would result, at a minimum, in Bosnia's partition, with the real possibility of further division into three parts within few years. While national interest of America is not directly affected by whether Bosnia is One County or Two or Three, the implications of Dodik's defiance go far beyond Bosnia itself because the outcome in Bosnia will profoundly affect US overall role in the emerging post-post-Cold War World.

Of the many organizations in Bosnia in the last seventeen years, only NATO-that is, the United States has been respected. What NATO demands, it happens. But the reluctance of EU to go beyond relatively narrow interpretation of its mission has left a gaping hole in the Bosnia. Recognizing this Bosnian Serbs have increasingly defied the Dayton powers. In response, the Bosnian Muslims have moved further from multiethnic state in their half of the country. If it succeeds, basic issues of American leadership that seemed settled after Dayton will re-emerge. Having reasserted American leadership in Europe, it would be tragedy to let it slip away again.

"We do not want to fight but we have fought before. Two thousand years ago, after the battle of Thermopylae, where three hundred Spartans were wiped out by all the Persians they carved above the graves a sign in the rock which said; "Passerby: Tell Sparta we fell faithful to her service".

True peace remains to be built in hearts and minds of Bosnian people. If history teaches us one thing, it is that history is unpredictable. The United States were led by Kennedy's idealism when they decided to end a war in Bosnia.

When at some future date the high court of history, sits in judgment on each one of us,... our success of failure in whatever office we hold will be measured by the answers to four questions:

Were we truly men of courage...?

Were we truly men of judgment...?

Were we truly men of integrity...?

Were we truly men of dedication...?

John Fitzgerald Kennedy

January 9, 1961

Methods and instruments

In this thesis I have used the historical research study. It is the type of research that examines past events or combinations of events to arrive at an account of what has happened in the past. Historical research is conducted to uncover the unknown facts, answer the questions and identify the relationship that the past has to the present. Also I evaluated the accomplishments of institutions like UN, NATO and EU. It helped me to understand the world culture in which we live today. Basically, we see that what we do today is rooted in the past. We should always start with what history tells us.

The war in Bosnia has received heavy coverage in the popular press and in scholarly writings. The fact that the war took place in Europe, the extent of ethnic cleansing and genocide, the investigations of the ICTY (the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia), the deployment of several large United Nations peace operations, and the use of an assortment of humanitarian assistance projects by nongovernmental organizations have all attracted attention to this war and have resulted in the accumulation of a large descriptive corpus on the war. Despite this wealth of information, we still do not know which theories of civil war best explain this war and what lessons might be drawn from Bosnia that could inform existing theories of war.

There are many rival explanations of the onset of war in Bosnia. Most explanations cannot fit neatly in a theoretical framework that tries to explain more than just Bosnia. Reading case studies or reports on the war, it is hard to know what we might learn from Bosnia that we can generalize to other wars. I make an effort to integrate an analysis of the Bosnian war with broadly applicable theories by considering that it is here, most of all, that the study of the Bosnia and Kosovo campaign is so relevant. It suggests an alternative approach to winning the struggle against terrorism. In doing so, I consider alternative explanations and weigh them against the predictions model.

This study has three key analytical aims: first, to provide the motives of U.S. intervention in Bosnia; second, to understand post-conflict stabilization pushed by U.S.; and third, to highlight the EU commitment to Bosnia. The emphasis on war and peace is a methodological choice that serves a precise analytical purpose.

Analyzing it in details, explaining their initial conceptual phases and evolution, and reconstructing the various diplomatic machinations behind them, it becomes easier to uncover the strategies, interests, and ideas of different actors during the war in Bosnia.

The understanding of U.S. intervention in Bosnia and post-conflict stabilization led by the EU's initiatives in Bosnia is reconstructed by combining two types of inquiry. The U.S. and EU official documents have been systematically examined to identify the development of policies, strategies and key-terminology that has been applied to the Bosnian conflict and aftermath. Based on initial research in Washington D.C and at the EU digital archives in Brussels, particular attention has been devoted to specific terms including: war, peace, state building, democratization, post-conflict stabilization, transitional justice and reconciliation. But also the Ethical Responses to Genocide, Witnessing Genocide at Srebrenica, The Task of Justice, Obstacles to Reconciliation, The Building of Civil Society, The Challenge of Democracy in Divided Societies, Social Reconstruction and Moral Restoration, Reconstructing Multiethnic Societies in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The documentation considered for this thesis relies predominantly on the records from 1991 and 2000 to the present. The choice of this start date is connected to the documents published in those years by the last U.S. Ambassador in Yugoslavia Warren Zimmerman and EU that formally inaugurated the EU membership perspective for the whole Western Balkans region and also clarified the specific EU commitment to Bosnia. The focus was put on the U.S. documents at the beginning and then after on EU official documents in Brussels. I conducted research through the content analysis of official documents: Cutillero Plan, Vance-Owen Plan, Owen-Stoltenberg Plan, Plan of the Contact Group and the Dayton Peace Accord. Also the documents of Central Intelligence Agency, the Defense Intelligence Agency, the National Security Agency, the Joint Chiefs of Staff documents and intelligence reports on the war in Bosnia.

The first EU document is the final declaration of Feira (European Council 2000). The second is the final declaration of the Zagreb Summit, which formally launched the SAP for all Western Balkan countries (EU 2000). The third is the specific Road Map for Bosnia – adopted in the same year – in which Brussels identified 18 essential steps

that Bosnia had to undertake before the work on a Feasibility Study for the Stabilization and Association Agreement (SAA) could be formally launched (European Commission 2000), Partnership for Peace (2006) and Membership Action Plan (2010). These steps represent the formal “inauguration acts” of the EU’s commitment to the integration of the Western Balkans and Bosnia into its supranational structures.

In order to develop a fuller understanding of the role of the United States of America to end a war in Bosnia and Herzegovina the official documents are not sufficient. Consequently, consideration has also been given to other sources. These have included: information in documents (like records, photographs, relics, and interviews), oral history (talks with the persons who has had direct or indirect experience with the war and peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina).

Also the speeches and other public statements by decision-makers, parliamentary debates and hearings, policy analysis published by independent experts on foreign affairs, policy briefs circulated by government-contracted experts, as well as media commentaries that have been selected from both international and regional sources.

Finally, considering that important facets of the processes through which decisions are made are not recorded in official documents or public statements, the inquiry has been complemented by “hard talks” with participants of the UN, NATO and EU decision-making processes that concern war in Bosnia and Herzegovina: 1992.-1995.

Introduction

“The years 1992 and 1993 will be remembered as the years in which a European country was destroyed. It was a land with a political and cultural history unlike that of any other country in Europe. The great religions and great powers of European history had overlapped and combined there: the empires of Rome, Charlemagne, the Ottomans and the Austro-Hungarians, and the faiths of Western Christianity, Eastern Christianity, Judaism and Islam.”¹

According to Malcolm, these facts alone would be sufficient reason for studying the history of Bosnia and Herzegovina as an object of unique interest in its own right.² But the war which engulfed this country in 1992 has added two melancholy reasons for examining its history more closely: the first is the need to understand the origins of the fighting, and the second is the need to dispel some of the clouds of misunderstanding.

In this thesis, I shall try to examine the dynamics of ethnic conflict in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the dilemmas surrounding international intervention. I shall analyze the causes and conduct of the war; why, for more than three years, international efforts to resolve the conflict in Bosnia and Herzegovina failed; and why they finally succeeded in late 1995. I review the Dayton Peace Accord produced in 1995 and ask whether, after eighteen years of experience with its implementation, we can expect it to lead to long-term peace and stability in Bosnia and Herzegovina. This analyses will examine the develop strategies for managing it; and policymakers intent on preventing ethnic conflict from undermining international peace and stability since the war is by its nature, the process which is quite difficult to control.³

I focus on the actions of the major participants in the crisis, including actors in the former Yugoslavia and the international community. Furthermore, this analysis is going to examine from the critical point of view the controversy over the “national question” that marked the life of the country and finally led to its demise. I view the conflict in Bosnia and Herzegovina in the same light. In order to embrace more clearly

¹ Noel Malcolm, *Bosnia, A Short History*, Papermac 1994 p. 9.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 9-10.

³ Alija Izetbegovic, *SJECANJA: Autobiografski zapisi*, TKD Sahinpasic-Sarajevo, 2001 p.223.

the ethnic conflict in Bosnia and Herzegovina, or in the former Yugoslavia, we must not exclude economic, political, and especially moral issues from the analysis.

I attempted to keep the larger issues in exploring the details of the conflict in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Also, in this analysis I tried, first of all to point out the doubt about the future of the state of Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as other numerous issues and problems. How did the war happen, could it have been avoided, could the bloodshed and mass suffering be prevented? How the peace was achieved, what does such a peace full of compromises and concessions brings, is peace possible after genocide against the Bosniaks? What is the worst side of the Dayton accords and what is its best side?

At the end of this analysis, I stressed why do I believe that, in spite of everything, all challenges and issues, Bosnia and Herzegovina will survive as an integral state? And what are the guaranties of it, or better yet who are the main allies of Bosnia and Herzegovina in the historic struggle for survival and existence.

I am aware that I am standing myself in front of a very complex task how to answer to all these questions concerning the war and the International Intervention in Bosnia and Herzegovina. I must acknowledge that it was not easy for me when I arrived to these questions about **“to be or not to be”** for Bosnia because we Bosnians consider that it was not our war. It was the assault on Bosnian state by its neighboring countries, Serbia and Croatia which believed that Bosnia cannot survive without the Tito’s Yugoslavia since it is a mixer of different ethnic and religious groups within a very small country. That is the country where I was born and I lived there before and during the war (1992-1995).

Furthermore, the purpose of this work will be to examine the causes of the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1992. More specifically this paper will compare and contrast the effectiveness of UN, NATO and American policy as it relates to cessation of hostilities in the Balkans.

The end of the Bosnian war is generally ascribed to the success of NATO air strikes against the Bosnia Serbs in 1995. While the air strikes were certainly dramatic a number of other policies aimed at creating a peace where also employed. The United States led policy of turning the Croats against the Serbs was more efficacious in ending the conflict in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The examination of the evidence will show that contrary to popular belief the most effective policy toward ending the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina derived from Croatia's involvement in the conflict at the behest of the Americans. Specifically, this paper will examine how Croatia's attacks on Serb strongholds in the North Croatia were more important in bringing the peace than air strikes.

Bosnia and Herzegovina had 4.4 million people living there before the war started. Its surface is 51.129 sq. km (about the size of West Virginia; 1/4 larger than Switzerland). Picturesque mountain scenery (Bosnia's capital Sarajevo hosted the 1984 Winter Olympics), much of it covered by forests; some coal and minerals, no oil.

Bosnia's traditional borders, established in the medieval period, are: the Sava River (in the N), the Drina River (E/SE), and the Dinaric Alps (in the W). Herzegovina ("the Duchy") is the historical name for the country's south-western region (around the town of Mostar). Located in the heart of Europe (as the crow flies, Sarajevo is closer to Rome than Milan is).

It is separated by Serbia and Montenegro by famous River Drina on the East side of the country and by Republic of Croatia by River Sava in the North, which are the midlevel boundary lines of Bosnian state.

In Bosnia and Herzegovina there are mixed religious traditions and they are Bosniaks (Muslims Slavs), Serbs (Eastern Orthodox) and Croats (Roman Catholics).

In 1991 Bosnia was home to 4,365,000 people (twice as many as live in West Virginia; 1/3 fewer than Switzerland); its largest city was Sarajevo (pop. 526,000). Much of Bosnia's population is urban and (until April 1992) was employed in manufacturing, mining, technology and service industries. It is (or was) a modern, industrialized European country with respectable educational and health-care statistics. Almost all (over 95%) of the people speak the same language (called Bosnian or Serbo-Croatian), and come of the same European racial stock, descended from Slavic tribes that settled in the area in the early Middle Ages. The people of Bosnia are traditionally called Bosnians. For reasons having to do with recent history (and as much with 20th-century ideologies as with traditional religious allegiances), Bosnians whose ancestors were of the Catholic faith are now identified as Bosnian Croats (17%), while those of Eastern Orthodox background are now identified as Bosnian Serbs (31%). The largest group of

the Bosnian population, however, are the Bosniaks Muslim Slavs (44% in the 1991 census),⁴ descendants of Christian Bosnians who accepted Islam some 500 years ago. Until the late 19th century, people of all three faiths identified themselves simply as Bosnians. Most Bosnians today are in fact highly secularized, and about a third of all urban marriages in Bosnia in recent decades have been between partners from different religious and ethnic backgrounds. While there were some villages in the countryside where one group or the other predominated, Bosnia's towns and cities have traditionally been the shared home of people from all ethnic and religious groups. The latter include Jews, who found a haven in the tolerant city of Sarajevo in 1492, following their expulsion from Spain. Unlike Jews in Venice and elsewhere in Europe, Sarajevo's Jews were not confined to a ghetto.⁵ The city's principal mosques, its synagogues and Christian churches are all located in close proximity to each other, a visible sign of the intermingled public and private lives of its ethnic and religious communities.

The war in Bosnia and Herzegovina was created between three national groups, Serbs, Muslims and Croats. Serbs were trying to eliminate by so called "ethnic cleansing" all the people with different religion and nationality. They terrorized other ethnic groups and wanted the country to be all Serbs.⁶ In doing so, they had been supported by Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic who wanted to create a Greater Serbia on behalf of Bosnian-Herzegovina territory.

In this war the UN (United Nations Protection Forces) failed to stop the war, protection of people and in providing the food. The UN role was to stop the war and protect the people from shootings. They had their troops in Sarajevo, the capital of Bosnia, at the beginning of the war because that was their base of operation for the UN mission in Croatia.

When Bosnia came under attack by Serb artillery on 6th of April in 1992, the UN forces pulled out to avoid casualties. They left behind lightly armed Muslims and Croats to defeat attacks by Serbian army.

The Bosnian Serbs were full well prepared for the war. They had all the weapons they needed. They were armed up to their teeth because Serbia provided them with the all

⁴ Savez za Statisticke Podatke u bivsoj Jugoslaviji.

⁵ Noel Malcolm, *Bosnia: A Short History*, Papermac 1994, p. 43.

⁶ Richard Holbrooke, *TO END A WAR*, New York: Random House 1998, p. 22.

necessary weapons for waging the war, even before the war broke out in Bosnia and Herzegovina. On the other hand, Bosnian Muslims and Bosnian Croats were not willing to fight since they knew from the beginning with whom they have to deal with, and they tried to avoid the conflict at every price, what can be seen from the speeches of their leaders.

They were clinging on to idea of a civic state for all its free citizens equally represented in the local government and in Bosnian parliament in Sarajevo.

According to Noel Malcolm and others historians, there is no doubt that the burden of responsibility for the destruction of Bosnia during the war lies predominantly on one side, and I have tried to set out in the final chapters of this analysis the reasons for thinking so.

“One sure way of judging the historical claims of the main perpetrators of violence in Bosnia is to look at what they have done to the physical evidence of history itself. They are not only ruining the future of that country; they are also making systematic efforts to eliminate its past”.⁷ According to this author, in a war like this one, truth had to be killed first. The state and university library in Sarajevo was destroyed with incendiary shells. The Oriental Institute, with its irreplaceable collection of manuscripts and other materials illustrating the Ottoman history of Bosnia and Herzegovina, was also destroyed by concentrated shelling. All over the country, mosques and minarets have been demolished, including some of the finest examples of sixteenth-century Ottoman architecture in the western Balkans. These buildings were not just caught in the cross-fire of military engagements; in towns such as Bijeljina and Banja Luka, the demolitions had nothing to do with fighting at all – the mosques were blown up with explosives in the night, and bulldozed on the following day. The people who have planned and ordered these actions like to say that history is on their side. What they have showed by their deeds is that they have been waging a war against the history of their own county.

However, as it concerns the international intervention to end the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina, we can be satisfied with the results achieved by NATO’s air strikes in late November of 1995. For better or worse, however, the international intervention in Bosnia against Milosevic project appeared to be under exclusive American control but

⁷ Noel Malcolm, *Bosnia, A Short History*, Papermac 1994, p.13.

the U.S. did not show unilateralism during the operation.⁸ Of course, what some label as U.S. unilateralism, other would call a strong leadership. From my point of view, what matters, however, is not the label but the results. It is obvious, even with the limited NATO's air strikes, affected against Bosnian Serbs around Sarajevo, Tuzla, Banja Luka and other Bosnian towns that the Serbs called off their aims and were forged to stop the campaign of "ethnic cleansing" and genocide in Bosnia. There might be another Srebrenica if the NATO did not use a force to stop the killings of the civilians in the siege towns. Karadzic and Mladic were willing to continue with their job unless the all Muslims would not end up into the mass graves all over round Bosnia.

According to the words of the American General Wesley Clark, we should look on the NATO's air strikes as: **"What the Bosnian and Kosovo campaign showed is the very power of our ideas, our belief in human rights and dignity, the importance of the rule of law, and the rights of the people to govern themselves"**⁹

The allies bombing and allied target approvals made the overall impact of the air strikes in Bosnia far greater than if the U.S. had acted unilaterally and the real lesson of Bosnia and Kosovo is this according to this author: **"to achieve strategic success at minimum cost, a structured alliance whose actions are guided by consensus and underwritten by international law is likely to be far more effective and efficient in the long term"**¹⁰

I think that the author was right in his predictions because at this writing, some eighteen years after the NATO campaign against Slobodan Milosevic's "ethnic cleansing" of Bosnia and Kosovo, Serbia has a new, democratically elected government. It is struggling with the problems of transforming itself from a fascist relic of the Cold War to a Western-oriented democracy. In Bosnia and Herzegovina there are under way the constitutional reforms pushed up by European Union. The Albanian Kosovars have returned to their province, and a democratic transformation is under way there, too.¹¹

While hard feelings and bitterness remain, and some 40.000 foreign peacekeepers help assure stability, there is no fighting – just a struggle to overcome the legacies of

⁸ General Wesley Clark, Random house 20002, p. 2.

⁹ General Wesley Clark, Waging Modern War, Random House 2002, p. 4.

¹⁰ Ibid., pp. 4-5.

¹¹ Ibid., pp.5-6.

the past and to develop democracy and free-market economies. And Milosevic, the man who helped instigate and direct four Balkan wars in a decade, has undergone a war crimes trial by a UN-mandated international tribunal at The Hague. He has been found guilty for genocide. All this was achieved at a remarkably slight cost, minimal destruction on the ground, no NATO casualties, and relatively few civilians deaths despite the use of some 23.000 bombs and missiles.¹² What caused this outcome was not just the weapons of war. In fact, one might say the weapons were but a relatively small factor in the ultimate outcome. Rather, there were forces far more powerful than bombs and bullets at work.

These were the wholehearted political commitment of European nations, the thrust of international law, and the binding structure of NATO. There are scholars who think that we should judge the NATO air strikes as the most effective method to end the war in Bosnia and Kosovo. As Clark suggest us to study these cases into depth with his strong message when he says: **“It is here, most of all, that the study of the Kosovo campaign is so relevant. It suggests an alternative approach to winning the struggle against terrorism”**.¹³

The all candidate wanted to do in this thesis is to set out some of the details and facts about the war (1992-1995) in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the responses of the international community to it. Can we imagine what might look like Bosnia today if the United States had not intervened to end the war? According to American diplomat, the main initiative of the Dayton Peace Accord Richard Holbrooke, Bosnia and Herzegovina would have disappeared from a map:

“Had the United States not intervened, the war would have continued for years and ended disastrously. The Bosnian Muslims would have been either destroyed, or reduced to a weak landlocked minstate surrounded by a Greater Croatia and a Greater Serbia. Fighting would eventually have resumed in eastern Slavonia. Europe would have faced a continued influx of Balkan refugees. And tens of thousands more would have been killed, maimed, or displaced from their homes.”¹⁴

¹² General Wesley Clark, Random House 2002, p. 10.

¹³ Ibid., pp. 10-12.

¹⁴ Richard Holbrooke, TO END A WAR, New York: Random House 1998, p. 360.

It is a history which I lived personally and I still have the nightmares of it. I will always remember it as a period when my town Srebrenica and my country were destroyed.

Chapter: 1 History of Bosnia and Herzegovina

“What we call Bosnia is not only a piece of earth in the Balkans. For many of us, Bosnia is an idea. It is the belief that the people of different religions, nations and cultural traditions can live together.” Alija Izetbegovic

In early 1992, the “three M’s” (*tri m*), which denoted a multicultural, multiethnic, and multiconfessional Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH), became the rallying cry against the forces of disintegration, or more accurately, of partition. These identifying characteristics or national ideals could not avert catastrophe. Indeed, Bosnia’s liminal position at the crossroads of cultures, religions, and history rendered it the most vulnerable of republics in the Yugoslav wars of succession. However “three-M” Bosnia and Herzegovina was in 1992, it was less so by 1995. Yet, despite the bloodshed, forced expulsions, migrations, and the inevitable rise in nationalism, citizens of BiH have no choice, in the aftermath, but to examine the reality of pre-war BiH and the potential for a new “multi-multi” Bosnia and Herzegovina. Such an investigation must begin with the past, as a colleague implied when I asked her how she envisioned the future in Bosnia. She replied that Bosnians could hardly conceive a future when they still had no idea, still in 1998, what had happened, and why. Our focus here will be the “why”—why did multiethnic BiH prove in many instances *internally* vulnerable to nationalistic rhetoric?

We must first address the misconception encouraged in the coordinate relationship between the three M’s of multicultural, multiethnic, and multiconfessional. In fact, the history of a multiconfessional and multiethnic Bosnia has been carefully recorded, and we will have recourse to significant aspects of that history below. As research in multiculturalism suggests, however, multiethnic and multiconfessional societies are not necessarily, or by definition, multicultural.

The fact is that in the course of the culture wars in the West, multicultural and multiculturalism as terms have moved beyond their use to describe a real situation (as is the case with ‘multiethnic’ and ‘multiconfessional’) to denote an abstraction or aspired-to state. The multicultural society is opposed to one in which one culture or

set of values dominates and suppresses (e.g., that of the infamous “dead European white males”). Much has been written about the perceived association between democracy and multiculturalism. For many, the expectation is that as societies become more democratic politically, they must become more pluralistic culturally.¹⁵ Multiculturalism, as the term has come to be used in this debate, connotes the ideal of a cohesive diverse society whose members know, value, and respect each other’s cultures.¹⁶ Proponents of multiculturalism generally view this kind of cultural pluralism as the social counterpart to political democracy.

The culture wars erupted in the United States before the Yugoslav wars of succession (Allan Bloom’s *The Closing of the American Mind: How Higher Education Has Failed Democracy and Impoverished the Souls of Today’s Students*¹⁷ was published in 1987, and represented even then a counterattack against the expansion of the “great books” and Euro-centric curriculum in American higher education). Ideological wars pale in every way before the real thing, but perhaps for that reason, they can carry on much longer. The culture wars rage on. Regardless of whether one agrees that societies in our ever more integrated world should strive to be more multicultural, it has become obvious to all that great political democracies like the United States can lag behind considerably in the (inevitable?) movement toward multiculturalism. This is a complex issue and beside the point in this discussion, but suffice it to say that the situation that prevailed for most of the history of US growth, where forced or willful newcomers to the nation subjugated (or were forced to subjugate) their cultural identity to an overarching set of values, no longer holds sway. While being a political (if even imperfect) democracy, the United States did not foster a “deep democracy,” as Judith Green employs the term:

¹⁵ See, for example, the works by Leonard Harris on Alain Locke: *Alain Locke and Values* (Savage, NJ: Rowman and Littlefield, 1997) and *The Philosophy of Alain Locke: Harlem Renaissance and Beyond* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1987).

¹⁶ This characterization is intended as a “multi-purpose” definition. Researchers in multiculturalism continue to argue and refine the notion. For example, Charles Taylor sees the interest in multiculturalism as reflective of the (growing) human need for recognition. He writes of the “politics of recognition” and surveys the philosophical inquiry into the “dialogue” (in the Bakhtinian sense) between the public and the private (“The Politics of Recognition,” in *Multiculturalism: Examining the Politics of Recognition*, Edited and Introduced by Amy Gutmann [Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1994]: 25-73).

¹⁷ Allan Bloom, *The Closing of the American Mind: How Higher Education has Failed Democracy and Impoverished the Souls of Today’s Students* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1987).

Emergent social problems with which we now struggle show that such a pride- and fear-based ideological attachment to America's traditional, formally democratic institutions...must be replaced with more deeply democratic, critically pluralistic¹⁸ perspectives that motivate cross-cultural, cross-generational participation in a transformative quest for new social and institutional patterns more appropriate to current and future conditions, and more compatible with our shared democratic ideal.¹⁹

It is in Green's understanding of "deep democracy" that we recognize the confluence of political democracy and multiculturalism. As we realize from the example of the United States, it is possible to theorize and implement a political democracy that identifies a common good for all and whose government seeks, for the most part and ever more successfully, we hope, to relate to its citizens equitably. However, the theory of the public sphere does not guarantee that democratic principles will guide the interactions of individuals. Political democracy does not guarantee multiculturalism.

The inevitability between these types of relationship occurs, it would seem, in the other direction. Multiculturalism has arisen as a valued concept relatively recently. Certainly there existed previously places where diverse peoples identified with their community while sharing a real understanding of and respect for each other's cultural differences. Such a city would be termed 'cosmopolitan,' as Sarajevo, the capital of Bosnia, was often described. Bosnians, for the most part, had a sense of their entire country (republic) as a land of mutual understanding and respect. With the increasing interconnectedness of vastly different cultures, along with the postmodern privileging of the individual voice or perception, multiculturalism has come to describe more than the state of being in some diverse societies; rather many consider it to be a necessary condition to insuring individual rights. Multiculturalism is democracy from the ground up. And genuine multiculturalism, by its very definition, should breed political democracy. The 225 years of political democracy in the United States has not yet

¹⁸ 'Critical pluralism' is used here to denote the thoughtful respect for other cultures in dialogue with one's own culturally specific views; in opposition to moral relativism.

¹⁹ Judith M. Green, "Educational Multiculturalism, Critical Pluralism, and Deep Democracy," in Cynthia Willett, ed., *Theorizing Multiculturalism: A Guide to the Current Debate* (Malden, Massachusetts: Blackwell Publishers, 1998): 429.

produced a critically pluralistic, multicultural, society. Might a multicultural Bosnia and Herzegovina, if it really was that, have achieved political democracy and the ideal of a socially pluralistic, yet politically egalitarian and cohesive, society had it been spared its history of political absolutisms? We will never know, but perhaps that is precisely what the power-grubbing nationalists feared most.

In the aftermath of the war, citizens of BiH, with the aid of the international community, are working to establish democratic political institutions—democracy from the top down. How quickly these institutions will flourish depends to a certain degree on the residual cultural pluralism, multiculturalism, if you will, that remains from the pre-war period. In any case, Bosnians are pondering the reality of their Bosnian ideal (read multiculturalism) in a search to understand the roots of the past war. By virtue of its position on the Balkan Peninsula, the multiethnic and multiconfessional character of Bosnia was inevitable. Yet, what is the history and, by implication, the future, of multiculturalism, with its support for political democracy, on that territory?

1.1 The Balkans

The over-simplification of the Yugoslav wars as “age-old hatreds” perpetuated the stereotype of the Balkans as a region of tribal warfare and general primitivism. Many countered this facile and reductionist characterization, but not soon enough to avert disaster. In fact, the stereotype of “Balkanization” met resistance very early on. Unfortunately, it was the very effort to form multiethnic states, such as Yugoslavia, that thwarted the broad dissemination of research on Balkan history.

The modern stereotype of age-old Balkan hatreds is a post-WWI construction. In his 1934 article, “L’Unité balkanique,” Jacques Ancel wrote: “An unfortunate and inappropriate expression was created at the end of the war, the ‘balkanization’ of Central Europe, as if the creation of new nations issuing from the Austro-Hungarian, Russian and Ottoman monster empires were an imitation of Balkan civilization—a model of dissension and wars.”²⁰ Ancel’s and others’ careful study of the history of the Balkan Peninsula as a geopolitical entity revealed a territory of isolated “cells” of disparate populations. Small groups separated by the rugged terrain formed small,

²⁰ Jacques Ancel, “L’Unité balkanique,” *Revue internationale des Études balkaniques* 1 (1934): 128. I wish to thank Svetlana Slapšak, of the Graduate School of Humanities in Ljubljana, Slovenia, for directing me to this research.

well-functioning (if patriarchal) units of government—“the city was a country.” Ancel and his colleagues concluded that the major source of dissension in the Balkans has been the invasion of the “Great Powers,” and more important, the wane of their influence, which initiated a struggle for land and power in the region. In modern Yugoslavia, Tito did not encourage the dissemination of this information, for the knowledge that primarily ethnically pure enclaves in the Balkans functioned peacefully might imply that multiethnic communities (or states!) were doomed to failure. Such studies indicate that for most of their history, enclaves in the mountainous terrain of the Balkans, which defined the region, were generally neither multiethnic (in our current conception) nor multi-religious and (therefore?) lived in peaceful coexistence with one another.

1.2 Multiethnic and Multi-confessional

The major factor contributing to the rise of multiethnic and multi-religious societies in the Balkans was the incursion of the neighboring empires; in particular, the Hungarian and Austro-Hungarian from the north and the Ottoman from the south. In Bosnia, the invasions of the Hungarians and Ottoman Turks preceded and succeeded, respectively, the era of the independent medieval state (1180-1463).²¹ There, with the exception of Albania, the greatest number of conversions to Islam in the Balkans occurred, and “Eastern” culture and Islam took root alongside Western-European cultural practices and the mixed Roman and Byzantine heritage of the Church of Bosnia.²² Although the governmental structures of the colonial powers varied considerably, the Balkan populations in both the north and south witnessed an influx of foreign representatives and, to a greater or lesser extent, the imposition of the cultural values of the ruling powers. Certainly Ottoman and Islamic practices differed considerably more from those of pre-Ottoman Bosnia than was the case in Slavic territories under Hungarian rule. It is to this exposure of Bosnians to such diversity in

²¹ Bosnia was to experience considerable (north-)Western influence again, of course, with the occupation and annexation of BiH by Austria-Hungary from 1878-1914.

²² The dispute over the nature of the independent Bosnian Church and its status when Bosnia fell to the Ottomans continues. In his history of Bosnia, Noel Malcolm gives greater credence to the research that reveals the heresy of the Bosnian Church as not that of the Bogomils, but of the persistence of particular Byzantine practices that had become unacceptable or heretical in the Roman church. He notes that even before the Bosnian Church lost converts to Islam, it had come under attack from the Franciscans (Noel Malcolm, *A Short History of Bosnia* (New York: New York University Press, 1996): 27-42.

cultural practices that we often attribute their legendary tolerance. Since the war, however, some Bosnian Muslim (Bosniak) intellectuals and theologians have stressed that it is rather Islamic faith itself that has nurtured tolerance in Bosnia.

In *Neighbors* (Komšije), Mustafa Spahić cites various Kur'anic appeals for neighborliness and credits them as a major influence in the development of tolerance in Bosnia. By definition, neighbors are defined simply by contiguity:

Neighbors are not any kind of specialized groups; they are simply territorial [groups]. In a neighborhood there are married couples, families, single people, people of various families, last names, clans, in this dynamic world of varied masses, ethnic groups, castes, classes, and nations, particularly in the world's metropolises.²³

Spahić recognizes that tolerant "neighborliness" is likely to develop naturally in diverse urban centers, but he emphasizes that the *Kur'an* commands that neighborliness characterize all human interactions: "Islamic faith precisely and clearly establishes neighborly laws, obligations, responsibilities irrespective of religious confession, color of skin, caste, ethnicity, or nation."²⁴ Spahić's observations on the natural development of neighborliness among neighbors corresponds to research by sociologists on the growth of trust in urban environments.²⁵ However, he holds that Islamic teaching focuses on the tolerance of human difference and has therefore enhanced the acceptance of cultural differences that arose historically on the crossroads of the Balkans.

In *Bosnia the Good: Tolerance and Tradition*, Rusmir Mahmutćehajić reconsiders the factors that effected conversions to Islam in the early years of Ottoman rule in Bosnia as well as the misconceptions and misrepresentations underlying anti-Islamic sentiment in the West.²⁶ Among the many reasons cited to explain the high incidence of conversion to Islam in Bosnia—the weakness of the independent Church of Bosnia, the burden of taxation (which was greater for non-Muslims), the practice of the willing

²³ Mustafa Spahić, *Komšije* (Sarajevo: Press Centra Armije Republike Bosne i Hercegovine, 1994): 9.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 11.

²⁵ The sociologist Adam B. Seligman, for instance, identifies trust as one of the values of civilization engendered in the city. Seligman sees the growth of trust as a basic social relation as a modern phenomenon related to increased urbanization. See Adam B. Seligman, *The Problem of Trust* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1998).

²⁶ Rusmir Mahmutćehajić, *Bosnia the Good: Tolerance and Tradition* (Budapest: Central European University Press, 2000). Translation of *Dobra Bosna* (Zagreb: Durieux, 1997).

or forced conversion to Islam of Bosnian boys (*devširme*) who, once educated in Istanbul, were returned to Bosnia as respected leaders—Mahmutćehajić finds greater significance in the affinities between the faith of the *krstjani* (the Church of Bosnia) and Islam along with the inherent respect within Islam for the Jewish and Christian faiths (the other Abrahamic religions).²⁷ Mahmutćehajić's premise is that Bosnia embodies "unity in religious diversity." This guiding principle underlay the state before the advent of the Ottomans, as expressed in the attempt by the Church of Bosnia to accommodate the varying traditions of Roman and Byzantine Christianity, if not pagan practices. Bosnians willingly converted to Islam because of *its* respect for Christianity, and the teachings of their new faith suited well the already existing tradition of religious pluralism.

The controversy over the relationship between the Church of Bosnia and Islam aside, the tolerance in a predominantly Muslim Bosnia for other faiths did indeed contribute to the further development of Bosnia as a multi-religious state. Sephardic Jews expelled from Spain in the late 15th century found a safe haven in Bosnia. They settled in Bosnia in Sarajevo, and in other towns in the Balkans, because the Ottoman Empire did not have an official policy of discrimination. Sarajevo, in particular, came to symbolize the multi-religious nature of Bosnia, the "Jerusalem" of Europe. In numerous publications during the 1992-1995 siege of Sarajevo that decried the assault on Sarajevo, writers called forth as an emblem of the city as a multiethnic and multi-religious community the location within 300 meters of each other of a mosque, the Roman Catholic Cathedral, a Serbian Orthodox church, and a Jewish temple.

One Sarajevoan writer presented perhaps the most compelling vision of a multiethnic and multi-religious Sarajevo. In "Sarajevo, Portrait of an Internal City," Dževad Karahasan offered a structural analysis of Sarajevo as a seemingly internal city—situated in a valley surrounded by mountains and unto itself. Yet, he claimed that Sarajevo, with the singular exception of Jerusalem, was actually the most open and external city of Europe. The neighborhoods, or *mahalas*, that radiate from the center, or marketplace (*čaršija*), like spokes from a wheel, although closed religiously and ethnically homogeneous, open out to the center, where all cultures and religions meet, trade, discourse, and intermarry. It is the center or hub of Sarajevo that best

²⁷ Nijaz Duraković offers an in-depth analysis of Bosnian conversion to Islam in *Prokletstvo muslimana* (Sarajevo: Oslobođenje, 1993). See, in particular, "Nestanak bogomila i process islamizacije," pp. 26-45.

represent the city. Although structurally surrounded, the center is in spirit and essence open and external. Karahasan predicted that the internal (nationalistic) cities of Western Europe, feeling threatened by Sarajevo's (and Jerusalem's) cultural pluralism, would not only not defend the city, but would contribute to its demise. Published in 1993, the book proved prophetic.

1.3 Multicultural

Whether Bosnia's multiethnic and multiconfessional nature derives primarily from its Muslim identity, from its position at a number of crossroads, or from the increasing desire of foreigners to conquer its landscape and to remain, BiH epitomizes the melting pot of the Balkans. In the calamitous 1990s, the majority of Bosnians clung to the idea of "Bosnia." To them, as to many who knew Bosnia from afar, the betrayal of the idea and descent of many into nationalism came as a shock. As it turned out, not all Bosnians ascribed to Karahasan's vision of Sarajevo's hub. He described a microcosm in Sarajevo's center where diverse cultures interacted in every way humanly possible. Most important, they intermarried. The resulting intermingling of the private spheres of existence made it impossible for families to remain ignorant of each other's faith and most intimate customs. Ideally, such knowledge led to mutual respect and a strengthening of relationship. This, and their commitment to a life shared in Sarajevo, in Bosnia, described, in fact, what we can accept as true multiculturalism.

Intermarriage was the key to genuine multiculturalism in former Yugoslavia.²⁸ The highest percentage of mixed marriages occurred in Sarajevo (30%)—a common expression during the war was that the front line cut through one's marriage bed. Intermarriage served as the bedrock of Tito's catchphrase of "brotherhood and unity," and in the early Communist period, it embodied the ideal of "internationalism." Yet, if the most multicultural of Yugoslav cities proved in 1992 to be insufficiently so, it was only more true of the earlier history of the city and the region.

In the current reconsideration of the past in Bosnia—the effort to find out what Bosnia was in order to determine what it might be—numerous documents and

²⁸ Svetlana Broz, Tito's granddaughter and author of *Dobri ljudi u vremenu zla* (Good People in a Time of Evil [Banja Luka: Media centar "Prelom," 2000]), a collection of testimonies of interethnic deeds of heroism during the Bosnian war) came to this conclusion as well, as she expressed in her International Women's Day lecture (8 March 2000) at the International Institute in Boston, Massachusetts.

(revisionist) histories have shed light on the nature of multiethnic and multi-religious Sarajevo (and Bosnia) before the modern-Yugoslav era. For instance, Sarajevo has long taken pride in its historical role as a haven for Jews fleeing the Spanish Inquisition. Yet, Dr. Moritz Levy, in his *Sefardi u Bosni* (The Sephardim in Bosnia), republished and translated from the German in its entirety in Sarajevo in 1996, describes a situation in Sarajevo under Ottoman rule of tolerance but inequality.²⁹ He details the taxes levied on the Jews (as well as the Christians) along with various prohibitions. For example, in 1579, Sultan Murat published an edict that forbade Jews and other non-Muslims to dress in the same fashion as Muslims; this not long after Jews had begun dressing like Muslims in a conscious effort to adapt to their new homeland. Jews and Christians, instead of turbans, wore special black caps. Their footwear had to be black also—they were forbidden to wear red shoes, as Muslim men did, or high yellow boots, as Muslim women wore. Non-Muslims could not ride horseback within the city, and even outside the city, their horses could not be ornamented in any way. There were restrictions on when Jewish women could visit the public baths. Non-Muslims could not carry weapons. Most important, however, there were no laws to protect the rights of non-Muslims.

With the fall of the Ottoman Empire and the annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina by Austria-Hungary, the cultural supremacy of Bosnian Muslims began to wane. We might view the establishment of Habsburg rule in BiH as a leveling factor with regard to the civil code. In his history of Bosnia, Noel Malcolm cites the historian William Miller's and the journalist W. E. Curtis's assessments of Austro-Hungarian evenhanded administration.³⁰ Contributing to this small step toward that ideal of multiculturalism, Habsburg agricultural policy encouraged foreign settlers (primarily Poles, Czechs, and Ruthenians), which made for an even more multiethnic BiH. According to the 1910 census in Sarajevo, the native speakers of Serbian or Croatian numbered 36,400, of German, 5,246, Spanish—4,875, Czech—1,702, Hungarian—1,392, Slovenian—789, Polish—592, Italian—465, Albanian—103, Romany—100, Romanian—59, Greek—39, Slovak—35, Ruthenian—34, Turkish—31. At the same time the city could boast the publication of 89 different newspapers, including 11 in German, 2 in Turkish, 1 each in

²⁹ Moric Levy, *Sephardim in Bosnien* (Sarajevo: Štamparija Daniala A. Kanon, 1911), *Sefardi u Bosni*, trans. Ljiljana Masal (Sarajevo: Bosanska biblioteka, 1996).

³⁰ Noel Malcolm, *Bosnia: A Short History* (New York: New York University Press, 1996): 145.

Spanish and Hungarian, and two bilingual German-Serbo-Croatian papers.³¹The Habsburg policy for economic development in BiH led to the construction of roads, railways, and model farms. However, the expected agrarian reform never materialized, and Bosnian Muslims retained much of their wealth and privilege. The Empire's reticence to interfere, in this respect, with the status quo in BiH impeded democratization, a prerequisite for multiculturalism.

A major redistribution of wealth in Bosnia after Ottoman rule came with the establishment of The Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes. Serfs were freed in 1919 and received legal title for the land they worked. Agrarian land reform resulted in the virtual impoverishment of many Bosnian Muslims: "A people who had owned 80% of the land, who had had great wealth, were transformed suddenly, by means of the laws on agrarian reform, into, one could say, beggars."³² As a consequence, the descendents of formerly wealthy Bosnian Muslim landowners often sought professional training and education in the West. They joined their (ethnic) Croatian and Serbian counterparts in study abroad to form a growing class of professionals/intellectuals who were affected by the secularizing influences of the West.³³ However, in contrast to this growing segment of the Bosnian population who shared values across ethnicities, many laws in the Kingdom and, after 1929, the first Yugoslavia, served to alienate or ignore a Bosnian Muslim identity; this while the concern for Croatian and Serbian interests among the relevant parties continued to grow. In the long run, the decline of the Muslim ruling class in BiH set the stage for economic and political equalization. Yet, it does not surprise that this relatively rapid process, from Austro-Hungarian annexation to the formation of modern Yugoslavia (1878-1945), antagonized the Muslim elite and instilled in the Christian (ethnic Serb and Croat) population, a sense of just retribution. In addition, the Kingdom brought together opposing factions in WWI, most in BiH and Croatia having fought against Serbia. While the forces of modernization and urbanization gradually bred greater equality and tolerance among various ethnicities, their immediate effect could be quite the contrary.

³¹ Nijaz Duraković, *Prokletstvo Muslimana*, 86.

³² Adil Zulfikarpašić, *Bošnjak* (Zagreb: Nakladni zavod GLOBUS, 1995): 99.

³³ See Noel Malcolm, *Bosnia: A Short History* (New York: New York University Press, 1996): 166-167.

Robert Donia's study of one institution in Sarajevo from the beginning of the Habsburg occupation to the rise of modern Yugoslavia sheds some light on the relationship among ethnicities in that time frame. He has compared the processes by which Sarajevo Council members were chosen in three periods of crisis and, therefore, relatively greater autonomy from higher-level authorities: 1878 (the Austro-Hungarian occupation), 1919-1920 (the collapse of the Habsburg monarchy and founding of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes), and 1945 (the liberation of Sarajevo by the Partisans from German and Ustashe rule). In all cases entry into the council was determined by ethnicity, even if, with time, *class* membership became a more salient feature for these leaders than ethnicity:

Office-holders had to pass through the appropriate national-confessional doorway to enter the chambers of power, a principle apparently no less true of the 1945 council than of the other two. The number of council seats or executive offices was increased to assure that each group felt represented in its work. But once the participants were accommodated, members of various groups worked together to meet the challenges facing the city.³⁴

The fact that council seats were distributed among the various confessions (e.g., in the Provisional Sarajevo Council of 1919, there were 9 Muslims, 9 Catholics, 9 Serbian Orthodox, 4 Jews, and 9 socialists [although not a religious confession]), demonstrates the attempt in Sarajevo to ensure equitable political representation among ethnicities (and socialists!). However, the identification of Sarajevans primarily with religious confession forefronts difference over integration. Donia observed that from the beginning of Austro-Hungarian rule through to the founding of modern Yugoslavia, in the working of the Sarajevo Council, class eventually became more significant than confession. That fact lends support to Sarajevans' characterization of everyday life lived in their city in the late-Tito era to before the war—in daily interactions, they were for the most part oblivious to confessional/ethnic differences. In any case, it was not the most salient feature of identity.

³⁴ Robert Donia, "Sarajevo's Pluralism in the Twentieth Century," unpublished paper delivered at the World Congress of the International Council for Central and East European Studies (Tampere, Finland, 3 August 2000).

Anecdotes, memoirs, and some historical sources chronicle the movement toward greater understanding and integration in times of peace in the early twentieth century and the first Yugoslavia. Émigrés from the region who left Yugoslavia before the post-Tito era often recoiled from the rationale of “age-old hatreds.” Their recollections, often from childhood, highlighted interethnic tolerance. One middle-aged colleague described the good relations in his Bosnian village between ethnic Serbs and Bosnian Muslims. The children got along well in school. However, he did note that they rarely played together after school, because they lived in separate neighborhoods. Another Bosnian émigrée, compelled by the Yugoslav wars to write a memoir of her childhood in Tuzla, recalled with more introspection than she might have otherwise exercised, the tolerance, but incomplete integration, of that town before World War II. In *Bosnian Counterpoint*, Borka Tomljenović, an ethnic Serb, whose father was the town doctor and whose mother she refers to as the “first lady” of Tuzla, ponders the interethnic influences that gave Tuzla its charm. Yet, she recognizes that a “mixed” culture does not necessarily imply mutual understanding:

Growing up in Bosnia provided ample exposure to the strange mixture of religions, nationalities and cultures where distinct communities lived peacefully side by side while preserving their customs and characteristics. As children and adolescents we were aware of and accepted those differences even though we did not fully understand them.³⁵

Tomljenović recalls in considerable detail three Muslim girls who attended her high school, although “I was not particularly friendly with any of them. They attracted me mostly because they were Moslem and were therefore cloaked with an intriguing veil of mystery and secrecy that covered their private life.”³⁶ Perhaps more significant as a sign of mutual respect, Tomljenović remembers the courageous actions, during WWII, of the father of one of these girls. Fadila Kurt’s father, the muftija Muhamed Kurt, opposed the intentions of the Ustaše to destroy the Serbian quarter of the town and its Orthodox church.

³⁵ Borka Tomljenović, *Bosnian Counterpoint* (Ann Arbor, MI: s.n.): 103-104.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 108

The history of Bosnia is still being written, and the documentation of the historical defense of pluralism in Bosnia will bear more significance than individual memory or nostalgia. Yet, specialists are accruing evidence of courageous rebellion, as that recalled by Tomljenović, against previous violent eruptions of nationalism. While the muftija Kurt prevented the destruction, during World War II, of the Serbian quarter in Tuzla, the leadership of Sarajevo called upon the Yugoslav Minister of Education Anton Korošec to oppose the edict that would prevent Jewish children from attending high school. Korošec turned a deaf ear. In protest, Sarajevo officials opened a Jewish gymnasium, even though few of the students or teachers would survive the war.³⁷

According to the history of the Sarajevo Council, the reactions of religious and political leaders in Sarajevo and Tuzla against the Fascists' and Ustaše's "solutions," and the memories of older Bosnians who recall the relative harmony of their multiethnic hometowns, Bosnia, on the eve of WWII (and the subsequent formation of modern Yugoslavia), had developed into a more pluralistic society. Political and educational institutions had become more integrated, which increased the "exposure" of one ethnicity to another. The question of multiculturalism aside, Bosnia and Herzegovina was culturally more cohesive than it had been under Ottoman rule. Much has been written about Tito's suppression of nationalism and how this refusal to face the horror of the civil war only served to "incubate" interethnic hatreds. That may be true. However, more attention should be given to the developing preconditions for multiculturalism at the start of WWII and their influence on reconciliation in modern Yugoslavia.

1.4 Modern Sarajevo and Bosnia

Patriotic Sarajevans cling to the ideal of multicultural Bosnia. Senad Pečanin, former editor of the news magazine *Dani* and a recent Fellow at the Nieman Foundation at Harvard University, expressed his belief in the shared (multicultural) values of inhabitants of Bosnia's emblematic capital before the war by referring to the city as "unicultural."³⁸ His point was that integration had reached such a degree that individual identity was primarily associated with the community. His use of "unicultural" corresponds, in fact, to the definition of multiculturalism employed here

³⁷ Josip Osti, *Jevreji u Sarajevu i Bosni* (Ljubljana: Biblioteka "EGZIL-abc", 1993): 23.

³⁸ Senad Pečanin, Neiman Lecture, Center for European Studies, Harvard University, 1 May 2000.

and (often) elsewhere in the literature. Pečanin is not the only writer or intellectual who has written or spoken out on the special culture of (pre-war) Sarajevo.³⁹ The question again arises whether all Sarajevans, or perhaps more significant, whether all Bosnians shared these attitudes.

1.5 City vs. Country

During the recent Yugoslav wars, many, both within and without the territory, attempted to characterize virulent nationalism as a product of the village, the provincial, and the uneducated. Accordingly, at the start of the Bosnian war, Sarajevo was immediately singled out for destruction due to its role as a symbol of Bosnian cosmopolitanism and “advanced civilization.” Thus, nationalists fire-bombed the National and University Library not only in an attempt to destroy the records of historical Bosnian-Muslim administration in the region. They sought to annihilate the center of Bosniak higher education and high culture. The Bosnian intellectual Gojko Berić analyzed the siege as an assault by Serbian “peasants,” such as General Ratko Mladić (or in the case of the Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadžić, by a Montenegrin “peasant”), on the cultural spheres of Sarajevo that remained outside their reach (Berić asserts that Karadžić, a psychiatrist practicing in Sarajevo, was never accepted by the city’s intellectual elite).⁴⁰

Others pondering the siege of Sarajevo interpreted events as a general assault on the concept of “city.” For the Serbian architect Bogdan Bogdanović, for example, Sarajevo and Jerusalem are not exceptional cities; rather, they are the very embodiment of the ideal. In response to the attacks on Bosnian and Croatian cities during the war, he wrote: “The horror felt by the West is understandable: for centuries it has linked the concepts ‘city’ and ‘civilization’, associating them even on an etymological level. It therefore has no choice but to view the destruction of cities as flagrant, wanton opposition to the highest values of civilization.”⁴¹ Bogdanović, who had written extensively on the threat of urbicide in the postmodern world, saw his worst dreams

³⁹ On the basis of my experience among students, writers, and intellectuals in Sarajevo, most frequent and extensive in the 1990s, I would have to agree as well. And more recently I have heard this conviction expressed in conversation with Sarajevans who do not represent the intellectual elite.

⁴⁰ Gojko Berić, *Sarajevo na kraju svijeta* (Sarajevo: Oslobođenje Sarajevo, 1994): 164-165.

⁴¹ Bogdan Bogdanović, “The City and Death” (translation of “The Ritual Murder of the City”), in Joanna Labon, ed., *Balkan Blues: Writing Out of Yugoslavia* (Evanston, Illinois: Northwestern University Press, 1995): 36.

realized in his own homeland. He recognized as well the affirmation of related notions on the city. The nationalists incited their followers with epic and folk songs and even their so-called “novels” took place mainly in rural locales and recalled more the heroic song of the oral tradition. Bogdanović saw in this support for the Russian literary scholar Mikhail Bakhtin’s classification of the novel as a genre of the (modern) city, open and dialogic.⁴² The urban novel represents the artistic counterpart to multiculturalism and opposes the monologic prejudices of nationalist folk genres.

Indeed, there is proof of urbicidal thinking in Yugoslavia. In nationalist rhetoric, such as the 1992 “Warning,” signed by officials of Slobodan Milošević’s Serbian Socialist Party, the Serbian Orthodox Church, and the Serbian Academy of Arts and Sciences, urbanization is maligned for its effect on falling birth rates and migrations of populations. Yet, urbicidal reasoning was not necessarily overtly nationalistic. For example, in *The Demographic Black Hole* (*Demografska crna jama*), published in Sarajevo no less, Ilija Bošnjović puts forth his theory of how the city engenders its own destruction—industrialization gives rise to migration to the city, but urban life leads to falling birth rates among the most educated and “progressive” citizens. The city implodes.⁴³ Though Bogdanović’s experience of the Yugoslav wars was personal, he recognized in them an escalation of postmodern urbicide that threatens us all: “Defending the city is the only valid moral paradigm for the future. It is a light that even the most humanitarian of humans—as much understanding as they may have for the rift between nature and man and the plight of endangered flora and fauna—are as yet unable to see, unable to understand.”⁴⁴

We may find compelling both Berić’s psychological profile of Radovan Karadžić and Bogdanović’s warning of campaigns against the city. What is needed with respect to the successor states of Yugoslavia, however, is detailed research on the realities, in modern Yugoslavia, of multiculturalism in urban versus rural areas. This investigation presents a tremendous challenge in a land so devastated by war.

In one important pre-war study of a central-Bosnian village, *Being Muslim the Bosnian Way* (1995), Tone Bringa makes numerous observations concerning the shared and separate lives of the village’s inhabitants, as well as the ways in which they themselves

⁴² Bogdan Bogdanović, “Zavađena sećanja,” in *Grad kenotaf* (Zagreb: Durieux, 1993): 46-48.

⁴³ Ilijas Bošnjović, *Demografska crna jama* (Sarajevo, “Veselin Masleša,” 1990).

⁴⁴ Bogdan Bogdanović, *Balkan Blues*, 73.

perceived their similarities and differences. She describes a society where members of the two ethnoreligious groups, Muslims and Catholics, socialize and help each other celebrate life's important passages. Yet, intermarriage was rare—such an intent might well be opposed by the young peoples' families, the women in the family citing the difficulty of melding the traditions of food-preparation and religious feasts. At the same time, Bringa reports on relatively rapid changes in the community. Within the preceding thirty years, the institution of the joint family household had waned to the point that newlyweds were likely to spend little time living with the husband's family; perhaps only to wait until the completion of their own home. On trips to the city, young women had ceased to wear the trousers, *dimije*, that were associated with village life. If we compare this description of village life with Karahasan's portrait of Sarajevo, and we keep in mind the rapid urbanization of post-WWII Yugoslavia, we might recognize, rather than a sharp distinction between rural and urban life in Bosnia, a continuum from the age-old disparate "cells" of the Balkans to a more authentic multicultural existence in the hub of Sarajevo.

Bringa noted another changing custom in the Bosnian village that relates to the question of why Sarajevo was singled out for destruction. Bringa observed that in village life, those with a modern outlook considered "Muslim" customs primitive or "of the village." Thus, although everyone in the village had previously eaten on the floor from a single pot, inhabitants of the newer neighborhoods now all ate at the table. Catholics considered the old practice a Muslim one, but everyone who now ate at the table viewed that custom as more urban or modern. If in Yugoslavia Muslims were associated with the village and the "primitive," Sarajevo must have represented to the non-Muslim provincial mind a double affront—a cosmopolitan and seemingly exclusionary center where the majority of citizens were both "modern" and (ethnically) Muslim.

Aside from the theoretical possibility of an inherent link between rural attitudes and hatred of the city and multiculturalism, we should consider the effect of societal change in socialist Yugoslavia. These economic changes contributed to a subtle process of disowning Bosnian Muslims as the lesser "other," which waxed as Ottoman,

and then Bosnian Muslim, power waned.⁴⁵ We may wish to attribute such attitudes to the vulgar provincial, along with ethnic jokes about Bosnians/Bosniaks. However, the Yugoslav leadership, which on the one hand gave full recognition to Bosnia as an entity, on the other, by decree, chose an ethnic designation for Bosnian Muslims based on religion. Intellectuals continue to debate the outcome in the dissolution of Yugoslavia if Bosnian Muslims could have retained their historical term of identity—Bosniak (*Bošnjak*), which gave evidence of their connection to the territory—rather than the appellation foisted on them by the Yugoslav government in 1963—Muslim (*Musliman*).⁴⁶

Just as some creative writers have been indicted for fostering nationalism, others, like Dževad Karahasan in “The Portrait of a City,” have led the intellectual inquiry into the reality of multiethnic integration in Sarajevo and beyond. In his essay, “The Intellectual and Creative Conscience of a Writer,” the Bosnian writer Mirko Marjanović observes that what we are calling multiculturalism in the region can succeed only on the foundation of a *genuine* mutual understanding and experience of cultural differences among all citizens. He speaks of the *writer’s* need to experience cultural differences among all citizens, for the artistic community can serve as a progressive force for change: “The writer must know well all the organisms, culture, religion, ethnos, history above all, everything that is in common and what is not, to make the body and himself healthy and his intellectual and creative conscience.”⁴⁷ Experience in Sarajevo and the rest of former Yugoslavia has shown, of course, that the intimate knowledge of other cultures that Marjanović recommends for writers should be the goal of everyone in multiethnic communities.

Reminders or revelations of how reality in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and in other republics of the former Yugoslavia, fell short of the ideal of multiculturalism should not serve a “list of grievances,” as horrific events of World War II were recalled these last two decades to incite nationalism. Information on the realities of life for the

⁴⁵ During WWII and in the aftermath that produced modern Yugoslavia, this disowning was, of course, far from subtle. On the heels of Ustaše atrocities during the war, Tito’s security chief Aleksandar Ranković implemented a policy of forced “repatriation” of Muslims from the Sandjak and Macedonia to Turkey.

⁴⁶ Adil Zulfikarpašić, *Bošnjak* (Zagreb: Nakladni zavod GLOBUS, 1995): 104-105.

⁴⁷ Mirko Marković, “The Intellectual and Creative Conscience of a Writer,” in *Forgotten Country 2: War Prose in Bosnia-Herzegovina (1992-1995)* (Sarajevo: Association of Writers of Bosnia-Herzegovina, 1997): 92.

various ethnicities before and during the era of modern Yugoslavia can prove useful in assessing genuine integration. Even in Sarajevo, the symbolic center of the multiethnic and multiconfessional western Balkans, ethnically homogeneous neighborhoods speak to a long past where the periphery of the city characterized it to an equal or even greater extent than its multicultural center.

Genuine multiculturalism requires an organic relationship between ideology and cultural practices. In the United States, democracy (a type of political association that is reflective of the principles of multiculturalism) was constructed and institutionalized, but full cultural integration has yet to be achieved. In the history of Bosnia and much of the Balkans, feudal, colonial, and communist systems, by definition, prevented the equitable political representation that multiculturalism demands, regardless of the degree of cultural integration in other spheres.⁴⁸ Over time and especially in towns and cities, the co-mingling of various ethnicities and religions in Bosnia and Herzegovina has produced quite naturally the preconditions for multiculturalism. This has been the source of the “idea” of Bosnia. Yet, many Bosnians have called into question their identification with that abstraction. Among all the “truths” that must be investigated, on the path toward reconciliation, we must include the myth or reality of “Bosnia” in pre-war BiH. Fledgling democratic institutions can help to foster multiculturalism—the only course for survival in Bosnia and Herzegovina—“from above,” but Bosnians and the international community must assess the historical (and remaining) foundation for critical pluralism and deep democracy in this new nation.

⁴⁸ Of course equitable multiethnic political representation was, theoretically, a goal of Communist governmental organization in Yugoslavia. However, beyond the question of how power was actually distributed across ethnicities, we must take into account the disenfranchisement of non-Communists from the political process.

Chapter 2: Bosnia and the Death of Yugoslavia: 1988-1990

2.1 Brotherhood and Unity in Titoist Yugoslavia, 1945-1980

“Tito is often given great credit for having brought internal peace and reconciliation to Yugoslavia after the Second World War. It is true that peace came, and that the wounds of the war gradually healed; it is true also that Tito gave some thought to balancing the conflicting claims of Yugoslavia’s peoples and regions. But power was more important to Tito than reconciliation, and Communist power was imposed on Yugoslavia at a very heavy price.”⁴⁹

The **Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia** was the Yugoslav state that existed from the end of World War II (1945) until it disintegrated in the Yugoslav wars in the 1990s. It was a Socialist state that comprised the area of the present-day independent states of **Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Macedonia, Serbia, Montenegro and Slovenia**.⁵⁰

The first president was Ivan Ribar and Prime Minister Josip Broz Tito. In 1953, Tito was elected as president and later in 1974 named “President for life”. Throughout the **Cold War**, Yugoslavia was an important member of the **Non-Aligned Movement**. The economy of the **SFRY** is known for the organization of that country, and its particular brand of workers’ **self-management system**.

Like the Kingdom of Yugoslavia that preceded it, the SFRY bordered Italy and Austria to the northwest, Hungary to the northeast, Romania and Bulgaria to the east, Greece to the south, Albania to the southwest, and the Adriatic Sea to the west. The most significant change to the borders of the SFRY occurred in 1954, when the adjacent Free Territory of Trieste was dissolved by the Treaty of Osimo. The Yugoslavian Zone B, which covered 515.5 square km, became part of the SFRY. Zone B was already occupied by the Yugoslav National Army. The constitution of 1946 gave wide autonomy to the six newly created republics: Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Macedonia, Serbia and Montenegro but actual power remained in the hands of Tito and the Communist party.

The Allied peace treaty of 1947 with Italy awarded Yugoslavia the eastern part of Venezia Giulia and set up **Trieste** as a free territory; conflict with Italy over Trieste ended in a partition agreement in 1954. Within Yugoslavia a vigorous program of socialization was

⁴⁹ Noel Malcolm. BOSNIA: A Short History. Papermac, 1994. p. 193.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

inaugurated. Opposition was crushed or intimidated, and Mihajlović was executed. Close ties were maintained with the USSR and the **Cominform** until 1948, when a breach between the Yugoslav and Soviet Communist parties occurred and Yugoslavia was expelled from the Cominform.

The Tito government began to pursue an independent course in foreign relations. Economic and military assistance was received from the West. In 1954, Yugoslavia concluded a military defence pact (independent of NATO) with Greece and Turkey. More cordial relations with the USSR were resumed in 1955, but new rifts occurred because of Soviet intervention in Hungary (1956) and Czechoslovakia (1968). Domestically Yugoslavia's "**national communism**" or "**Titoism**" included the abandonment of agricultural collectivization (1953) and the centralization of administrative and economic controls. Important economic power was given to workers' councils, and the republics were subdivided into communes. In 1966, Aleksandar Rankovic the vice president and Tito's long-time associate, was purged for having maintained a network of secret agents and for opposing reform.

Friction with the Roman Catholic Church ended with an accord with the Vatican in 1966. Yugoslavs under Tito possessed greater freedom than the inhabitants of any other Eastern European country. In the early 1970s, agitation among the nationalities revived, particularly among the Croats, and controls over intellectual life were stiffened. The autonomy of the six republics and two autonomous provinces of Serbia slowly increased through the 1970s as the economy began to stagnate. With the death of Tito in 1980, an unwieldy collective leadership was established. The economic problems and ethnic divisions continued to deepen in the 1980s, and the foreign debt grew significantly.

2.2 The Rise to Power of Slobodan Milosevic: 1986-1988

The dissolution of federal Yugoslavia was hastened by the rise to power of Slobodan Milosevic as president of the Serbian Republic and his embrace of an extreme Serb nationalist agenda. That agenda calls for a solution of the "**national question**" by the creation of a Greater Serbia, uniting all Serbs in a single state; in 1986 it was endorsed by the Serbian Academy of Arts and Sciences. The following year, Milosevic and his hard-line faction gained power within the Serbian League of Communists, in large part by playing the nationalist card appealing to the Serbian sense of grievance at having been deprived of a

leadership role in Tito's Yugoslavia and at being outstripped by some other republics economically.

He demanded that the more prosperous republics (Slovenia and Croatia) take on a greater share of the costs of the federal budget and called upon them to defer to Serbian leadership. His denunciations of Croat and Slovene efforts to liberalize the economy and to privatize state enterprises struck a chord among workers anxious about rising unemployment and other uncertainties of life in the twilight of the Communist era. By the end of 1987, Milosevic was speaking of scrapping the federal constitution and the collective presidency altogether, calling for a new, recentralized Yugoslavia, united under a single strong hand.

2.3 The Disintegration of Yugoslavia: 1989-1991

In 1989, seizing upon the patriotic fervour surrounding a historic anniversary, Milosevic initiated a crackdown on Serbia's ethnic Albanians, who form the majority (90%) of the population in the country's southern autonomous province of Kosovo. Kosovo was the seat of a Serbian kingdom in the Middle Ages and the site of the famous battle, fought in 1389, that ended medieval Serbia's independence and began its centuries of subjection to the Islamic Ottoman Empire. In the romantic imagery of Serbian nationalism, Kosovo represents both Serbia's past greatness and its humiliation at the hands of Muslims.

The continued presence of a large and politically assertive Muslim Albanian population in Kosovo is perceived as an intolerable affront to this nationalist vision of Serbia. In 1990 Milosevic issued decrees abolishing the autonomous status of all of the Serbian Republic's minority regions and severely curbing the educational and political rights of ethnic minorities. The autonomous regions seats in the Yugoslav collective presidency were retained, however, and were packed with Milosevic's own appointees. Non-Serbs throughout Yugoslavia watched these developments with growing unease, unwilling to become either tools or targets of his policies.

2.4 The War in Slovenia

By the summer of 1991 Slovenia, the most prosperous and Westernized republic, decided it had had enough of Milosevic's attempts to seize control of the federal presidency. When

Milosevic tried to block the Croatian member of the collective presidency from taking his turn at the federal helm, the Slovenes issued an ultimatum. As the deadline passed without a response from Belgrade, the Slovene parliament declared for independence (in theory, the right of each republic to secede was guaranteed under Tito's federal constitution). In Belgrade the Serbs responded with outrage and the Yugoslav federal army (with a 70% Serb officer corps) was called upon to intervene to stop Slovenia from seceding.

The army was unprepared for such a mission and the Slovenes, using public relations as much as derring-do, managed to inflict a series of humiliations on their vastly more powerful adversary (including sending captured JNA conscripts home on trains headed for Belgrade, clad only in their underwear). Following a brief struggle, Slovenia achieved its independence and JNA troops were evacuated to bases in neighboring Croatia. Since there is no Serb minority within Slovenia, this humiliating turn of events did not as yet seriously impinge on the Serb nationalist dream of a Greater Serbia. The same was not true in the case of the other republics.

2.5 The War in Croatia

Croatia, which is home to a sizeable Serb minority population, declared its independence on the same day as Slovenia. Following a tense period of skirmishes and negotiations between the Croatian government, representatives of Serb nationalist parties within Croatia and the Serbian-dominated federal authorities, talks broke down just as the conflict in Slovenia next door was coming to an end. The Yugoslav army launched a full-scale offensive against Croatia from its bases in Serbia and Bosnia-Herzegovina, in coordination with militias that had been formed by Serb nationalists (supplied and armed by the JNA) within Croatia. Savage fighting ensued, marked by the Serbian forces deliberate targeting of civilians and of cultural landmarks (including the brutal siege of the medieval port city of Dubrovnik and the total destruction of the town of Vukovar, a jewel of Baroque architecture). Battles continued until the end of the year, when the UN brokered a cease-fire that left nearly a third of Croatia's territory under the control of Serbian forces. This fighting bore all the features that later characterized the conflict in Bosnia, including the forcible expulsion of civilian populations from conquered areas, known as "ethnic cleansing."

Within Serbia, Milosevic catered to nationalist sentiment by further tightening restrictions on minorities and instituting a reign of terror against the Albanians in Kosovo. Ultra-nationalist Serb paramilitary groups were given free rein, and there were calls to "cleanse" all non-Serbs from the Serbian lands. About 185,000 Albanians in Kosovo were dismissed from their jobs in the state-controlled economy; the non-Serb population was subjected to a new round of random assaults, killings and mass arrests. The hard-pressed Albanians responded to this policy with non-violent resistance, organizing a civil disobedience campaign and declaring for independence in an underground referendum, held at the beginning of 1992.

Chapter 3: Descent into War in Bosnia and Herzegovina: 1990-1992

Between December 1990 and April 1992 the fate of Bosnia and Herzegovina hung in the balance. The first democratic elections in the history of the republic produced a deeply divided political system. As the republic became politically polarized from within, the external environment became chaotic. When war broke out in Croatia in summer 1991, Croats and Serbs from Bosnia joined in the fray. The Croats began training Muslims for war in Bosnia. The Yugoslav People's Army (JNA) trained and armed Serb reservists throughout Bosnia. In the fall, the JNA sent reservists from Montenegro rampaging across Herzegovina. Elsewhere, Bosnia was a zone of relative quiet, surrounded on three sides by violence, ethnic cleansing, and destruction. The Bosnian media propagated the notion that Bosnia's traditions of national tolerance would help it avoid war. President Izetbegovic contributed to this "suspension of disbelief" by insisting that he knew how, he did not explain that war would not come to Bosnia-Herzegovina. On the eve of the outbreak of the war, he insisted that the conflicts in Bosnia-Herzegovina were being fabricated and would end after recognition.⁵¹

⁵¹ Danas, Daily Report: March 17, 1992, p. 29.

Yet the ability of Bosnia to avoid violence was rapidly diminishing as a result of two developments. The first was the onset within Bosnia-Herzegovina of a veritable revolution from above. The three national parties began a purge of state administration, replacing those cadres still loyal to the Titoist system with persons loyal to the national parties. The nationalists thus destroyed the intricate system of interethnic checks and balances that had been at the heart of the Titoist system.⁵² The second development took place outside Bosnia-Herzegovina. The breakup of Yugoslavia, the only authentic multinational state in the Balkans, generated deep fissures within an already politically divided Bosnia and Herzegovina. The period from 1990 onward, when Yugoslavia collapsed, proved no exception. Both these developments are examined here.

3.1 The Nationalist Revolution

The national parties in Bosnia and Herzegovina sought to consolidate their newly won power through cadre changes designed to favour their respective ethnic communities. The process of inclusion and exclusion based on ethnic criteria, in both the public and private sectors went forward by fits and starts after December 1990. But with time and especially following the outbreak of hostilities in Bosnia-Herzegovina in spring 1992, the process produced deep cleavages at all levels of Bosnian society. Thanks to these changes, and with the encouragement of all three national parties, multiculturalism was dealt its first blow in Bosnia and Herzegovina. How these changes took place is evident only in scattered examples of the process, which continued up to the moment that war broke out and beyond.

The first step was to remove communists from positions of responsibility at higher levels of state administration and replace them with representatives of the three nationalist parties. Each of the three national parties was deeply suspicious of the remaining two, and prone to use its blocking power to prevent the ministers from carrying out their normal functions.⁵³ In the paralysis that resulted. And thanks to the attrition of non-Muslim cadres in the ministries, the government in Sarajevo came to be largely under SDA control.⁵⁴ Since Bosnia and Herzegovina was a highly centralized

⁵² Ibid., pp. 29-30.

⁵³ Borba, April 11-12, 1992, p. 4.

⁵⁴ Ibid., pp. 4-5.

state the danger was real that the SDA and the Muslim ethnic community would effectively shut out the other ethnic communities from power, at least at the level of the central government. Outside Sarajevo, the Serb SDS consolidated its power where the Serbs were a majority. On the eve of the war in spring 1992, there were reports that the SDS had purged local governments in Serb-majority areas and was insisting that the tangible assets of the community be divided among the ethnic communities.⁵⁵ With the onset of the war, the Croat HDZ in Mostar began to purge the city administration of Muslims, even though the Croats were at war with the Serbs, and the Muslims in the city were supporting the Croats.⁵⁶

The efforts of nationalists met with the resistance from a combination of intellectuals who were committed to democratic values, and communists loyal to the Titoist creed of brotherhood and unity. The nationalists, for their part were not terribly efficient in their purging, and each was reluctant to challenge the power base of the other ethnic communities. Thus, the process of breaking society down along ethnic lines proceeded unevenly. When fighting broke out in March-April 1992, a number of cities and towns were still able to operate along multiethnic lines, and to protect themselves from the excesses committed by the armed extremists, at least for a time.

The Ministry of the Interior in Sarajevo continued to resist nationalist pressures up to the outbreak of the war. In October 1991, the interior ministry launched a desperate appeal to the Yugoslav Army for assistance in disarming the paramilitary organisations of the three nationalist parties.⁵⁷ In March 1992 it was active in trying to ease tensions in Bosanski Brod and Mostar.⁵⁸ Even after the bulk of the Serbs had left and the ministry had come under the control of the Bosnian government, it continued to employ Serbs. Serbs remained in leading positions in other bodies, as well. Biljana Plavsic, for example, was president of the Council for the Protection of the Constitutional Order until the outbreak of the war. Nikola Koljevic and Plavsic, the two Serbs in the state presidency, did not formally resign their positions until April 4 of 1992.

⁵⁵ Guardian, April 13, 1992, p. 22.

⁵⁶ Laura Silber and Allan Little, *Yugoslavia: Death of a Nation*, New York: 1996, p. 294.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 294-95.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

Polarization in the work place and in government was accompanied by polarization of the media. All three national parties were guilty of attacks on the independent media. It became virtually impossible for the media to stand above national question.

Nenad Pajic, director of Sarajevo TV, was forced to resign, in part because he insisted on broadcasting daily newscasts from Zagreb and Belgrade, as well as Sarajevo.⁵⁹ All three national parties demanded that Radio-Television Sarajevo stop transmitting meetings of the all National Parliament, which met the first week in April 1992 to protest the ethnic polarization of Sarajevo.⁶⁰ In the battle over control of television, TV relay towers became much-sought-after prizes. Serb seizure of several key TV relay installations meant that Sarajevo TV could reach only a relatively small part of Bosnia-Herzegovina by spring 1992. *Oslobodjenje*, the newspaper whose staff included Serbs as well as Muslims, threw in its lot with the beleaguered Bosnian government after the war broke out.⁶¹

At the apex of the emergent power structures stood the newly anointed nationalist leaders. Radovan Karadzic, the president of the SDS, and Alija Izetbegovic, president of the SDA, were closely associated with the formation of their respective parties and therefore wielded immense symbolic power as spokesmen for their respective national movements. Karadzic had been a sports psychologist, a familiar and well-liked figure in Sarajevo before the war. In the crucial six months preceding the outbreak of fighting, Karadzic made inflammatory statements suggesting that the Muslims would be exterminated if war broke out in Bosnia. He provided the ideological justification for ethnic cleansing, insisting that Muslims and Serbs could not live together. He and the narrow circle of leaders in the SDS planned and oversaw the destruction of Muslim cultural monuments. Karadzic bore political responsibility, as president of the Bosnian Serb republic (*Republika Srpska*), for crimes committed by Serb forces during the conflict, leading to his indictment as a war criminal by the War Crimes Tribunal at The Hague. Corruption was endemic in the leadership circles of the SDS, suggesting that Karadzic had close ties with criminal elements in the Bosnian Serb Republic. Karadzic was painted as an extreme nationalist and even fascist, "worse than Himmler," in the words of the U.S. ambassador, Warren Zimmerman. But Karadzic

⁵⁹ *Vreme*, April 13, 1992, pp. 8-9.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*

⁶¹ See Tom Gjelton, *Sarajevo Daily: A City and Its Newspaper*, New York: HarperCollins, 1995.

could not be dismissed simply as a national extremist. Within the SDS, Karadzic occupied a centrist position. His metamorphosis from a benevolent psychiatrist and environmentalist to an extreme nationalist reflected the larger forces at work in Bosnia at the time. Karadzic was at first blindly loyal to Milosevic, only to break with Belgrade when it became evident that Milosevic was prepared to sell the Bosnian Serbs short in order to end the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The Croat political scene, in contrast, was marked by an absence of strong leadership. The HDZ was split into two factions. The first and most powerful faction had its power base in western Herzegovina, and was anti-Bosnian. The second, which supported the integrity of Bosnia, had its roots in central Bosnia and especially Sarajevo. The Herzegovina faction was led by Mate Boban, who became president of the Bosnian Croat republic (Herceg-Bosna) after the region declared its independence in July 1992.⁶² The Herzegovina Croats had strong ties to the HDZ leadership in Croatia and to President Franjo Tudjman. Tudjman's own political fortunes were, in turn, tied to the Herzegovinians and to Croatian emigres in the West, many of whom had emigrated from Herzegovina. Suspicion of the urban Croatian intellectuals in Sarajevo ran deep among the Herzegovinians. In Grude, the only Croatian majority district of Bosnia-Herzegovina, they vote against the referendum in February 1992, local Croat leaders considered the Sarajevo intellectuals "Red Croats."⁶³

The HDZ was under the control of first one faction, then the other, depending on Zagreb's policy toward Bosnia. Davor Peronic, who later became the head of the Bosnian branch of the extreme right-wing Croatian Party of Rights, was forced by Zagreb to relinquish the leadership of the Bosnia HDZ before the war broke out. He was replaced by Stjepan Kljucic, an urban Croatian intellectual and former sports writer from Sarajevo. Kljucic proved to be a relative moderate. He was compelled to step aside in spring 1992. Mate Boban then became acting president of the HDZ, to be replaced by Dario Kordic in July 1994, a hard-liner who was charged with war crimes in fall 1995. Moderate Croat leaders in central and northern Bosnia found themselves in an extremely difficult position, torn between a sense of loyalty to the Bosnian government and their ethnic and political ties to the radical faction of the HDZ in western Herzegovina. But because the Herzegovina lobby was strongly represented in

⁶² Borba, January 15-16, 1994, pp. 8-9.

⁶³ Ibid.

Zagreb, the moderate Bosnian Croats were largely powerless to influence Croatian policy toward Bosnia. This became painfully evident after the establishment of the Muslim-Croat (Bosnian) Federation in 1994, when the moderate Croats were unable to overcome the intransigent opposition to the federation on the part of the Croats in Herzegovina.

The SDA was founded by Alija Izetbegovic in March 1990,⁶⁴ and remained under his leadership throughout the period covered by this analysis. As a student during World War II, Izetbegovic was a member of the Yung Muslims, an organisation of elitist Muslim youth with ties to the Ustashe youth movement. He was arrested in 1946 for membership in the Young Muslims and served a three-year sentence. Most of his later career was spent as a lawyer in Sarajevo. Izetbegovic was committed anticommunist, a deeply religious Muslim, and an ardent advocate of the regeneration of the Muslim world through what he called (in his work the Islamic Declaration) “the creation of a united Islamic Community from Morocco to Indonesia.”⁶⁵ He was arrested in 1983 for the distribution of Islamic Declaration some 13 years earlier and sentenced to 14 years in jail, to be released two years later. For the Serbs, the Islamic Declaration confirmed their suspicions that Izetbegovic wished to transform Bosnia and Herzegovina into an Islamic state. Izetbegovic insisted that he was committed to preserving Bosnia as a multicultural, secular society, and that the Muslims could not lay claim to the role of the titular nationality in Bosnia, at least not until they were 70 percent of the population.⁶⁶ He was quoted in a biographical sketch in the Western media as saying: “Our home is in Europe, and not in a fundamentalist state. My aim is to have an independent, democratic republic which conforms to European standards.”⁶⁷ But Izetbegovic was at heart not only a religious Muslim, but a Muslim in the national sense. Izetbegovic’s most intriguing feature was his apparent ability to combine the conflicting values of Islamic religiosity, Bosnian tolerance, and Western secularism. This seeming symbiosis of contrasting and even incompatible cultural traits made Izetbegovic the most elusive of the nationalist leaders, but also the most authentically Bosnian. He was notoriously indecisive and prone to change his mind

⁶⁴ Alija Izetbegovic, *Odabrani govori, pisma, izjave, intervjui*, Zagreb: 1995, p. 82.

⁶⁵ Alija Izetbegovic, *Islamska Deklaracija*, Sarajevo: Bosna, 1990, p.5.

⁶⁶ Silber and Little, *Yugoslavia: Death of a Nation*, p. 208.

⁶⁷ *Financial Times*, March 7, 1992, p. 6.

when dealing with international negotiators. His inability to agree to closure at the Dayton peace talks drove the Americans negotiators to distraction. He was modest, and appeared genuinely committed to peace, although not at any price, as my analysis will show. His public utterances were couched in the language of moderation and tolerance. The liberal Zagreb journal *Danas* remarked that he would have made a good *Reis-ul-ulema*.⁶⁸ He strongly opposed any devolution of power to ethnic regions in Bosnia. In this respect he had the near unanimous support of the Muslims, and a number of Croat and Serb, intellectuals. But Izetbegovic was accused by the democratic opposition of having an autocratic personality. Izetbegovic allowed corruption and crime to flourish in Sarajevo during the first year and half of the war. While in jail, Izetbegovic had become friend with the criminal Musan Topalovic-Caco and he came to rely on Caco to organize the defence of Sarajevo in the early months of the fighting. Izetbegovic appears to have done little to stop the abuses committed against the Serbs in Sarajevo, or even excesses perpetrated by Muslim forces against Croats. The nationalist party leaders were, however, only the most visible and influential of the new power holder in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Local politicians, criminal elements, military officers, and even some clergy were founded among the new ruling elites in each ethnic community. There were few constraints on their exercise of local power. Consequently, the emergence of these new elites was dividing Bosnia and Herzegovina even more deeply along national lines and somehow contributed to the dissolution of the country within itself.

3.2 The Dissolution of Bosnia and Herzegovina

The polarization of Bosnian politics and society along ethnic lines after 1990 was accelerated by, and a reflection of, the disintegration of Yugoslavia. The demise of Yugoslavia is now a familiar tale. It is enough to remind the reader that following the electoral victories of nationalist parties in most of the republics in 1990, Yugoslavia found itself in a state of permanent crisis, culminating in the secession of Slovenia and Croatia in June 1991. Here I shall focus on the impact of these events on Bosnia.

The future of the Yugoslav federation had become the subject of intense debate after Tito's death in 1980. Serbia sought constitutional changes that would have

⁶⁸ *Danas*, October 22, 1991, pp. 30-31.

placed more power in the hands of the federal government. Initially, Slovenia and Croatia argued for “status quo”. But following the defeat of the communists in the elections in Slovenia and Croatia in spring 1990, the new leadership in these republics opted for a confederal Yugoslavia of sovereign republics, in effect, for independence. The debate over the future of the Yugoslav federation was a matter of life and death to Bosnia and Herzegovina. Prior to the outbreak of the war in Croatia, all Bosnian parties opposed the breakup of Yugoslavia.

At the same time, the SDA and the communists opposed the Serbian campaign for a stronger Yugoslav federation. In October 1990, the Bosnian parliament adopted a resolution suggesting that Yugoslavia adopt a “Charter of the Community” that would have transformed Yugoslavia into a loose confederation of sovereign republics. In September 1990, Izetbegovic made it clear that he opposed Bosnia-Herzegovina remaining in a rump Yugoslavia, taking the position that if Croatia and Slovenia were to leave Yugoslavia, then Bosnia-Herzegovina should immediately declare its independence.⁶⁹ After he was chosen president, Izetbegovic continued to hold to this position.

Izetbegovic argued that Bosnia-Herzegovian would be forced to declare its independence should Croatia and Slovenia leave the Yugoslavia. On the other hand, he sought to facilitate an agreement among the quarrelling republics that would allow Yugoslavia to survive. With the support of Macedonian president Kiro Gligorov, Izetbegovic argued for a “Yugoslav state community” that would acknowledge the sovereignty of the republics while retaining Yugoslavia’s international legal status.⁷⁰ At one point in spring 1991 he even appeared open to the idea of an “asymmetric federation”; that is, one in which Bosnia and Herzegovina would have closer ties to the federal government than Croatia and Slovenia. Public opinion in Bosnia was against such a relationship with Belgrade, however, and Izetbegovic was compelled to drop the idea.⁷¹

Karadzic and the Serbs argued that Bosnia-Herzegovina was in miniature, an artificial creation whose people could not, and should not, be forced to live in one state. Izetbegovic and the non-nationalist opposition parties took the position that Bosnia-

⁶⁹ Tanjug, October 30, 1990, p. 73

⁷⁰ Tanjug, June 8, 1991, p. 42.

⁷¹ Ibid.

Herzegovina was a state in its own right, with its unique traditions, history and stable borders that predate those of Yugoslavia. Paradoxically, the SDS resisted confederal solutions for Yugoslavia but advocated them for Bosnia-Herzegovina, while Izetbegovic and the SDA opposed a unitary solution to the Yugoslav constitutional crisis, but favoured such a solution for Bosnia-Herzegovina.

In February and then again in May 1991 the SDA attempted to push a declaration of sovereignty through the Bosnian assembly.⁷² Both the resolutions failed. Apparently, neither the Serbs nor the Muslims were yet ready for showdown. The search for a way out of the impasse in Bosnia was renewed in summer 1991, sparked by the outbreak of the war in Croatia. The Serbian government participated in the effort to solve the Bosnian dilemma by organising the so-called "Belgrade initiative," a meeting of delegates from Serbia, Montenegro, Macedonia, and Bosnia and Herzegovina on August 12, at which the idea of a new federation without Slovenia and Croatia was presented to the public. The gathering suggested the possibility that Bosnia-Herzegovina might become part of a new Yugoslavia made up of the non-Catholic republics.⁷³ But the effort was political theatre because the key ingredient for the success of such solution, the support of the Bosnian Muslims, was absent. The August initiative nevertheless highlighted the risk that Izetbegovic was taking by turning his back on Belgrade. The key to Izetbegovic's stand was his insistence that Bosnia-Herzegovina could not be part of any federation that excluded Croatia. This ruled out Bosnia-Herzegovina joining a rump Yugoslavia. Of course, even if Izetbegovic had opted for the path of Muslim collaboration with Belgrade, Bosnia would not have escaped without the loss of territory. Such a move would, at minimum, have sparked the secession of western Herzegovina and its Croat population. Nevertheless, there were a number of reasons why linking up with Yugoslavia might have looked attractive to the Bosnian Muslims. First, it would have brought the Yugoslav army into the Muslim camp and avoided "civil war" between the Muslim and the Serbs. Second, while it might initially have involved political costs, since the new federation would be dominated by the Serbs and Milosevic, it would have united all the Muslims of former Yugoslavia in one state (that is, Muslims from Kosovo, Sandzak, and Bosnia and Herzegovina). Eventually, one can surmise, the Muslims would have become a political

⁷² *Oslobodjenje*, January 31, 1991, p. 61.

⁷³ *Oslobodjenje*, May 18, 1991, p. 29.

force to be reckoned with in the new Yugoslavia. Finally, Bosnia-Herzegovina probably would have been able to retain its status as a republic and many of the powers it had enjoyed in the old Yugoslav federation.⁷⁴ According to some resources, a coup was apparently in the works in the state presidency in early May 1992 to replace Izetbegovic with a leadership that would have kept Bosnia-Herzegovina in a rump Yugoslavia. In effect, what began in 1991 as an effort to create a Greater Serbia by the Serbs in Croatia would be transformed into a greater Bosnia and Herzegovina?⁷⁵ It is not difficult to accept the assertion that Bosnia and Herzegovina would be today a part of a Greater Serbia project, if Izetbegovic did not refused such idea in July 1991. So the “Belgrade initiative” came to naught.

While the path to an agreed common state for Serbs, Croats, and Muslims appeared extremely difficult, the path down to which Bosnia was headed promised catastrophe. When the SDA made it clear that it would not remain in a Yugoslavia without Croatia, war was inevitable in Bosnia and Herzegovina.⁷⁶

By fall 1991, as the war gained in intensity in Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina appeared to be on the verge of disintegration. Serb autonomous oblast SAOs were formed in Serb areas throughout Bosnia on September 12. The Croats followed by setting up two autonomous oblasts of their own, one for the Sava Vally, the other Herzeg-Bosna in the second and third weeks of November 1991.⁷⁷ In the third week of October the Serbs created an Assembly of the Serb Nation of Bosnia-Herzegovina. In early November 1991 the Bosnian Serbs organised a referendum that asked Serb voters whether they wished to remain in a Yugoslavia that would include Krajina, eastern Slavonija, Baranja, and Srem, in effect, a Greater Serbia. The referendum received near unanimous backing from the Serbs. The leadership of the SDS argued that the vote dispelled any doubt that the Serbs wished to remain part of Yugoslavia, rather than accept the status of a minority in an independent Bosnia and Herzegovina.⁷⁸

By March 1992 perhaps three-quarters of Bosnia-Herzegovina was claimed by either the Serbs or Croat nationalists.

⁷⁴ Silber and Little, *Yugoslavia: Death of a Nation*, p. 214.

⁷⁵ *Borba*, July 31, 1991, p. 9.

⁷⁶ *Oslobodjenje*, April 5, 1992, p. 7.

⁷⁷ *Danas*, November 26, 1991, p. 56.

⁷⁸ *Nedjelja*, November 17, 1991, pp. 12-13.

Tensions between the government and Yugoslav army mounted over the government's refusal to cooperate in conscripting Bosnian youths to fight the war in Croatia. The Bosnian Serb and Muslim leadership were deeply suspicious of one other, while the Croats of western Herzegovina had, to all intents and purposes, opted out of the task of governing the republic, choosing instead to create a *de fact* autonomous state tightly integrated with neighbouring Croatia. All the while, arms were pouring into Bosnia. The JNA began a transfer of arms to the Bosnian Serbs.⁷⁹ The Croatian paramilitary group, HVO (the Croatian Defence Force) was actively arming its members in Herzegovina.⁸⁰ The Bosnian Muslims Green Berets were organized in fall 1991. According to Izetbegovic they numbered about 35,000 when the conflict began. The more inclusive Patriotic League was formed at the same time and, in February 1992, drew up a plan for the defence of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Croat units from western Herzegovina returned home following the end of the fighting in Croatia, anticipating that war would soon break out in Bosnia.

Serbs who were mustered out of the JNA units in Croatia returned to Prijedor and Banja Luka, bringing their weapons with them despite the objections of the Muslim-controlled city assembly.⁸¹ According to Bosnian accounts, the JNA struck a deal with Karadzic in February 1992 to create a joint Bosnian Serb-JNA command and coordinate military actions in Bosnia.⁸² Journalists travelling through Bosnia and Herzegovina described evenings filled with the sound of small-arms fire from villagers firing off their newly acquired weapons.⁸³

There was still one last glimmer of hope for Bosnia if the three nationalist parties could agree on mechanisms of government that would protect the basic interests of each ethnic community while keeping Bosnia and Herzegovina intact. Once again, the SDA brought the issue of sovereignty following the formal declaration of independence by Slovenia and Croatia and the formation in Belgrade of a rump Yugoslav presidency that excluded Slovenia and Croatia. The president of the Bosnia Serb party SDS rejected it. The outcome of the debate was disaster. Karadzic first gave

⁷⁹ Milos Vasic, *A Dream Too Far*, War Report 31, February 1995, p.23.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*

⁸¹ The International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia, *The Prosecutor of the Tribunal v. Dusko Tadic*, Case no. IT94-1-T, May 21, 1996, p.62.

⁸² *Oslobodzenje*, January 19, 1993, p. 4.

⁸³ *New York Times*, January 10, 1992, p. 2.

the impression of wishing to be conciliatory, speaking of the need for an institutional solution to the divide between the two camps.⁸⁴ Izetbegovic offered the choice between a referendum on sovereignty and new elections. His words were unyielding: “The debates between us and the SDS, and the problem has completely come to a head on the question of sovereignty – yes or no? We have no way out. Now we cannot put it off, for October 1991 has come, when it must be resolved. This way or that way. We must come to terms with this, to say, will we accept peace at any price in Bosnia, bend our heads once and for all, because of peace accept an inferior position for the next fifteen years, or shall we say, we want sovereignty, risking a conflict. That is not a situation we created. That is a situation created by the disintegration of Yugoslavia. No matter who was in charge he would find himself in completely the same situation...⁸⁵

Karadzic warned the assembled deputies that Bosnia was on the verge of civil war and that the Muslims risked annihilation:

“I am asking you once again. I am not threatening, but asking you, to take seriously the interpretation of political will of the Serbian people who are represented here by the SDP and the Serbian Renewal Movement and a couple of Serbs from other parties. I ask you to take seriously the fact that what you are doing is not good. Is this the road onto which you want to direct Bosnia and Herzegovina, the same highway to hell and suffering that Slovenia and Croatia are travelling? Do not think that you will not lead Bosnia and Herzegovina to hell, and do not think that you will not perhaps lead the Muslim people into annihilation, because the Muslim people cannot defend themselves if there is war. . . .

How will you prevent everyone from being killed in Bosnia and Herzegovina?”⁸⁶

Izetbegovic’s rejoinder sought to downplay the spectre of war:

“His manner and his messages perhaps explain why others also refuse to stay in such a Yugoslavia. Nobody else wants the kind of Yugoslavia that Mr. Karadzic wants any more, no one except perhaps the Serbian people. Such a Yugoslavia and such a

⁸⁴ Ljiljan, July 6-13, 1994, p. 30.

⁸⁵ Ibid.

⁸⁶ Ibid.

manner of Karadzic are simply hated by the people of Yugoslavia. . . . And I then say to the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina that there will not be war, that is my prediction based on the facts, on some confirmed facts. Therefore sleep peacefully; there is no need to fear, because it takes two to tango.”⁸⁷

Following a walk out by the Serbs, the Muslims and Croats then convened a rump session of the parliament and adopted the memorandum and the platform by a majority vote. The Platform provided some balance to the Memorandum by proclaiming the goal of creating a “civil republic” in Bosnia and Herzegovina, in which the human rights and freedoms of all citizens would be guaranteed. Outvoting on all crucial issues “concerning the equal rights of all nations and nationalities” would be precluded “through an appropriate structure of the Assembly.” But the document also closed the door against Serbian demands for secession. Changes in the borders of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the platform stated, could only be approved by a two-thirds vote in popular referendum.⁸⁸ Much has been made of Karadzic’s threatening statement in the Bosnian Assembly, including its use as evidence of a Serb intent to commit “**genocide**” against the Muslims. Izetbegovic’s response makes it clear that, at the very least, contrary to Karadzic’s own intentions, the outburst hardened Muslim resistance to either continuing the *status quo* in Yugoslavia or allowing Bosnia-Herzegovina to become part of a Serbian-dominated rump state. On the other hand, the efforts of the majority to reaffirm the existing constitutional order while pushing for the adoption of a declaration of independence were also questionable.

The debate on sovereignty in October 1991 reinforced the determination of the SDA to break away from what remained of Yugoslavia. On October 16, the SDA held a press conference in Sarajevo. According to *Borba*, the spokesman for the Muslim party announced that with the adoption of the memorandum “we have cut out any possibility that Bosnia and Herzegovina, in some secret fashion, unconstitutionally, silently, will find itself in rump Yugoslavia, with Serbia and Montenegro.”⁸⁹

But the constitutional debate was not yet over, as this analysis will show. The outcome of that debate would be shaped by events outside Bosnia-Herzegovina.

⁸⁷ Ibid.

⁸⁸ Ibid.

⁸⁹ *Borba*, October 17, 1991, p. 3.

Among the most important of these was the way in which the international diplomatic community responded to the break-up of Yugoslavia and the onset of war in Croatia.

3.3 The Role of the International Community

It is a complex task to follow, in precise detail, the actions of the international community in Yugoslavia prior to the time that the conflict in Bosnia and Herzegovina broke out. But there is a close connection between the events in Croatia and those in Bosnia. To see why this is so, it is necessary to turn to the involvement of European Community (EC) - after January 1993, the European Union (EU) - in the Yugoslav crisis.

The United States played only a limited role in the initial stages of the Yugoslav and Bosnian crises. But, as this analysis will show, the U.S. role became more and more critical as the crises continued and the focus shifted to Bosnia.

The involvement of the EC in Yugoslavia came suddenly. Europe's priorities lay outside the Balkans, and its knowledge of the politics of Yugoslavia was superficial. There were no readily available guidelines by which the European powers could assess the Yugoslav crisis.

Europe was committed only to general principles: first, that territorial *status quo* should not be altered; second, that the use of armed force to resolve conflicts over borders in Europe was inadmissible; and third, support for **self-determination**, provided it was the expression of a democratic process and did not seek to alter existing borders by violence.

In practice it proved difficult to determine whether the resort to force in Yugoslavia was motivated by self-preservation or by aggression, or possibly both. Nor was it clear what constituted the status quo in a multiethnic state undergoing dissolution. The first effort of the EC in Yugoslavia came in March 1991, when EC leaders visiting Belgrade expressed their support for the current internal and external borders of the country.⁹⁰ This extended the application of Helsinki principles from internationally recognized borders to internal borders.

At the same time, Washington expressed support for "democracy, dialogue, human rights, market reform and unity" in Yugoslavia, defining unity as "the territorial

⁹⁰ Bulletin of the European Communities, May 24, 1991, p. 63.

integrity of Yugoslavia within its present borders.” The U.S. statement went on to suggest that dismemberment would worsen ethnic tensions and that unity must be democratic and based on mutual agreement. “The United States will not encourage or reward secession,” and if borders were to be changed, they would have to be changed by “peaceful consensual means.”⁹¹

The U.S. statement did not completely rule out the possibility of redrawing internal borders as part of the dissolution process. At a press conference in early June the U.S. ambassador to Yugoslavia appeared to point to the need for internal negotiations to settle the issues in dispute.⁹² But the United States offered no public support for border changes, even if such changes might have facilitated a peaceful solution to the looming civil war.

Nonetheless, the Bosnian crisis should have put Western policymakers on notice that the issue of borders would be on the agenda as Yugoslavia dissolved. The first stage of the conflict in Yugoslavia began in Slovenia in January 1991, and was quickly ended following an agreement, signed by Yugoslavia, Slovenia, and Croatia on the island of Brioni on July 8, under the auspices of the EC.⁹³ The Brioni accords were hailed as the first success of Europe’s new independent foreign policy.

In fact, as Silber and Little show in their engrossing account of the Slovenia war, the Europeans had been in the dark the entire time, unaware that the concessions they extracted from Milosevic and the JNA had already been agreed to by the Yugoslavs themselves.⁹⁴

3.4 The Greater Serbia Project

The outbreak of fighting between Serbia and Croatia did not bode well for Bosnia because, with the breakup of Yugoslavia, Croatia and Serbia once more considered partitioning of Bosnia and Herzegovina, like it was in interwar period, in 1939, with Cvetkovic-Macek agreement. In March 1991, Milosevic and Tudjman met in Karadjordjevo in an attempt to resolve their differences. Bosnia was discussed, as well as the fate of the Serbs in the border regions of Croatia. Silber and Little tell of

⁹¹ U.S. Department of State Dispatch 2, no.22 (June 3, 1991) p. 395.

⁹² New York Times, June 6, 1991, p. 14.

⁹³ Ibid.

⁹⁴ Silber and Little, *Yugoslavia: Death of a Nation*, chapter 12.

Tudjman returning to Zagreb, confident that he had reached a deal with Milosevic that would have allowed Croatia to deal with its Serb minority as it saw fit.⁹⁵ Stipe Mesic, who helped organize the meeting, testified at the War Crimes Tribunal in The Hague, that Tudjman returned highly satisfied from Karadjordjevo, having received assurances from General Kadijevic that the Yugoslav army would not attack Croatia.⁹⁶ Mesic himself received assurances in February from Borisav Jovic that Belgrade was not interested in the Serbs in Croatia, but did want two-thirds of Bosnia-Herzegovina.⁹⁷ Despite the apparent complementary of interests between Serbia and Croatia in the dismemberment of Bosnia and Herzegovina, this first attempt at rapprochement failed, almost certainly over the issue of the Serbs in Krajina and Slovenia.⁹⁸

On September 25, 1991, Milosevic and Tudjman met again in eastern Slavonija. General Kadijevic was in attendance. The meeting took place at a time of rising tensions in Bosnia and growing misunderstandings between the JNA and Croatia over how to end the siege of JNA barracks in Croatia. According to a New York Times account of the meeting, the three parties to the talks agreed to a cease-fire, as well as further talks to achieve a political settlement of the war.⁹⁹ It is possible that the cease-fire was meant to be a prelude to more substantive discussions between the two sides that would have dealt with the fate of the Serb minority in Croatia and the division of Bosnia and Herzegovina. In the event, the encounter did nothing to move the peace process forward.

In early October the war in Croatia escalated in intensity. The JNA launched a new offensive against Vukovar. In Bosnia, the JNA provoked a confrontation with the Sarajevo government when General Nikola Uzelac, commander of the Banja Luka corps, ordered the general mobilization of the population of northwest Bosnia, presumably for action in Croatia. On October 1, Dubrovnik was attacked by the JNA. By the end of the first week in October, Serbian irregulars and JNA units were only fifteen miles from Zagreb. Croatia was on the verge of collapsing in front of the JNA onslaught. But the army was distracted by the barracks wars, abandoned by non-Serb officers, and suffering from disorganization and a lack of manpower as a result of

⁹⁵ Ibid., pp. 131-32.

⁹⁶ Danas, May 23-24, 1998, p. 13.

⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁹⁸ Slobodni Tjednik, March 4, 1992, p. 22.

⁹⁹ New York Times, September 26, 1991, p. 3.

desertions by Serbs and non-Serbs alike. It was unable to score a decisive victory over the vastly inferior Croatian forces. When General Panic and Adzic inspected the Vukovar front, they were appalled by the absence of a chain of command and by disorganization, desertion from the ranks, and “chaos”.¹⁰⁰

Silber and Little conclude that “Milosevic called a halt to the war when the Serbs, backed by the JNA, had won all they were capable of winning without an endlessly bloody and costly conflict.”¹⁰¹ It is known that thousands deserted. The fact that Serbs from Serbia proper were unwilling to fight outside their own republic became a major factor shaping Belgrade’s strategy and goals in the war in Croatia and, later, in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The European approach to the Yugoslav crisis was another factor shaping Serbian strategy. The EC approach involved instead negotiations among representatives of the federal and regional leaderships and the leaders of EC, based on the principles of “no unilateral change of borders by force, protection for the rights of all in Yugoslavia and full account to be taken of all legitimate concerns and legitimate aspirations.” In an effort to limit the conflict, the Committee of Senior Officials of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) agreed to the imposition of an arms embargo on Yugoslavia. The United Nations Security Council unanimously adopted the embargo on September 25, 1991 (Resolution 713). While this would have little effect on the ability of the Serbian (JNA) forces to wage war, the fact that it applied to all Yugoslavia-including Bosnia-would be of great importance for the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina. This decision has been seen by the Bosnian Muslims like death sentence because it prevented the elementary right of Bosnia to “**self-defence**” guaranteed by the article 51 of the U.N. Charter. While on the other hand, some Serbian General have said that the Serbs have enough arms and they could have wage the war for the next ten years without stopping. Of course, the Yugoslav People Army, once up on the time was the common army of all its six republics in ex-Yugoslavia. Now it is transformed in the pure Serb army with headquarter in Belgrade. The latter, that army will fight against its own citizens in Bosnia and Herzegovina just because they are not Serb. Hundreds of thousands Bosnia Muslims and Croats and others will be killed during the war 1992-1995 in Bosnia.

¹⁰⁰ Silber and Little, *Yugoslavia: Death of a Nation*, p. 182.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*, p. 188.

According to Silber and Little, Milosevic's idea was clear, continuing support for the Serbian claim to a single state, in effect, a Greater Serbia, encompassing all of the Serbs in Croatia and Bosnia- Herzegovina.¹⁰²

They continued to insist on the right of Serbs outside Serbia and Montenegro to self-determination. The Serb's rejection of the draft proposal for peace in October 1991, led the EC to turn to sanctions against Serbia and Montenegro. In a statement issued on October 27 in responses to the JNA shelling of Dubrovnik, the EC also "forcefully reminded the leadership of Yugoslav People's Army and all those exercising control over it of their personal responsibility under international law for their actions, including those in contravention of relevant norms of international humanitarian law." This echoed an earlier statement by the CSCE that had also threatened to hold Serbian military and political leaders to account for accusations of war crimes. The next day, the EC called for strong UN action and agreed to ask the UN secretary-general to use the coercive powers granted by Chapter VII of the UN Charter to bring peace to the region.¹⁰³

The Serbs themselves appeared to have been clear over their own goals. Milosevic was prepared as early as January 1991 to see Slovenia secede and he recommended to that Slovenia be expelled from the federation. It was the "**Plan A**". The proposal to expel Slovenia raised the option of establishing a smaller Yugoslavia which would include Croatia or some parts of Croatia, or exclude Croatia, but surely include whole Bosnia and Herzegovina. General Kadijevic reports in his memoirs that the JNA had prepared precisely such a plan.¹⁰⁴ According to Jovic, however, he and Milosevic had already decided in May not to let all of Croatia secede-that is, to pursue a strategy that called for the *de facto* partition of Croatia. They appeared to have pursued this policy in fall 1992. The October 22 statement of the rump presidency called for a new Yugoslavia consisting of Serbia, Montenegro, and two Serb regions of Croatia. The implications of this strategy for Bosnia had been made clear by Jovic as early as February 1991. He had recommended to Milosevic that Yugoslavia incorporate two-thirds of Bosnia and Herzegovina (everything except the mostly Croat region of western Herzegovina and the mixed Muslim-Croat region of central Bosnia). The key

¹⁰² Ibid., p. 189.

¹⁰³ Bull. EC, November 24, 1991, pp. 70-72.

¹⁰⁴ Kadijevic, *Moje vidjenje raspada*, p. 135.

part of the deal was to be the creation of a Muslim **“buffer state”** in the centre of Bosnia and Herzegovina, so that the Muslims have a place for a graveyard as Seselj have said. This would have brought all the Bosnian Serbs and almost the entire Bosnian Muslim population into the new Yugoslavia or as someone calls it “Serbo-Slavia”. The October 22 statement called for the inclusion of four Bosnian Serb autonomous oblasts, as well as the two Serb regions in Croatia. The JNA leadership, heretofore committed to war against Croatia if not to the defence of all Yugoslavia, appears to have fallen into line with Milosevic’s strategy by October 22. Kadijevic reports that he proposed a similar plan to the rump presidency in October- what he calls in his memoir **“Plan B”**.¹⁰⁵ It is unreasonable to assume that the unexpected internal problems of the army noted earlier, and the poor performance of the JNA in Croatia in September 1991, contributed to this change.

Just how far Milosevic was willing to go to meet EC demands for a settlement of peace in the region remains unclear. It seems that Milosevic had given away little, and that his refusal to agree to the EC declaration of October 28 indicated that he was still bent on creating a Greater Serbia. It was his policy of creating a Greater Serbia based on military conquest.

The consequences of this Milosevic’s policy will be the disaster for the Serb civilians. The war in Bosnia then isolated the Serb-held areas in Croatia from Serbia proper, and sanctions against Serbia undermined the economic and military strength of the Serb-held areas, rendering them vulnerable to Croatia attack in summer 1995.

3.5 Independence

The future of Bosnia and Herzegovina was bound up with the fate of the referendum on Bosnian independence. Three outcomes were possible. First, the adoption of the referendum could have been accompanied by a constitutional agreement on the future of Bosnia. In this case, the referendum would have ratified an elite pact for the creation of a consensual system of government in Bosnia. Second, the Croats, who held the swing vote in parliament and in the electorate, could have defeated the referendum or insisted that it be reworded in such a manner as to preclude any hope that a central government could continue to function in Bosnia. In this case the

¹⁰⁵ Ibid., p. 132.

referendum would have legitimated and accelerated ethnic partition. Finally, the Croats could throw their lot in with the Bosnian government and the SDA, in which case the referendum would constitute a vote for Bosnian independence and legitimate the existing constitutional system, at the risk of provoking civil war with the Serbs.

In the end the Croat vote for the Bosnian government's version of the referendum must be understood in the light of Zagreb's desire to see Bosnia separated from Yugoslavia. It was evident even to the hard-line Croats that the only form in which the referendum could pass was that approved by the parliament and supported by the Muslims. As adopted by Bosnian assembly, the referendum asked the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina if they wish to live in a "Bosnia of citizens," carefully eschewing any reference to regionalization of the republic along ethnic lines.

Critics of the SDS claimed that Karadzic was demanding *de facto* confederation of Bosnia before a referendum could be held.¹⁰⁶ On the other hand, Stjepan Kljucic, the president of the HDZ did not hide his bitterness when he said:

"Just let me tell you. Many who sit here and who support canonization of Bosnia and Herzegovina will live in a Greater Serbia, and I shall depart for Australia."¹⁰⁷

In any case, the Croats could not risk being seen voting with the Serb and against the Muslim. Their support assured adoption of the referendum proposal in 1992.

International concern over the upcoming referendum began to surface during February. The UN decided in early February to establish the headquarters for the UNPROFOR operation in Croatia in Sarajevo, out of concern over developments in Bosnia and Herzegovina.¹⁰⁸ Vance was alarmed by the situation in Bosnia. He described it as a "time bomb" adding that the UN mission in Bosnia believed the referendum could trigger an eruption of violence.¹⁰⁹

On February 15 the *Suddeutsche Zeitung* reported on a speech by Stipe Mesic to the German Society for Foreign Policy in which he warned, to the displeasure of audience, that holding the referendum would lead to war.¹¹⁰ Prompted by these concerns, Carrington proposed that a peace conference on Bosnia be held prior to the staging of

¹⁰⁶ Danas, January 27, 1992, p. 31.

¹⁰⁷ Borba, February 4, 1992, p. 9.

¹⁰⁸ Lewis MacKenzie, *Tragic Errors*, December 12, 1994, p. 35.

¹⁰⁹ Guardian, February 24, 1992, p. 1.

¹¹⁰ *Suddeutsche Zeitung*, February 15, 1992. p. 5.

the referendum in order to allow a consensus to emerge on how sovereignty was to be exercised in an independent Bosnia.¹¹¹

The last U.S. ambassador in Yugoslavia, Warren Zimmerman was sceptical of the claim that Bosnian Serbs' rights were being violated and was unsympathetic to the Bosnian Serb call for self-determination. He told Karadzic in October 1991: **"It seems to me you are just angry that Serbs are a minority. But that is how elections come out, that is democracy. Your creation of autonomous regions is provocative, and your unilateral changes of Bosnia's borders are destabilizing."** To Zimmerman, **"It was growing increasingly obvious that Karadzic had no intention of playing by the rules."**¹¹²

Zimmerman reports he told Karadzic and Koljevic in mid-January 1992:

"It is time to start dealing with reality. Since Europe has decided to recognize the Yugoslav republics, American recognition is inevitable, just a matter of time. Why do not you participate in the referendum on independence and come to terms with the fact that with 30 percent of the population Serbs cannot expect to dictate the outcome? By participating you can at least affect the timing and content of independence."¹¹³

The Zagreb weekly Danas quoted Zimmerman as declaring that **"the United States is very interested in a unified and integral Bosnia and Herzegovina."**¹¹⁴

3.6 The Referendum and War in Bosnia and Herzegovina

The EC negotiations took place largely after Bosnia declared its independence following the referendum of February 29-March 1, in 1992, but before the United States and Europe extended diplomatic recognition to the new state. Although the SDS did not attempt to block the referendum, the Serbs refused to participate in it. They remained adamantly opposed to any declaration of independence made before Bosnia's transformation onto some kind of confederation whose members would

¹¹¹ Ibid., p. 7.

¹¹² Zimmerman, *Origins of a Catastrophe*, p. 176.

¹¹³ Ibid., p.187.

¹¹⁴ Danas, January 27, 1992, p. 32.

enjoy special relation with neighbouring states. The referendum by triggering the events that would result in independence and recognition, was from the Serb point of view a step toward war.

This interpretation is underscored by the events surrounding the staging of the referendum. The voting itself took place uneventfully. The official results showed that 62.68 percent of the total number of voters in Bosnia and Herzegovina voted in favour of independence; almost precisely the outcome one would expect if all the Muslims and Croats supported the referendum. There were charges that Serbs who might have wished to vote in favour of the referendum had been kept away from the polls by intimidation.¹¹⁵ In fact, there were some Serbs who looked favourably upon the establishment of an independent Bosnia. At the same time, Croats, who favoured partition, were under the pressure of HDZ and the Bosnian Catholic Church to vote for independence. Thus, the exact sentiments of the Bosnian population other than the Muslims must remain in doubt. But the net change in the outcome had voters been entirely free to vote their consciences would likely have been small.

The day following the referendum, barricades went up in Sarajevo. The ostensible reason for this act was the shooting of several Serbs at a wedding over the weekend. The Serbs demanded that the negotiations over the future of Bosnia and Herzegovina be brought to a conclusion before the declaration of independence was adopted; that independent Sarajevo TV be replaced by national television channels; and that the Ministry of Interior be recognized along national lines. These demands were first accede to by Izetbegovic, then repudiated after the JNA stepped in and the people of Sarajevo took to the streets to protest the terror.¹¹⁶ Encouraged by the support of the masses, and convinced that the Serb side had suffered a major political defeat, Izetbegovic went ahead and declared the independence of Bosnia and Herzegovina on March 3, 1992. His actions were ratified by parliament (in the absence of its Serb members) the same night.

The motives of the Serbs in setting up the barricades on March 2 were the subject of considerable debate. Most commentators saw the move as a dry run for an eventual Serb takeover, orchestrated from Belgrade. It is also possible that the Serbs were

¹¹⁵ *Oslobodjenje*, March 9-16, 1992. p. 9

¹¹⁶ Silber and Little, *Yugoslavia: Death of a Nation*, p. 206.

seeking to paralyze the Bosnian government at this crucial juncture (in effect, to stage a coup), but were deterred by the actions of the army and the peace demonstrators.

A Western media source quoted the commander of the Sarajevo military district, General Kukanjac, to the effect that what the Serb militants were doing was “sheer madness.”¹¹⁷

At a minimum, the actions of the Bosnian Serbs could be taken as a crude warnings aimed at dissuading the Bosnian government from declaring independence prior to the successful conclusion of the EC-sponsored negotiations. If this was the intent of the maneuver, it failed. The majority of the people of Sarajevo repudiated the masked gunmen.

On March 6, the same day a large rally for peace was held in Sarajevo, Karadzic called for an army takeover and warned that if the EC were to recognize Bosnia and Herzegovina before it was transformed, there would be civil war.¹¹⁸ The army refused, just as it had turned down the offer of the Milosevic forces to take power in Yugoslavia in March 1991. Meanwhile, during the month of March, all three national camps prepared for war.

Mostar was the scene of armed confrontation between JNA reservists and Croat irregulars. In early March, fighting broke out in the northern city of Bosanski Brod, in the ethnically Croat area of Bosanska Posavina on the Croat-Bosnian border. Local Croats, with the support of the Muslims, tried to block the passage of JNA forces from Croatia to Bosnia.¹¹⁹ Reports in the second week of March described a situation of near anarchy in the Doboj region.¹²⁰ In the third week of March, there were reports of fighting between Croatian irregular forces and the JNA in Herzegovina.¹²¹ Fighting was reported in Derventa, as Croats tried to cut the link between Bosanska Krajina and Serbia.¹²² The Mayor of Gorazde, Hadzo Efendic, declared a state of emergency, and Tanjug reported that that Gorazde had “sunk into darkness and fear.”¹²³ At the same time, Serbs began the “**ethnic cleansing**” of Croat villages in Herzegovina, and Croats

¹¹⁷ Guardian, March 3, 1992, p. 1.

¹¹⁸ Borba, March 6, 1992, p. 3.

¹¹⁹ Ibid., p. 4.

¹²⁰ Sarajevo Radio, March 13, 1992, as translated in FBIS, EEU p.18.

¹²¹ Borba, March 27, 1992, p. 1.

¹²² Ibid.

¹²³ Borba, March 24, 1992, p. 3.

initiated the cleansing of Serb villages in the Posavina.¹²⁴ This first phase of the struggle was characterized by the breakdown of law and order, the takeover of power throughout the republic by the national parties and their “crisis staff” (krizni stabovi), and local confrontations, mostly between Serbs and Croats, in anticipation of major battles to come.

The first engagement of Serbian forces from outside Bosnia occurred in Bijeljina on April 2 and 3, when an armed confrontation between the Muslim Patriotic League and local Serb territorial units took place. The fighting degenerated into sniping on the civilian population, and sparked the intervention of the paramilitary Serbian Guard, under the command of Zeljko Raznjatovic (nom de guerre: Arkan).

Arkan is best described in the words of the last U.S. ambassador in Yugoslavia Warren Zimmerman: **“one of the most ruthless cutthroats in the Balkans. Arkan “Tigres” specialized in the murder of civilians in Croatian and Bosnian villages.”**¹²⁵ A massacre of Muslims followed the first of the war.¹²⁶ Arkan’s incursion into Bosnia was a major factor in escalating tensions in Bosnia-Herzegovina, and provoked an outraged reaction from the international community, as well as an organized appeal from Izetbegovic for a halt to the fighting.

By April 6, when the EC granted recognition (followed by the United States the next day), Bosnia and Herzegovina was on the brink of full-scale war, and panic had seized the population.¹²⁷ Crisis committees had taken over. Western hopes that recognition would head off the civil war had clearly not been realized. In the view of Borba’s correspondent in Sarajevo, **“If you recognize, war will spread, if you do not, it will spread.”**¹²⁸

In the event, recognition sparked a Serbian invasion of eastern Bosnia. Serbian irregulars, including Arkan’s forces and JNA reservists from Serbia, launched a full-scale attack on Muslim cities and towns along the River Drina. Fighting broke out in Srajevo on April 6, and on April 8 the Yugoslav army entered the fray. Instead of slowing or halting the war, as in the case of Croatia, recognition had apparently

¹²⁴ Tanjug, March 29, 1992, p. 32.

¹²⁵ Warren Zimmerman, *Origins of a Catastrophe: Yugoslavia and Its Destroyers*. New York: Times Books, 1996, p.112.

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 112- 115.

¹²⁸ Borba, April 6, 1992, p. 1.

accelerated the pace of Bosnia's decline and destruction. The Bosnian crisis had become the Bosnian-Herzegovina tragedy.

3.7 Could War in Bosnia and Herzegovina Have Been Avoided?

The preceding account suggests the difficulties that the international community faced at the time the Bosnian conflict began. First, Bosnia and Herzegovina was disintegrating from within. In the words of Ljiljana Smajlovic, until the war a journalist for *Oslobodjenje*:

"A year before the war broke out Bosnia was, in effect, partitioned. The authority of the central government in Sarajevo extended only to the city's limits. Serb-dominated Banja Luka in northwestern Bosnia, for instance, refused to send tax monies to the government in Sarajevo. Muslim-dominated Zenica in central Bosnia refused to send army conscripts to the JNA. Croatian Listica, in western Herzegovina, refused to allow army convoys to pass through its territories."¹²⁹

Second, the winding down of the war in Croatia freed up Croat and Serb forces, above all Croat units from western Herzegovina, to undertake operations in Bosnia. Third, reconfiguration of the JNA created a distinctively Bosnian Serb army. Milosevic's decision to create a Bosnia Serb army was taken in anticipation of a civil war seen as inevitable in the light of the German move toward recognition. Milosevic and his advisers were convinced that recognition of Croatia would lead to the recognition of Bosnia and Herzegovina by the EC and United States. Their response was to prepare for a war, and to provide Belgrade with some basis for denying involvement once the war broke out. In any case, as this analysis makes clear, Serb preparations for war in Bosnia-Herzegovina pre-date the German decision.

Could the international community have done anything differently to prevent this terrible conflict before it broke out? Or, did international actors, singly or collectively, accelerate the trend toward war in Bosnia and Herzegovina? A full answer to this question would require us to consider the international response to the larger Yugoslav crisis as a whole. Given my more narrowly focused concern with Bosnia-Herzegovina, I may begin with the debate over the recognition of Croatia and Slovenia. The decision has had its defenders and critics, but the latter far outweigh the

¹²⁹ Ljiljana Smajlovic, "From the Heart of the Heart of the Former Yugoslavia," *Wilson Quarterly* 1995, p. 111. See also Sefer Halilovic, *Lukava strategija*, p. 165.

former.¹³⁰ Those critical of German pressure to recognize Croatia call it a blunder of major proportions, in the absence of which the international community might have found a way of averting the Bosnian tragedy.

The controversy is complicated by the fact that two different recognition decisions were at issue: the German and EC decision to recognize Croatia and Slovenia, and the U.S. decision to push for the recognition of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The German campaign for recognition of Slovenia and Croatia appears to have influenced Milosevic's decision of December 5 to redeploy JNA troops in Bosnia. Milosevic grasped what Genscher seems to have ignored, but what Carrington and Vance feared; that recognizing one or two republics would necessitate recognizing them all, accelerating Bosnia's slide into war. In light of the formal criteria for recognition adopted by the EC, recognition also meant that the EC accepted the claims of those they recognized to be democratic, respectful of human rights, and legitimate members of the international community. If a newly recognized state then found itself threatened, the international community was in principle duty bound to go to its defence.¹³¹ A rational and consistent recognition strategy would have necessitated follow-up actions that went beyond simply punishing Serbia with economic sanctions. Recognition should in principle have been followed by military and economic aid to those recognized. Yet such aid was not forthcoming. The critics of recognition could therefore argue that the tangible results of recognition for the states concerned were small, while the expectations generated by recognition were immense, and cruelly disappointed.

It could be argued that the German initiative helped convince Milosevic to give up the idea of achieving a Greater Serbia through military means.¹³² But as I have demonstrated above, his abandonment of a Greater Serbia came in response to combination of factors: the military difficulties the Serbs were encountering in Croatia, the willingness of the UN to permit the Serbs to control occupied areas of Croatia, and the breakdown of the EC Conference on Yugoslavia. The risk of aggressive Serb responses to the recognition decision was real; judging from the facts that, in reaction to the recognition decision, the hard-liners in Belgrade urged that the borders of a

¹³⁰ Washington Post, September 11, 1995, p. 21. and New York Times, September 19, 1995, p. 20.

¹³¹ Zimmerman, "The Last Ambassador," p. 16.

¹³² Ibid., pp. 16-18.

Greater Serbia be carved out of Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina by force, and that there was an upsurge of fighting in the second week of December 1991. Although Milosevic chose a different course of action-internationalizing the issue of the Serb-inhabited areas in Croatia-that outcome was far from certain at the time the recognition debate was going on. Thus, the argument that recognition dissuaded the Serbs from creating a Greater Serbia, while not without merit, is by no means proven. Meanwhile, those defending the recognition decision had a number of strong arguments to support their case. Recognition did seem to end any hope Milosevic may have had to occupy all or most of Croatia and, in retrospect, sounded the death knell for the Serbia strategy of a Greater Serbia. In the German view, Serbian aggression had been under way from the beginning of the conflict. Recognition could not be blamed for inciting the Serbs to an action to which their preparations for war in Bosnia and Herzegovina suggested they were already committed.¹³³ The German argument was, in essence, that recognition was a show of firmness that would be induce Belgrade to be more reasonable. Did recognition of Croatia and Slovenia raise the issue of recognition of Bosnia and Herzegovina prematurely, as Carrington and others feared? Bosnia's best hope for survival lay in the success of the EC Conference on Yugoslavia. The collapse of these negotiations marked a turning point for the Bosnian government. Once these negotiations collapsed Izetbegovic became less willing to delay recognition, in contrast to his earlier eagerness to see recognition postponed while the talks continued. The issue of Bosnia's future status thus assumed central importance at least a month before Germany recognized Croatia. In the light of what was happening within Bosnia and Herzegovina itself, the sooner the Bosnia issue was resolved, the better. The mistake, then, was not in recognition of Croatia *per se*, but in the failure of recognition to agreement on constitutional reforms in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

If, on the other hand, Serbia was determined to see Bosnia-Herzegovina partitioned and to annex the Serb portions of it, then, absent any outside force that might constrain the Serbs, the republics fate was already sealed, recognition or no. As events were to prove, the only comprehensive solution that would have ended the confrontation between Serbia and Croatia was a deal between them to divide up

¹³³ For treatment of the problem from the German perspective, see Maull "Germany in the Yugoslav Crisis" p. 38-39.

Bosnia and Herzegovina. This, in effect, is what happened at Dayton. The second part of the recognition debate concerned the U.S. push to recognize Bosnia and Herzegovina in spring 1992. The Americans argued that Serbia was preparing aggression against Bosnia and that recognition would deter, not hasten, civil war. This was exactly the Germans argued in respect to Croatia, and it is not unfair to surmise that the U.S. policy toward Bosnia was influenced by the apparent success of the German strategy toward Croatia. Yet the two situations were not strictly comparable, and the U.S. attempt to replicate the German move was a mistake (If, indeed, this was what the Americans were attempting). The progressive disintegration of Bosnia and Herzegovina meant that Croatia and Serbia would be forced to intervene at some point, if only against each other. If recognition remained purely symbolic, and did not entail concrete steps to reverse the disintegration of Bosnia from within, it would fail to accomplish its purpose since Milosevic was preparing for war in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Milosevic, after all, was waging a campaign for recognition of rump Yugoslavia as the legitimate successor to the old Yugoslavia. Important military assets, including military bases and weapons manufacturing plants, would be put in jeopardy if war broke out too soon in Bosnia; all the more so now that Croatia could be expected to enter the Bosnian conflict on the side of Bosnian Croats. On the contrary, U.S. and EC diplomats received numerous warnings from both official and unofficial sources in Serbia that recognition of Bosnia and Herzegovina would result in war.¹³⁴

The problem was that the United States, which held the key to resolution of the Bosnia conflict, was not present at the EC negotiations. The apparent U.S. lack of interest in the constitutional issue surrounding the talks amounted to an endorsement of the integral Bosnia line taken by the Bosnian government. By spring 1992, however, it was clear that this position was unacceptable to Serbia. Yet, the United States did not press Serbia to compromise, not even by offering to exchange recognition of Yugoslavia for Serbia's agreement to the peaceful recognition of Bosnia in a way that would not jeopardize the security of its constituent peoples. U.S. policymakers failed to perceive the difference between the wars in Croatia and Bosnia: the former was a straightforward territorial dispute; the latter a question of existence or non-existence of the state itself and, in the eyes of some, the survival of its peoples. Jose Cutlerio,

¹³⁴ Washington Post, February 8, 1993, p. 1.

for one, remainder convinced that a chance for peaceful solution had been allowed to slip away in spring 1992, alluding to advice from “well-meaning outsiders who thought they knew better” to explain Izetbegovic’s refusal to adopt the March 18 agreement.¹³⁵

The events of spring 1992 therefore allow several different interpretations of the motives that guided Milosevic policy toward Bosnia and Herzegovina. They do not, however, relieve Serbia from responsibility for invading eastern Bosnia in April, and for encouraging the “**ethnic cleansing**” and “**genocide**” that followed in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The mistake of the West was not in recognition of Bosnia and Herzegovina on April 6, 1992. The mistake came earlier, and consisted of its unqualified support for the holding of a referendum on independence before the three nationalist parties had agreed on a constitutional solution. The proper time for a referendum would have been after such an agreement, as foreseen in the Cutlerio negotiation plan. But was a constitutional solution truly possible, even assuming that the United States pressured both the Serbs and the Muslims? To achieve a peaceful outcome it was necessary, first, to persuade Milosevic that his strategy of engaging the UN on his side, as had occurred in Croatia, could not be repeated in Bosnia and Herzegovina. But developments in Croatia encouraged Belgrade to engage in a quick and bitter campaign of “**ethnic cleansing**” once Bosnia declared its independence, and then present the world community with a *fait accompli*, hoping the UN would then step in to ratify this change. As this analysis will show once Milosevic concluded that Krajina was lost, the Milosevic version of a Greater Serbia collapsed and with it the need to prolong the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The point to be made here is that Belgrade was riding a tiger in Krajina, afraid to assert outright its claims to the region, but unable to let it go. But Belgrade’s indecision over what to do about Serb claims to parts of Croatia drove Croatia and the Bosnian Croats to support Bosnian independence. This, in turn, encouraged the Bosnian Muslims inclination to forgo compromise and simply override Bosnian Serb offers to negotiate autonomy, the sincerity of which was therefore never put to the test. In the end, it was not external factors that brought Bosnia and Herzegovina to ruin, but internal ones: the profound

¹³⁵ Economist, December 9, 1995, p. 6.

clash of perception and principle among the Bosnians themselves concerning the fate of their country that made compromise impossible.

In early 1992, in an interview with *Vreme*, Koljevic expressed the dilemma inherent in this situation as follows:

“You know what, I told Alija Izetbegovic one thing based on the Muslim demands. The Muslims want a sovereign Bosnia, the Serbs do not want it, and the Croats have said that they want it. The Muslims want a unified Bosnia, a Bosnia that will not split apart. I think that it is unrealistic to have both. I can understand the Muslim need or fear, if you wish, of Serbian or Croatian domination, and I can see that quite clearly. But you cannot make up for that by placing Serbs in the position of a minority. I say to them that it must be decided whether it will be a unified Bosnia that will not be absolutely sovereign, or a sovereign Bosnia that will not be absolutely unified, meaning a Muslim Bosnia. Let a Muslim Bosnia be sovereign. Can Bosnia be both sovereign and unified, integral, at the same time? Hardly.”¹³⁶

The contrasting vision of the Bosnian Muslims was reflected in Izetbegovic’s address to the congress of the SDA in November 1991:

“Serbia and Croatia are national states. Bosnia-Herzegovina is not this and it can only be civil republic. (Applause) For it is not Muslims, Serbs, and Croats who live in Bosnia-Herzegovina, but a national mixture of these three peoples, including, of course, a smaller number of other peoples. If somebody wants to speak about ethnic self-determination of peoples in the ethnic sense of the term, he must explain how this otherwise indisputable principle is to be applied to a mixture of peoples found, for example, in Sarajevo or in Bosnia-Herzegovina in general.

Therefore the right question for Bosnia-Herzegovina is not whether to carry out self-determination of peoples, but how to do so with a mixture of peoples. Nobody has so far given a decisive and clear theoretical answer to that. Of course, there is a practical answer, and it is the historical formula of Bosnia as multi-denominational, multi-national, and multi-cultural community.

Why would one mar something that has been created by a fortunate combination of historical circumstances, has been functioning well, and also represents a humane, democratic, and one may also say, a European solution. Why would one change that

¹³⁶ *Vreme*, January 20, 1992, p. 24-25.

even if it had been possible, and particularly why do so if it is impossible without violence and blood and if a retrograde concept of national autocracy is offered along with that change?”¹³⁷

Chapter: 4 The War in Bosnia and Herzegovina: 1992-1994

The war in Bosnia and Herzegovina broke out on the 6th of April 1992, and it involved struggle among ethnic nationalists over the definition and control, indeed, the very existence of the state, as well as an international struggle between the government of Bosnia-Herzegovina and its neighbors. The intensity of emotions and perceived stakes of the struggle escalated as revelations of widespread abuses of civilians and charges of “**ethnic cleansing**” and “**genocide**” made the brutal nature of the war apparent to all concerned. It was the most devastating war in Europe after World War Two, as well as in the history of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the memory of its people. Complexity and emotion are the enemies of effective policymaking, and Western policies toward Bosnia-Herzegovina reflected this. The United Nations, already involved in the unstable peace in Croatia, was drawn into the Bosnian conflict against the judgements of its leaders and suffered what may prove to be lasting damage to its peacekeeping capacity. The Great Powers, having at first underestimated the dangers in Bosnia-Herzegovina, very quickly drew back from efforts by local actors and the UN to involve them more extensively. The British and French, who provided the bulk of UN peacekeeping troops, resisted any expansion of their role. The United States attempted to isolate and contain the war through sanctions and embargoes while policymakers struggled to find a solution. This left the three nationalist forces to pursue their own goals by whatever means they chose. It was the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina who paid the price. The Western responses to the fighting in Bosnia and Herzegovina were crisis driven; that is, they were shaped by the need to “**do something**” rather than by carefully calculated policy objectives. Yet it should be kept in mind that the outraged response in the West to particularly egregious developments, like reports of “**massacres**”, “**ethnic cleansing**”, “**genocide**” and other atrocities added an element of credibility to Western threats, directed almost

¹³⁷ Sarajevo Radio, November 29, 1991, as translated in FBIS, EEU, December 3, 1991, P. 42.

exclusively against the Serbs. This enabled the United States to project power into the conflict under the NATO banner, but only as long as the feeling of outrage lasted. In each case the use of force against Bosnian Serbs was inevitable by NATO, in order to end the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1995. I shall analyse this **“international intervention and diplomacy”** in more detail in the chapter to follow. Here, I present an overview of key events on the ground in Bosnia and Herzegovina that helped shape Western policy responses to the war (1992-95).

4.1 How Bosnia and Herzegovina was led into the war?

By the end of March 1992 and at the beginning of April Bosnia and Herzegovina was in the big disarray. The definitive rupture between the Bosnian government and the Serbs took place on April 4, when Izetbegovic ordered the mobilization of all police and reservists in Sarajevo, and the SDS issued a covert call for the Serbs to evacuate the city. As Serb government officials left, they told to the Serbs remaining behind that they would be back in a few days.¹³⁸ On April 6 the Serbs began the shelling of Sarajevo. On April 7 and 8, following international recognition of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbs forces crossed the River Drina from Serbia proper and lay siege to the Muslim cities of Bijeljina, Zvornik, Bratunac, Srebrenica, Zepa, Gorazde, Visegrad, and Foca. By mid-April all of Bosnia and Herzegovina was engulfed in war.¹³⁹

As the violence spread throughout the whole Bosnia and Herzegovina, fear and panic grew, accelerating the ethnic polarization of the population. There were efforts in these first few weeks to stem the tide of ethnic violence against Bosnian Muslims by their neighbour Serbs. In Bijeljina, for example, a number of local Serbs tried to halt a massacre being perpetrated by Arksn’s forces and they were killed by Arkan’s men.¹⁴⁰ In Gorazde, a “Citizens’ Forum” was organized to ward off ethnic violence.¹⁴¹ Thanks in part to the efforts of this group, the town remained calm during the initial Serb onslaught in eastern Bosnia. In Tuzla, prior to May 15, the antinationalist and civic-minded opposition parties controlled the municipal government. The defence of the city was organized independently of the Bosnian government; Muslims, Serbs, and

¹³⁸ Tom Gjelten, *Sarajevo Daily: A City and Its Newspapers Under Siege*. New York: HarperCollins, 1995, pp. 20-21.

¹³⁹ Dr. Smail Cekic, *The Aggression on Bosnia and Genocide against Bosniacs 1991.-1993*. Institute for Research of Crimes against Humanity and International Law Sarajevo, Sarajevo 1995, pp. 242-44.

¹⁴⁰ *Oslobodjenje*, May 7, 1993, p. 6.

¹⁴¹ *Ibid.*

Croats all participated. In Vares, a moderate Croat administration cooperated with local Muslims to keep ethnic tensions under control. In Fojnica, Muslim and Croats were able to maintain ethnic harmony all up to 1993, with the support of the Franciscans.¹⁴² In the Cazinska Krajina (Bihac) region an agreement was reached between the local JNA commander, General Spiro Nikovic, and local leaders in Bihac, Cazin, Bosanski Petrovac and Velika Kladusa for a cease-fire.

In Doboij, a Muslim mayor and the SDS chief set up joint patrols before the city fell to the Serbs hands on May 2. In Sarajevo, an antiwar, pro-democracy assembly was formed and staged a sit-in in the parliament building the first week of April. The JNA in Sarajevo, under the command of General Kukanjac, participated in efforts to stem the violence in the city and general blamed the Muslims as well as the Serbs.¹⁴³

These efforts went for naught, however; in part because all sides had been preparing for war well before hostilities commenced. Prof. Dr. Smail Cekic has documented, in great detail, preparations by the SDS and JNA for war in Bosnia and Herzegovina, ranging from arming the Serb population to relocation of military depots and bases.¹⁴⁴ According to this author, the JNA had set up siege positions around Sarajevo in advance of the fighting.¹⁴⁵ These efforts were facilitated by the fact that outlying districts surrounding Sarajevo were inhabited by Serbs who were, in the main, nationalist and anti-Muslim. They were quickly absorbed into the ranks of the Serb irregulars who took up the siege of the city. The Serbs were confident that they could prevail relatively quickly in a showdown with the Bosnian government. Karadzic was reported to have suggested in April that the whole thing would be over within ten days.¹⁴⁶

During the critical first six weeks of the war, Serb irregulars and paramilitary forces were supported by JNA troops brought into eastern Bosnia from Serbia and Montenegro, and by JNA units retreating from Croatia into western Bosnia, as well as by local JNA garrisons. Without the participation of the JNA, it is doubtful that the cities along the River Drina where the Muslims were the majority would have fallen so

¹⁴² Robert Donia and John Fine, *Bosnia and Herzegovina: A Tradition Betrayed*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1994, p. 254.

¹⁴³ Tanjug, April 6, 1992, p. 5.

¹⁴⁴ See Smail Cekic, *The Aggression on Bosnia and Genocide Against Bosniacs 1991-1993*. Sarajevo: Ljiljan, 1994, pp. 79-96.

¹⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁶ Borba, April 10-11, 1993, p. 1.

rapidly into the Serb hands, if at all. The Bosnian government was at first hopeful of winning the JNA over to its side, but the relations with the JNA deteriorated quickly. On April 27 the Bosnian presidency issued an order that the JNA should be placed under civilian control or leave Bosnia and Herzegovina. This was followed by a disastrous series of events in early May pitting the JNA against the government.¹⁴⁷

The decisive battle for Sarajevo came on May 2, when a disorganized Serb attack aimed at cutting the city in two was beaten back by a handful of Green Beret troops and local gang members. On May 3, President Izetbegovic was kidnapped by JNA officers at airport on his return from negotiations in Lisbon. They used Izetbegovic as leverage to gain an agreement on the safe passage of JNA troops out of the barracks in downtown Sarajevo under UNPROFOR protection. But Muslims forces failed to honour the agreement and ambushed the convoy as it left the barracks, despite the personal presence of Izetbegovic and his attempt to carry out the agreement. The incident left all sides; Muslims, Serbs, and UN embittered.

On May 18 a cease-fire was signed, and an agreement reached on the evacuation of the JNA from Bosnia and Herzegovina. On May 20 the Bosnian presidency declared the JNA an occupation force, ending, once and for all, any hope that the Yugoslav military could be won over to the Muslim side. Later on, in summer 1993 some colonels and generals of the Yugoslav People's Army would be indicted for crimes against humanity and international law by the International Crime Tribunal for Former Yugoslavia in The Hague. They had been accused by the International Court Tribunal for **"ethnic cleansing"** and **"genocide"** committed against Bosnian Muslim civilians.¹⁴⁸

4.2 The Siege and the Shelling of Sarajevo

The war entered the new phase when General Ratko Mladic was made commander of the newly formed army of the Serb Republic on May 20, 1992. The event was preceded and followed by an escalation of violence and fighting all over Bosnia-Herzegovina. On May 18 a Red Cross relief convoy was shelled on the outskirts of Sarajevo. On May 22 a UN convoy was hijacked. On May 24 the village of Kozarac, in

¹⁴⁷ Laura Silber and Allan Little, *The Death of Yugoslavia*. London: Penguin Books, 1995, pp. 255-68.

¹⁴⁸ See the Case of General Radislav Krstic at the ICTFY, who had been accused for the genocide and massacre committed by the Bosnian Serb army on 11 of July 1995 at the UN "safe area" of Srebrenica.

the Banja Luka region, was overrun by the Serbs and its inhabitants massacred. On May 24 and 26, and again on May 28 and 29, Sarajevo experienced severe shelling by the Serbs. UN Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali, in his report to the Security Council of May 30, attributed these attacks to General Ratko Mladic, the commander of the Bosnian Serb military forces around Sarajevo. The escalation of the fighting on the ground, and especially the increased shelling of Sarajevo, led to increased concern in the West about the mounting humanitarian crisis in Bosnia-Herzegovina; concern that was heightened by the shelling of a breadline in Sarajevo on May 27 that killed scores of civilians. This was the first of many such incidents about the civilians being killed in Sarajevo while they were waiting in a breadline; queuing up for water to pour at the springs, in the market place, the children being killed while they were playing on the ground and act. The event of May 27 set the stage for the first decisive action of the West and UN: the imposition of sanctions on Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) by the Security Council on May 30, 1992 (Resolution 579).

On May 30, Bosnian forces attacked the JNA barracks in Sarajevo. Heavy shelling of the city followed. On June 5 and 6, as street fighting raged and the last of the JNA personnel and dependents evacuated Sarajevo, the city suffered its worst shelling yet. In response to these events the international community initiated efforts to open the Sarajevo airport to humanitarian relief flights. On June 20 a cease-fire, which was meant to set the stage for the UN takeover of the airport, was broken as both sides battled for control of the territory between the airport and the city.¹⁴⁹

The crisis over the opening of the airport reached its climax on June 26 when Boutros Boutros-Ghali issued what the press described as an ultimatum. It gave the Bosnian Serbs 48 hours to stop their attacks on Sarajevo. The secretary-general demanded that the Serbs allow the UN to take control of the airport and that they place their heavy weapons under UN supervision as provided for in a cease-fire agreement negotiated by General Lewis Mackenzie, the Canadian UNPROFOR commander in Sarajevo.¹⁵⁰ At the same time, the media reported that President Bush was meeting with his advisors to consider the use of force in Bosnia and Herzegovina in order to stop the violence against the civilians in the siege towns, constantly bombarded by the Serb forces. On June 28 and 29, the French President François Mitterrand made his dramatic and

¹⁴⁹ Washington Post, June 20, 1992, p.18.

¹⁵⁰ Ibid., June 27, 1992, p. 1.

improbable visit to Sarajevo which was under the siege and constant bombing. The end of this stage of the drama came when the Serbs, without incident, turned the airport over to an UNPROFOR contingent of Canadian troops on June 29.

The events of the six weeks between May and the end of June riveted the attention of the world on Sarajevo. The callousness of the Serb shelling and sniping from the surrounding hills provided a dramatic contrast to the courage of the Sarajevans under siege. It turned world public opinion decisively and permanently against the Serbs. The opening of the airport at the end of June ensured that the focus on events in Sarajevo would continue, as the city became easily accessible to the media. In effect, these extraordinary events created an instant bond between the **“global village”** served by mass media, and the people of Sarajevo.

4.3 The Combined Muslim-Croat Offensive

Meanwhile, outside of Sarajevo, the fortunes of the combatants varied dramatically during the first year of the war. Within a matter of months the Serbs had seized the Muslim-majority cities along the Drina and Sava rivers and expelled the Muslim population.¹⁵¹ Serb advances into Posavina in the north and into central Bosnia in the early weeks of the war were reversed by a joint Muslim-HVO (Croat Defense Council, or Bosnian Croat army) offensive in May. Taking advantage of the confusion resulting from the formal withdrawal of the JNA from Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croat and Muslim irregulars occupied most of Posavina and advanced southward, placing Doboj under siege. As a result, Serb forces in Bosanska Krajina to the west were cut off from Semberija and Serbia to the east. In June 1992, the HVO, strengthened by the addition of Muslim infantry to its ranks, launched an attack against the Serbs in eastern Herzegovina, forcing them to abandon Mostar in mid-June. In June and July Croat forces in central Bosnia were reported within artillery range of Sarajevo.

While Muslim towns along the Drina were overwhelmed in the first two months of the war, cities farther to the west such as Jajce, Bosanski Brod, and Bosanska Gradiska, did not fall to the Serbs until summer or autumn 1992. The fall of Bosanski Brod and Jajce in October came as a shock to the Bosnian government, and might have been avoided if there had been a breakdown in cooperation between the Croat and Muslim

¹⁵¹ Noel Malcolm, *Bosnia: A Short History*. Papermac 1994, p. 44.

defenders of these two cities. In Herzegovina, regular army forces from Croatia moved well into Bosnia to secure an area overlooking the Serb-populated town of Trebinje, where they remained until the end of the war. Their deployment was designed to protect Dubrovnik, which lay just across the nearby Croatian-Bosnian border. According to Richard Holbrook, if a cease-fire had been negotiated in June 1992 at the time the UN took over the Sarajevo airport, it would have been on terms far more advantageous to the Muslims than several years later.¹⁵²

4.4 The War in Central Bosnia between Croats and Muslims

In January 1993, fighting broke out between Croat and Muslim forces in central Bosnia. The Muslims found themselves in a two-front war or, more accurately, a multi-front war against two adversaries. The causes of the conflict between the Muslims and Croats were related to the division of Bosnia and Herzegovina in three republics proposed under the “**Vance-Owen**” peace plan. Following publication of a proposed map by the international mediators in January 1993, the Bosnian Croat serving as minister of defence of Bosnia and Herzegovina ordered Croat forces to take control of those provinces expected to be Croat-majority territories. His action was immediately opposed by the Muslim commander of the Bosnian army, General Sefer Halilovic.¹⁵³

The fighting between Croats and Muslims began around Gornji Vakuf and then spread to the vicinity of Bugojno, Busovaca, Konjic, and Jablanica. The UN peacekeepers negotiated several cease-fires, but no avail. On January 27, Izetbegovic and Boban issued a joint statement calling for an end to the fighting. A lull in the fighting followed. But it broke out with renewed intensity in mid-April in the Lasva valley, to the north and west of Sarajevo. There were confrontations between Muslim and Croat forces throughout central Bosnia, especially around Vitez and Travnik, in the south-central districts of Konjic and Jablanica; and in the Neretva valley north and south of Mostar. Croat forces joined the Serbs in the siege of Tesanj and Maglaj, Serb units appeared to have worked against the Croats by holding their fire against the Muslims.¹⁵⁴ On May 9 the HVO attacked Bosnian government forces in and around Mostar. The Croat attack was met with outrage in the UN. The Croat offensive against

¹⁵² Richard Holbrooke. *TO END A WAR*. New York: Random House, 1998. pp. 360-62.

¹⁵³ David Owen. *Balkan Odyssey*: New York: Harcourt Brace & Company, 1995. pp. 83-4.

¹⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 88-89.

the Muslims was accompanied by “**ethnic cleansing**” of the Muslim population in the Neretva valley and in Ahmici and Stupni Dol. HVO forces laid siege to the eastern, Muslim sector of the city Mostar, shelling the area continually. It was estimated that more than 100 000 Croat shells fell on east Mostar in the nine month siege that ended in January 1994.¹⁵⁵ In early June 1993 the Muslim seized control of Travnik. From this point on the initiative in central Bosnia lay largely with the Muslim, who eventually brought most of the Lasva valley with exception of Vitez-under their control. Croat forces were cleared from the vicinity of Konjic in south-central Bosnia.

By the end of 1993, Muslim pressure on the remaining towns still under Croat control in central Bosnia; Kiseljak, Vitez, and Prozor had increased to the point that Croatia dispatched regular army troops to central Bosnia. Croatian and Bosnian Croat forces engaged in ethnic cleansing, set up detention camps for Muslims, and laid siege to the Muslim quarters of Mostar. In response, the UN Security Council adopted a statement on February 3, 1994, threatening Croatia with sanctions.¹⁵⁶ Relations between the Croats and Muslim had deteriorated to the point that the Croats and Serbs had agreed to launch a joint offensive against the Muslims. No such joint operation came to pass, however. The Markale marketplace shelling in February led instead to the formation of a Muslim-Croat-Croatian alliance under American sponsorship.

Foreign military observers of the fighting in Bosnia and Herzegovina tended to downgrade both the Serbs and the Muslims for their lack of discipline, poor command and control, and, in the case of the Serbs, reluctance to take casualties. One Western military observer concluded in May 1994 that “if the Serbs had a real infantry, they would have finished with Bosnia a long time ago”.¹⁵⁷ According to David Owen, the European Community never expected the Croats to attack the Muslim forces since they have been struggling together against the Serbs.¹⁵⁸ It was just one of many mistakes by European negotiators and diplomacy in attempting to resolve the crisis in Bosnia and Herzegovina during the war.

In the March 1994, Bosnia’s Muslim-led government and Bosnian Croats sign a U.S.-brokered accord, **Washington Peace Agreement or Croat-Muslim Federation**, ending

¹⁵⁵ Independent, April 9, 1994, p. 8.

¹⁵⁶ UN Security Council, February 3, 1994.

¹⁵⁷ New York Times, May 13, 1994. p. 10.

¹⁵⁸ David Owen. *Balkan Odyssey*: New York: Harcourt Brace & Company, 1995. pp. 90-91.

a yearlong war between the Bosnian Croats and Bosnian Muslim. Now they had to work together against the Bosnian Serbs in order to reconquer the remaining territory under Serb control. In May 1993 a conflict between Croats and Muslims in central Bosnia ended in March 1994, when the two groups agreed to create a joint federation to battle the Serbs. A cease-fire between Bosnian Serbs and the Muslim-Croat federation was declared from January to April of 1995, but sporadic fighting continued to break out. A cessation of hostilities in summer 1993 would have left all three sides holding fragments of territory scattered north and south, east and west, across the all Bosnia and Herzegovina. This fragmentation of territory among the combatants complicated the already difficult negotiations in summer and fall 1993, and remained a feature of the Bosnian conflict until summer 1995.

4.5 The massacre in Srebrenica on July 11, 1995

“The worst crime was dared by a few, Willed by more and tolerated by all.”

Tacitus, Srebrenica. 11.07.1995.

The first of the crisis to which the West responded was occasioned by the Serb attack on Srebrenica in early April 1993. Srebrenica had been in the vortex of the east Bosnian maelstrom from the start. It was overrun by the Serbs in April 1992 and recapture by Muslims in May. Zepa, to the south, had been the scene of the ambush of Serb troops by Avdo Palic in May 1992. That the Serbs would seek to take Srebrenica, or neutralized it, was hardly surprising. But the bitter fighting in eastern Bosnia that provided the background of the campaign was not well known in the West. As a result, the Serb offensive in April 1993 was viewed as a deliberate provocation aimed at undermining the **Vance-Owen** plan, rather than as yet another round in one of the most brutally fought military contests in Bosnia and Herzegovina. It probably was both. The fact that the enclave was packed with refugees provided the extra dimension that made humanitarian intervention a distinct possibility in the event the Serbs tried to overrun the town. Reports of the suffering of the refugees trapped in Srebrenica were some of the most dramatic and riveting of the war. The UN commander for Sarajevo at the time, General Philippe Morillon, found himself in

the thick of the battle. Acting on his own initiative, Morillon managed to cross Serb Lines and raise the UN flag in Srebrenica, much to the delight of the refugees packed in the town, but to the dismay of his superiors in New York.

The attack on Srebrenica was devastating, few hundreds civilians (mostly women and children) were killed in the densely packed streets of the town. The attacks followed the sudden suspension of “**cease-fire**” talks by General Mladic, Morillon and General Sefer Halilovic, the commander of Bosnian army, at the Sarajevo airport. The Serbs’ suspension of cease-fire talks and shelling of Srebrenica seemed a deliberate act of malice with political intent.

On April 18, 1993 the agreement was signed between the Bosnian Serbs and UN commanders which provided that the Serbs would withdraw from around Srebrenica if UN forces undertook to disarm Muslim forces in the city within seventy-two hours.

The same morning a Canadian **UNPROFOR** unit, which had been halted by the Serbs outside Srebrenica, was allowed to enter the town. On April 21 the UN announced that the turnover of Bosnian Muslim arms had been completed and declared Srebrenica “**safe area**” by the resolution 752 of the Security Council. Although tensions remained high in the region, only small contingent of UN troops protected Srebrenica against the Serb forces and the confrontation in eastern Bosnia wound to an uneasy close. The Bosnian Serbs insisted that the terms of the agreement with the United Nations were not fulfilled. After being reasonably quiet for most of 1994, things had begun to go wrong at the beginning of 1995 in around Srebrenica.

By July 1995, the fighting was in full swing again, General Mladic decided to attack three isolated Muslim towns in eastern Bosnia, Srebrenica, Zepa, and Gorazde. The towns were filled with Muslim refugees from nearby areas, and though they had been declared **United Nations “safe areas”**, but they were protected by only a small number of UN troops. Mladic wanted to take the three towns so that all of eastern Bosnia would be controlled by the Serbs, and he was convinced that, as long as he held UN peacekeepers hostage, the UN would not allow NATO to bomb in retaliation. He was right, and the consequences were devastating. On July 11, the Serbs took Srebrenica. By the end of the month they had also taken Zepa, and refugees who escaped from Srebrenica had begun to tell the world of the horrifying slaughter of Muslims there by Mladic’s troops. Thousands of men and boys were gathered in a

soccer field and murdered in masse. Thousands more were trying to escape through the heavily wooded hills. Now, almost two decade ago, in the **United Nations “safe area” of Srebrenica**, Bosnian Serb soldiers executed and buried in mass graves more than ten thousands Bosniaks (Bosnian Muslim) men and boys. Thirty thousand women, children, and elderly were forcibly deported from their homes. Dutch blue-helmets stood helpless by as the Bosniaks were taken away. **“Kill them all,” General Radislav Krstic** reportedly said to his deputy. **“Not a single one is to be left alive.”** No doubt, **Krstic** was acting at the behest of the commander of the army of the **Serb Republic, General Ratko Mladic**, president of the **Serbian Republic, Radovan Karadzic**, both of who face the trials in the Hague.

The reverberations of Srebrenica go far beyond the trials and sentencing of the perpetrators. Most important is the continuing effect the massacre has had on Bosniaks themselves: the loss of loved ones, the many humiliations suffered, and the still nagging problem of thousands of missing relatives and friends. The recent release of film clips of Serbian paramilitaries- **“Scorpions”**-taunting, torturing, and killing a group of Bosniaks men and boys has had an important, if still hard to gauge, impact on changing Serb self-images from victims to perpetrators.

As the largest incidence of mass killing in European history since World War II, Srebrenica has also had important implications beyond the borders of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The massacre shamed the West into taking concerted military action against Bosnian Serbs. The launching of Operation Deliberate Force by NATO in August 1995 finally brought peace to the region, codified by the Dayton agreement the following December. The resolute response of the United States and NATO to Serbian ethnic cleansing in Kosovo in 1999 can also be traced to the shock waves in the West about the depredations committed by the Serbs at Srebrenica.

Motivated by the frustrations generated by Bosnia, Kosovo, and Rwanda, human rights activists underlined the principle of the **“responsibility to protect,”** whereby the humanitarian norms of the international community should trump those of state sovereignty when citizens are threatened with **“genocide”** or **“ethnic cleansing.”** This argument most recently found its way into **the 2005 U.N. secretary-general’s high-level panel report** on the future role of the **United Nations: “When a State fails to protect its civilians, the international community then has a further responsibility to**

act, through humanitarian operations, monitoring missions and diplomatic pressure, and with force if necessary, though only as a last resort.”

Srebrenica demonstrates that, if force is designated as the last resort instead of one of many possible policy options, circumstances tend to militate against its use. **Especially in situations where multinational efforts are needed to engage in military activity, problems of intelligence, coordination, decision making, and operational effectiveness are often too daunting for concerted action to be taken.** The Dutch and the U.N. should have learned that bitter lesson in Srebrenica.

On July 11, 2005 **the tenth anniversary** of the fall of the city, the Bosniaks buried the recently discovered remains of another 610 victims of **“genocide”** at **Potocari Memorial Cemetery**, amongst them was my older brother Abdulah Osmanovic.

In the words of Judge Riad and Former President Bill Clinton, Srebrenica represents:

“Truly scenes from hell, written on the darkest pages of human history.”

Judge Riad, the International Crime Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia.

“We remember this terrible crime because we dare not forget because we must pay tribute to the innocent lives, many of them children, who were snuffed out in what must be called genocidal madness... Bad people who lusted for power killed these good people simply because of who they were. They sought power through genocide.”

Former President Bill Clinton in Srebrenica

THE INFERNO OF SREBRENICA

MOTHER, MOTHER
YOU STILL APEAR IN MY DREAMS
BROTHER, SISTER
EVERY NIGHT YOU APEAR IN MY DREAMS
YOU ARE NOT HERE, YOU ARE NOT HERE
I AM LOOKING FOR YOU, I AM LOOKING FOR YOU
WHEREVER I GO I SEE YOU
MOTHER, FATHER
WHY ARE YOU NOT HERE
ALAS, BOSNIA, MY MOTHER THOU SHALT BE
ALAS, BOSNIA, MY MOTHER I SHALL CALL THEE
BOSNIA, MY MATHER
SREBRENICA, MY SISTER
I SHALL NEVER BE ALNOE
LENETOSUM
NEITHER, NETLES, FOR VIOLETS, FOR WALL FLOWER
GROW HERE ANY MORE
THE LAND HERE IS AS BLUE AS THE SKY
AND NO ONE MOWS THE MEADOW
AND NO ONE PLOUGHS THE FIELDS
THEY ONLY HAVE TALKS ALL DAY LONG
THE BONES CLOSE TOGETHER
AND THE WHITE SWALLOWS OF SHADOWS
AND NO ONE COMES TO MENTION US
SREBRENICA, MY ONLY ONE
SREBRENICA, MY DEAR ONE
SREBRENICA, MY WISH
THOU ART MY HOPE.
SREBRENICA, THE LAND OF BLOOD
THE BLOOD OF MY PEOPLE
I SHALL COME BACK
WE ARE ALL COMING BACK
TO MY NATIVE LAND.

Dzermaludin Latic

4.4 The Marketplace Massacre in Sarajevo

Media coverage of the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina, like Western policy, was driven by crisis. In part, the sense of crisis surrounding certain events was the product of media coverage itself. Three events were the subject of intense coverage that assumed crisis proportions, and were central to the escalation of Western involvement in the war: the breadline massacre of May 27, 1992; the Markale marketplace massacre of February 5, 1994; and the second shelling of the Markale marketplace on August 28, 1995. These massacres galvanized the West and U.S. into action. The second, August 1995, Markala marketplace massacre provided the trigger that the United States was looking for in order to launch the massive NATO air campaign that helped bring the fighting to an end. The second shelling of the Markala marketplace, on August 28, 1995, took place at a moment when Western policymakers appeared already to have decided to use force- **“air power”**- against the Bosnian Serbs and were waiting only for an appropriate **“trigger.”** The shelling provided this, and was offered as one of several justifications for the **NATO bombing campaign** that began on August 30, 1995. Finally, after so many threats by NATO to use **“air power”** against the killers around Sarajevo, the right moment had come to demonstrate it.

4.5 Ethnic Cleansing and Genocide

The civilian population bore the brunt of the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina during the war 1992-1995. The number of casualties is about 250,000 lives and caused more than two million people to flee their homes.¹⁵⁹ The figure of 250,000 (or more) dead, injured, and missing was frequently cited in media reports on the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina, according to President Bill Clinton. Smail Cekic gave a figure of 144,248 perished (including those who died from hunger or exposure), mainly Bosnian Muslims.

In November 1995, CIA estimated 156,500 civilian deaths in the country (all but 10,000 of them in Muslim-Croat held territories), not including the 8,000 to 10,000 then still missing from the Srebrenica and Zepa enclaves.

¹⁵⁹ Bill Clinton. *My life*. New York: Random House, 2004. pp. 684-685.

This figure for deaths far exceeded the estimate in the same report of 81,500 troops killed (45,000 Bosnian government; 6,500 Bosnian Croat; and 30,000 Bosnian Serbs).¹⁶⁰ Stockholm Peace Institute estimated that 20,000 and more women had been the victims of rape by Serb forces in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The UN Commission of Experts was able to identify 1,600 actual cases of rape.¹⁶¹ A study of rape victims in hospitals in Croatia, Serbia, and Bosnia and Herzegovina carried out by experts attached to the UN Human Rights Commission produced evidence of approximately 12,000 cases of rape which had been committed by Serbs.¹⁶² The commission experts estimated the number of rape cases on the basis of pregnant rape victims in hospitals. The figure was a conservative estimate, based only on data available at selected hospitals.

The very nature of the crime, and the circumstances under which it was committed, suggest that the precise number of rapes will never be known. The charge that rapes were committed by the Serbs in such a fashion as to constitute “**genocidal rape**” must be approached with caution. A cautious approach should not, however, be allowed to obscure the fact that large numbers of Muslim women were incarcerated and repeatedly raped, and that incidents of rape of Serb and Croat women did not approach the scale of victimization of Muslims. **The UN Human Rights Commission report of August 4, 1995, sums up the state of knowledge as follows:**

“It is difficult to assess the actual numbers of individuals who suffered rape or sexual abuse; victims are often reluctant to report such experiences owing to social stigma and fear of reprisals. Available information indicates that rape has been committed by all sides to the conflict. However, the largest numbers of perpetrators have been Bosnian Serbs. There are few reports of rape and sexual assault among members of the same ethnic group.”¹⁶³

After only a month of fighting the UN estimated some 520,000 persons (12% of the population) had been displaced and in 1995 the figure showed that 1.5 million

¹⁶⁰ CIA Memorandum, November 25, 1995.

¹⁶¹ Alexandra Stiglmyer, *The War Against the Women in Bosnia and Herzegovina*, Lincoln Press, 1994, pp.25-26.

¹⁶² *Ibid.*

¹⁶³ UN document A/50/329, August 4, 1995, p. 17.

refugees had fled Bosnia and Herzegovina to other European countries, and additional 1.3 million individuals still inside the country had been displaced from their homes.¹⁶⁴ This amounted to more than half the total pre-war population of the country. Only a portion of this can be attributed directly to the fighting. Much of it was the result of fear, **“ethnic cleansing,”** and **“genocide,”** or an effort to find security. Inhabitants of rural areas, for example, fled in large numbers to the cities, seeking safety. At the centre of this web of motives was the policy of **“ethnic cleansing”**; that is, forcing an ethnic community to flee its traditional place of residence, most often by extensive violence or the threat thereof, for the purpose of creating an ethnically homogeneous population as a basis for claiming political control over the territory. On the other hand, Serb actions in the war; including ethnic cleansing, the executions of leading Muslims in the Prijedor region, mass rape, and other atrocities, gave rise to the charge that the Serbs had committed the genocide against the Muslims in Bosnia and Herzegovina. This charge was sustained by actions committed right up to the closing weeks of the fighting, above all by killings at Srebrenica in July 1995. The charge is one of the most sensitive and important aspect of the conflict. The determination of genocide depends on one’s definition of the phenomenon. The UN Convention on Genocide applies to destruction of peoples **“in whole or in part”** and thus leaves open suggestion that small-scale acts of the type specified therein, that is, **“intent or destruction”** of **“part”** of a people might qualify with proper word the genocide in Srebrenica. **It is here, that is quite clear that the genocide has taken place against the Bosnian Muslims during the war 1992-1995 in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Europe must be shame of it.**

Chapter: 5 The International Intervention: August 30, 1995

“I have lived through most of this century (20th). I remember that it began with a war in Serajevo. Mr. President, you must not let it end with a war in Sarajevo.”

His Holiness Pope John Paul II said to U.S. president Bill Clinton in summer 1995.

¹⁶⁴ Ibid.

“The August 28 mortar attack was hardly the first challenge to Western policy, nor the worst incident of the war; it was only the latest. But it was different because of its timing: coming immediately after the launching of our diplomatic shuttle and the tragedy on Igman, it appeared not only as an act of terror against innocent people in Sarajevo, but as the first direct affront to the United States. As we sleepwalked through a busy schedule in Paris, my mind drifted back over the many failures of Western leadership over the last few years, and I hoped-prayed-that this time it would be different.”¹⁶⁵

In August 1995, the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina took a dramatic turn. The Croats launched an offensive **“Operation Storm” on 4 of August 1995** to retake the Krajina, a part of Croatia that the local Serbs had proclaimed their territory.¹⁶⁶ The Croat offensive against Serbs in Knin will change dramatically the situation on the ground in Bosnia and Herzegovina between the Bosnian Serbs and Muslims.

European and some American military and intelligence officials had recommended against the action in the belief that Milosevic would intervene to save the Krajina Serbs, but the Americans were rooting for the Croats. So did Germany, Helmut Kohl, who knew, as everyone did, that diplomacy could not succeed until the Serbs had sustained some serious losses on the ground. According to **America General Wesley Clark**, who says that in Bosnia **“there was nothing comparable to the Croat’s ground campaign of 1995 that could threaten the Serbs with defeat.”**

The role of U.S. Policy was crucial in bringing the conflict to the end in the region by supporting the Croats to overrun the Serb stronghold in western Croatia. In the words of President Clinton: **“Because we knew Bosnia’s survival was at stake, we had not tightly enforced the arms embargo. As a result, both the Croats and the Bosnians were able to get some arms, which helped them survive. We had also authorized a private company to use retired U.S. military personnel to improve and train in the Croatian army.”**¹⁶⁷

As it turned out, Milosevic did not come to the aid of the Krajina Serbs, and Croatian forces took Krajina with little resistance. It was the first defeat for the Serbs in four

¹⁶⁵ Richard Holbrooke. To End a War. New York: Random House, 1998. p. 93.

¹⁶⁶ Bill Clinton. My life. New York: Random House, 2004. pp. 666-67.

¹⁶⁷ Ibid.

years, and it changed both the **“balance of power”** on the ground and the psychology of all the parties waging war in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

On the other hand, there was another offensive against the Bosnian Serbs, the **NATO air strike campaign “triggered”** by the massacre of civilians on the marketplace in **Sarajevo on 28 August 1995**. The Bosnian Serb leaders, Radovan Karadzic and Ratko Mladic, found themselves in front of the real defeat, by waging the war against the whole **World**.

5.1 The NATO Bombing

“Operation Deliberate Force began on August 30 at 2:00 A.M. local time. More than sixty aircraft, flying from bases in Italy and the aircraft carrier Theodore Roosevelt in the Adriatic, pounded Bosnian Serbs positions around Sarajevo. It was the largest military action in NATO history. French and British artillery from the Rapid Reaction Force joined in, targeting Lukavica barracks southwest of Sarajevo. Unlike earlier air strikes, when the U.N. and NATO had restricted themselves to hitting individual Serb surface-to-air missile sites or single tanks, these strikes were massive.”¹⁶⁸

It was the NATO’s first war in Europe since World War II, and we have not seen such the military cross-fire since the war in Vietnam. The General Wesley Clark, the NATO supreme commander, was in charge of the whole operation in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Press and public reaction was highly positive. **Izetbegovic**, his doubts temporarily erased, **said, “The world has finally done what it should have done a long, long time ago.”**¹⁶⁹ After 40 months of awkward hesitation, NATO stepped squarely into the midst of the war helping to the U.S. diplomacy to end the war in Bosnia. According to the U.S. President Bill Clinton, it was the only way to tell to Bosnian Serbs, **“what is enough, it is enough. Now we ought to bomb those around Sarajevo who had been killing for three and half years the civilians in Sarajevo.”**¹⁷⁰

There were many advocates of earlier, more forceful United States intervention to stop the fighting in Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina. These appeals tended to focus on the use of force to stop the fighting or roll back Serb gains, but they did not

¹⁶⁸ Richard Holbrooke. *To End a War*. New York: Random House, 1998. pp. 101-2.

¹⁶⁹ Alija Izetbegovic. *RAT I MIR U BOSNI I HERCEGOVINI*. Vijeće Kongresa bosnjackih intelektualaca. Sarajevo, maj 1998.

¹⁷⁰ Bill Clinton. *My life*. New York: Random House, 2004. pp. 671-72.

offer any formulas for resolving the political issue that underlay the fighting. But, at that time, neither the Europeans nor the Americans were interested in, or able to impose a political solution by force. This time it was inevitable because massacre took place on marketplace in Sarajevo, Srebrenica fell before on 11 of July, and there were rumours and then confirmation of a huge massacre of Muslim civilians, and international outrage grew.

5.2 How was Peace concluded?

The record of earlier efforts by the ICFY in 1992, Vance-Owen plan in 1993, Owen-Stoltenberg peace proposal in 1994 and Contact Group plan in 1995, to negotiate a political settlement of the conflict made it clear that if the United States was to assume leadership of a serious effort to bring the fighting to an end, U.S. officials would have to negotiate directly with Bosnian Serb leaders and with Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic. On the other hand, more or less, the same had to be done with the Bosnia Croats and with Croatian President Franjo Tudjman in order to end a war in Bosnia.

The need to accommodate Bosnian Serb interests had been the subject of debate within the administration, and between the administration and its European allies, since the beginning of the international efforts to negotiate a settlement, in 1992. Efforts to negotiate an agreement in 1993 seemed to offer the greatest chance of success when Milosevic was actively engaged in the process, and to offer little hope when he was not. The U.S. effort in 1994 to create a Muslim-Croat federation on those portions of Bosnia and Herzegovina with Muslim and Croat majorities inevitably raised the question of the eventual status of the remaining Serb-majority territories of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The hostility of the Americans toward the Serbs was reflected in the **“take-it-or-leave-it”** approach adopted by the U.S.-led Contact Group in 1994. The U.S. administration consistently opposed conceding to the Bosnian Serbs a right to confederate with Serbia that would parallel the confederation between Croatia and the Muslim-Croat federation. But the Europeans favoured giving the Bosnian Serbs such a parallel right, and U.S. officials admitted from the start, in unattributed statements to the press, that such a parallel arrangement represented a highly probable outcome. They remained

adamantly opposed, however, to any outright annexation of Bosnia Serb territory by Serbia, a scenario described pejoratively as “Anschluss.”¹⁷¹ Moreover, U.S. policymakers remained under intense public pressure from both Congress and political supporters of the Bosnian Muslims not to make any concessions to Serb interests at all, and to undertake instead efforts to ensure an outright military victory for the Bosnian Muslim.¹⁷² Republican Senator Robert Dole had long been an advocate of lifting the arms embargo on the Bosnian Muslims and using air power against the Serbs. Now he and the Republican Speaker of the House, Representative Newt Gingrich, intensified efforts in both houses of Congress to lift the embargo; efforts that were gaining support even among Democrats.¹⁷³ By mid-1995, concern grew in the White House that Bosnia would become a campaign liability for the president in the 1996 elections. In order to avoid domestic political defeat, the conflict would have to be resolved before the winter of 1995.

Secretary Christopher stressed the need for diplomacy and incentives to persuade the Bosnian Serbs to end the war and accept the **Contact Group Plan and map**.¹⁷⁴ If force were to be used, it would have to be used in support of a political settlement to the conflict. To achieve a settlement through the **coercive diplomacy** and incentives, however, required that the United States negotiate directly with the Serbs. The U.S. administration therefore reopened direct discussions with the Bosnian Serbs leadership in September 1995. The U.S. ambassador to Germany and former envoy for Bosnia, Richard Holbrooke was sent first to Zagreb, then to Sarajevo and two days later to Belgrade to meet with President Milosevic and Bosnian Serb leadership. The ambassador allegedly underscored for the Serbs the possibility of altering the division of territory between the **Muslim-Croat federation** and the **Bosnian Serbs** contained in the **Contact Group map** proposed in July, as long as the **51-to-49** percent ratio of Muslim-Croat to Serb territories was preserved. The acceptance of this peace proposal by Bosnian President Alija Izetbegovic, Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic and Croatian President Franjo Tudjman, reflected Clinton administration’s decision to become more directly involved in negotiating a

¹⁷¹ Richard Holbrooke. *To End a War*. New York: Random House, 1998. p. 110.

¹⁷² *Ibid*, pp. 110-12.

¹⁷³ Bill Clinton. *My life*. New York: Random House, 2004. p. 677.

¹⁷⁴ *Ibid*.

political settlement. The administration insisted, however, that Clinton also emphasized the **Contact Group plan as the basis for such negotiations**, thereby clearly signalling that it would insist on basing any settlement on the general framework contained in that plan, or at least on the **51-49 territorial division of Bosnia and Herzegovina** contained in it.

This position was made explicit in January 1995 in a letter from Secretary of State Christopher to Bosnian President Izetbegovic.¹⁷⁵ The seriousness of the administration's effort also led to the removal of the U.S. ambassador to Bosnia-Herzegovina, an ardent supporter of the Bosnian Muslims who opposed making any concession to Bosnian Serbs interests and his replacement by a deputy more amenable to negotiating with the Serbs.¹⁷⁶

5.3 The Dayton Peace Agreement

(November 1-21, 1995)

“The time will come when those few hours will say much about War and Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the role that the United States played in the outcome, the real importance of France, and perhaps the World Order that will reflect it”.

BERNARD-HENRY LEVY, *Le Lys et la Cendre*

The Dayton Accords, initialed in Dayton, Ohio on November 21, 1995, and signed in Paris on December 14 that same year by the Bosnian President Alija Izetbegovic, the Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic and the Croatian President Franjo Tudjman, ended the worst conflict in Europe since the Second World War. After almost four years of ineffective diplomatic efforts by the European Union, the United Nations, and the United States, the Clinton administration finally decided to take the initiative and sent Richard Holbrooke the Assistant Secretary of State for Canadian and European Affairs to lead an "all out negotiating effort" to end the war in Bosnia. Holbrooke and his team mediated between the three sides the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY), Croatia, and Bosnia and Herzegovina to reverse what Holbrooke earlier had characterized as the "greatest collective failure of the West since the 1930s."

¹⁷⁵ New York Times, December 6, 1994, p. 1.

¹⁷⁶ Washington Post, January 28, 1995, p. 23.

It was a product of time and the circumstances in which Bosnian people find themselves in November 1995. According to many Bosnians, it is not a just peace for Bosnia and Herzegovina but, it is better than the continuation of a war. War would have destroyed Bosnia and Herzegovina, cancel her from its existence, and the only way to avoid its complete destruction was the acceptance of the Dayton Peace Agreement. According to U.S. Secretary of State, Warren Christopher after tough talks and discussions, on the morning of November 21, 1995 in Dayton, Ohio the three presidents of Bosnia, Croatia, and Serbia had reached a peace agreement to end the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina.¹⁷⁷ The agreement preserved **Bosnia and Herzegovina** as a single state to be made up of two parts, the **Bosnian Croat Federation 51** percent and the **Bosnian Serb Republic 49** percent, with a resolution of the territorial disputes over which the war was begun. Sarajevo would remain undivided capital city. The national government would have responsibility for foreign affairs, trade, immigration, citizenship, and monetary policy. Each of the federations would have its own police force.

Refugees would be able to return home, and free movement throughout the country would be guaranteed. There would be international supervision of human rights and police training, and those charged with war crimes would be excluded from political life. A strong international force, commanded by NATO, would supervise the separation of forces and keep the peace as the agreement was being implemented.

The Bosnian peace plan was hard-won and its particulars contained bitter pills for both sides, but it would bring an end to four bloody years that claimed more than 250,000 lives and caused more than two million people to flee their homes. American leadership was decisive in pushing NATO to be more aggressive and in taking the final diplomatic initiative. These efforts were immeasurably helped by the Croatian and Bosnian military gains on the ground, and the brave and stubborn refusal of Izetbegovic and Silajdzic, and their comrades to give up in the face of Bosnian Serb aggression.

The final agreement was a tribute to the skills of Dick Holbrooke and his negotiating team; to Warren Christopher, who at critical points was decisive in keeping the Bosnians on a board and in closing the deal; to Tony Lake, who initially conceived and

¹⁷⁷ Bill Clinton. My life. New York: Random House, 2004. p. 685.

sold the American peace initiative to their allies and who, with Holbrooke, pushed for the final talks to be held in the United States; to Sandy Berger, who chaired the deputies' committee meetings, which kept people throughout the national security operation informed of what was going on without allowing too much interference; and to Madeleine Albright, who strongly supported American aggressive posture in the United Nations. The choice of Dayton and Wright-Patterson Air Force Base was inspired, and the carefully chosen by the negotiating team; it was in the United States, but far enough away from Washington to discourage leaks, and the facilities permitted the kind of **"proximity talks"** that allowed Holbrooke and his team to hammer out the tough details. The role of the United States of America to end the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina was crucial in succeeding the peace negotiation talks between three parties in conflict. In the words of Bill Clinton:

"On November 22, after twenty-one days of isolation in Dayton, Holbrooke and his team came to the White House to receive my congratulations and discuss our next steps."¹⁷⁸

The best in the Dayton Agreement is Article I of the Dayton Constitution of Bosnia and Herzegovina saying: **"Bosnia and Herzegovina shall continue its legal existence as an internationally recognized state under name of Bosnia and Herzegovina, with all the rights of a state, and within its internationally recognized borders"**.¹⁷⁹ This is a key provision and the first and the most important article of the Constitution of Bosnia and Herzegovina, i.e. of Annex IV of the Dayton Agreement. The greatest deficiency of the Dayton is possibility of blockade of institutions, and that is very much present currently. The common institutions through which the state of Bosnia and Herzegovina (**Muslim-Croat Federation and Serb Republic**) exercises its functions are inefficient and they are not pretty well organised within itself.

This advantage and deficiency of the Agreement are waging a silent war, and destiny of Bosnia and Herzegovina depends on the outcome of the silent but dangerous war. In the words of president Izetbegovic, Bosnian Government could not do more for its people:

¹⁷⁸ Bill Clinton. My life. New York: Random House, 2004. pp. 685-6.

¹⁷⁹ Alija Izetbegovic. RAT I MIR U BOSNI I HERCEGOVINI. Vijeće Kongresa bosnjackih intelektualaca. Sarajevo, Maj 1998. p. 43.

“This is not a just peace, however it is more just then continuation of the war. In situation such as it is, in the world such as it is, a better peace could have not been reached. God is our witness that we did all in our power to make injustice for our country and our people as little as possible.”¹⁸⁰

There are many intellectuals within the country and in abroad, the western politicians and diplomats who share this view of Mr. Izetbegovic. On the other hand, there are those who criticize him for the acceptance of Dayton Peace Agreement. According to president Izetbegovic it is a favourable agreement for Bosnia and Herzegovina:

“The Dayton document is an expression of times and circumstances in which we lived then, and if it is consistently implemented it will be a favourable agreement.”¹⁸¹ Besides all problems that we do have in Bosnia and Herzegovina, his conclusion was an optimistic one: **“We have the best children in the world; we have the best soldiers in the world. The generation about which I speak is being born and is growing up at the end of the 20th century, both during and after the terrible war. These children have gone through hell; they have been acquainted with hunger and death, which they stared in the eye. These children are our major trunk-card for the future; we must take care of them.”¹⁸²**

5.4 The End of the War, Paris 14 December 1995

“No one ever managed to rule Bosnia; it was always just their illusion.”

Alija Izetbegovic

Only two months after the UN mediator Cyrus Vance negotiated a cease-fire in Croatia, on February 29, 1992, Bosnia and Herzegovina proclaimed its independence. However, Bosnian Serbs rebelled under the leadership of Radovan Karadzic and created their own separate state in Bosnia the Serb Republic or Republika Srpska. The Serbian president Slobodan Milosevic cooperated closely with the Bosnian Serbs and provided them with military and political support. Three years of ensuing fighting

¹⁸⁰ Ibid.

¹⁸¹ Ibid.

¹⁸² Ibid.

killed hundreds of thousands, rendered two million people homeless and introduced the term "ethnic cleansing" into everyday vocabulary.

The Bosnian Serbs made their most important territorial gains early in the war when they captured approximately 70 percent of Bosnia. After the Serbian offensive, the situation on the ground did not change much until 1995: the UN arms embargo imposed on all of the former Yugoslavia, in September 1991, prevented the growth of the Bosnian Muslim army, which was consequently unable to counter much stronger Bosnian Serb forces. Therefore, the conflict centered mostly around Sarajevo under siege from April 1992 until October 1995 and other "safe areas" established by the UN in April, 1993. In the same month, the conflict between the Bosnian Croats and Muslims escalated into war over the remaining 30 percent of Bosnia-Herzegovina. The situation improved somewhat in March 1994 when these two warring sides signed the Washington Accords: they agreed to cease hostilities and to create a Croat-Muslim Federation. However, the Federation, constituted under American auspices, was more of a "marriage of convenience" than a sincere alliance: the wounds from the 1993 war would require a long time to heal.

In the period from April 1992 to late 1994, the US, the UN and the EU treated the wars in the former Yugoslavia as an internal European problem. Two statements memorably express this notion: while in 1991 the foreign minister of Luxembourg, Jacques Poos, triumphantly proclaimed that "the hour of Europe has dawned," Secretary of State James Baker transmitted the official opinion of the United States when he said that "we don't have a dog in this fight."

As Daniele Conversi argues, during this period, Western countries defined the conflict as a civil war, "a war without victims and aggressors" in which all parties were addressed as "warring factions." Western diplomats and policy makers believed or at least wanted to believe in order to justify their inaction the arguments of scholars and historians who claimed that ancient hatreds caused the wars in Croatia and Bosnia. Furthermore, Western leaders held that all sides were equally responsible for the war. However, this argument conceals an extremely important truth: in Bosnia, the Serbs

committed 90 percent of all the atrocities including ethnic cleansing, genocide, systematic rape of women and mass executions.

The West's approach a blurred definition of the conflict at hand and an unwillingness to act militarily to stop the war in Bosnia resulted in abominable failure. Henry Kissinger's question, "What is Europe's phone number?," was still very relevant. The competing interests of the European countries prevented the EU from acting as a single negotiating entity with clear goals and interests. The Russian-Serbian connection, as well as the pro-Serb sympathies of the British and the French during John Major's and Francois Mitterrand's administrations prohibited effective measures against the Serbs, such as the lifting of the arms embargo or air strikes.

Moreover, European diplomats failed to secure agreement to four peace proposals: the Carrington-Cutileiro plan of 1992 that called for the confederation of Swiss-style cantons, the Vance-Owen plan (of the spring of 1993), the "Invincible" plan (of September 1993), and the Contact Group plan (of May 1994) that envisioned a partition of Bosnia along ethnic lines. All were dismissed by the Muslim or the Serbian governments. However, what Holbrooke called "the brutal stupidity of the Bosnian Serbs," started to change the attitude of Western leaders. One could no longer ignore crimes such as the shelling of the Sarajevo marketplace on February 5, 1994, and the Srebrenica massacre of 8,000 Muslim men and boys in the UN "safe haven" in July 1995; both which were broadcast around the world by CNN and brave reporters such as Roy Gutman and David Rohde. In May 1995, the Bosnian Serbs took several hundred UN peacekeepers hostage as a safeguard against possible NATO attacks. This action became the ultimate symbol of the impotence of the international community. The world moved away from "the delusion of impartial peacekeeping" and toward proclaiming the Serbs as aggressors and the Muslims as victims.

The change in the perceptions of the Western leaders came at the same time as the situation on the ground began to change significantly in 1995. The new French President Jacques Chirac, appalled by the weakness of the international community and the helplessness of UN peacekeepers, prompted the UN to authorize a combat-

capable Rapid Reaction Force (RRF), consisting of French and British soldiers to protect the "blue helmets" (UN forces) in Bosnia. In May, the Croatian army regained Western Slavonia and in August, the Krajina – areas previously held by Croatian Serbs. The Serb army retreated in disarray almost without any resistance at all; Milosevic did not come to their rescue. Furthermore, the Croatian and the Bosnian Muslims' armies began their offensive during the summer, and thus started to win back important portions of Western and Central Bosnia. Finally, the economic and financial sanctions imposed on the FRY began to take a visible toll on the Belgrade regime.

At this point, the US Administration started to delineate the basics of a new negotiation effort in Bosnia. This new effort would be headed for the first time by the United States and would entail not only intensive diplomacy but also the use of NATO's threat to use force to push the parties into an agreement that would finally end the war. Richard Holbrooke was the person chosen by the US Administration to inaugurate what would be 'a new era in Balkan Diplomacy.'

General Framework Agreement for Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Dayton Peace Accords is the name of the peace agreement reached at the Wright-Patterson Air Force Base near Dayton, Ohio. These accords put an end to the three and a half years of Bosnian War, one of the armed conflicts in the former Socialist Federative Republic of Yugoslavia.¹⁸³

The negotiations were initiated following the unsuccessful previous peace efforts and arrangements, the August 1995 Croatian military Operation Storm and its aftermath, the Bosniak-Croat military offensive against the Republika Srpska, in concert with NATO's Operation Deliberate Force, i.e. the bombardment of the Bosnian Serb military. It was also held in the shadow of the massacre in the Srebrenica "safe zone", and the indictments against the main military and government leaders of Bosnian Serbs before the ICTY.¹⁸⁴ During September and October 1995 the international community (especially the USA), gathered in Contact Group, applied intense pressure to the leaders of the three sides to attend the negotiations in Dayton, Ohio.

¹⁸³ Dr. Haris Silaldzic. ZA BOSNU I HERCEGOVINU- IZBOR IZ DOKUMENTACIJE
DR. HARISA SILAJDZICA. Bosanska knjiga, Sarajevo, 1998. P. 21.

¹⁸⁴ Ibid., pp.21-2.

The conference took place from November 1 to November 21, 1995. The main participants from the region were Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic (representing the Bosnian Serb interests due to absence of Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic), Croatian President Franjo Tudjman, and Bosnian President Alija Izetbegovic with Bosnia Prime Minister Dr. Hairs Silajdzic. The peace conference was chaired by American negotiator Richard Holbrooke with two Co-Chairman in the form of EU Special Representative Carl Bildt and the First Deputy Foreign Minister of Russia Igor Ivanov. A key participant in the U.S. delegation was General Wesley Clark.

After having being initialled in Dayton, Ohio on November 21, 1995 the full and formal agreement was signed in Paris, France, on December 14, 1995 also by French President Jacques Chirac, U.S. President Bill Clinton, UK Prime Minister John Major, German Chancellor Helmut Kohl and Russian Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin. It should be noted that official name of the **Dayton Agreement** is therefore the **General Framework Agreement for Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina** or the **Paris Protocol**.

The present political divisions of Bosnia and Herzegovina (**Muslim-Croat Federation and Serb Republic**) and its structure of government were agreed upon as part the constitution that makes up Annex 4 of the General Framework Agreement concluded at Dayton. The agreement mandated a wide range of international organizations to monitor, oversee, and implement components of the agreement. The NATO-led IFOR (Implementation Force) was responsible for implementing military aspects of the agreement and deployed on 20th December 1995, taking over the forces of the UNPROFOR. So in this way, the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina ended up when three presidents of warring parties signed peace plan in Paris on 14 December 1995, setting stage for deployment of 60,000 NATO troops in Bosnia and Herzegovina to implement it.

Everyone thinks it is great that the war is over and that there is a peace now in Bosnia and Herzegovina. But we Bosnians often say we have yet to survive the peace. This peace is full of concessions and compromises. So, sometimes Bosnians ask themselves is it a real peace or it is a kind of protectorate by international community since the struggle between two parties or better yet, (**Croat-Muslim Federation and Serb Republic**) still continue in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

5.5 On the road to Europe: from Dayton to Brussels

“What we call Bosnia is not only a piece of earth in the Balkans. For many of us, Bosnia is an idea. It is the belief that the people of different religions, nations and cultural traditions can live together.”

Alija Izetbegovic

From the beginning of the 1990s, people in Bosnia have witnessed a dramatic process of disintegration and partition (1991-1995), followed by another of reconstruction, reconciliation and painful and slow state-level building. Many in the country hope that this process will one day lead to integration into the European mainstream; yet the dangers of further disintegration may still threaten the whole process. The Dayton Peace Agreement which put an end to the war was designed as the least bad solution at that time, with the hope that one day it would serve to overcome actual partition on the ground. The Bosnian Serbs (and to a certain extent, the Bosnian Croats) agreed at Dayton because of the high degree of decentralisation offered by the plan, which effectively recognised a state within another state (the Republika Srpska), plus the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (Muslim-Croat), highly decentralized around ten cantons.

The international community believed that nationalist politics would progressively fade away and that a more “Western-style” party system would develop to replace them. However, eighteen years later, political life in Bosnia is still led by three nationalist parties. Both entities still fear each other and this feeling constitutes one of the main obstacles to the creation and consolidation of common institutions and multi-ethnic parties. Overcoming this mistrust may still take a decade, even a generation, but the upcoming years will be crucial for this process of reconciliation.

It is true that Bosnia would not exist today as a state but for international support summarise the challenges ahead. The international community, and so the EU, has been at the frontline to defend the unity of this weak state, so much so that some

have argued that “the main fault line of conflict” in post-Dayton BiH has not been between the three national groups, but rather that the “main line of confrontation has been between Bosnians and the international community”. Some observers have even questioned the legitimacy of a state where the majority of the population (Serbs plus Croats) do not “truly” support its maintenance. However, these statements were written seven years ago, and since then a lot of progress has been made in the building of a single state structure. This change has coincided with the arrival of the new High Representative (HR), Paddy Ashdown, and greater pressure from the EU and NATO. Nonetheless, the building of a single state-level structure has been the result of a painful time-consuming process. For instance, a common currency and a Central Bank were not established until 1998, in part due to pressure from the international community. The same can be said in the case of internal security and the reform of the judiciary, with the restructuring of the police and the creation of a Ministry of Security, the SIPA, a State Border Service, an Intelligence and Security Agency, and a State Court. In the case of the defence reform, the proposals coming from the HR have faced some hostility from the entity level (in particular from the Republika Srpska). A state-level Ministry of Defence was established in 2004, while the unify the armies and the intelligence agencies of the entities took place in 2006. The last, but not the least important issue has been the restructuring of the police which, until recently, was blocked by the veto of the RS National Assembly.

One of the main problems threatening the process towards EU integration is the unresolved issue regarding the status of the country. The Dayton agreement is under continued challenge in the process towards European integration. It is common knowledge that only sovereign and self-sustaining states can become members of the EU. But the Dayton agreement established a highly decentralised state, with weak, sometimes non-existent state-level institutions.

Hence, from the Bosnian-Muslim side, the idea has been to reform Dayton so as to reinforce the process of construction of a unitary single state. However, this idea has encountered the opposition of the Bosnian-Serbs, while an increasing number of outside observers agree with the idea that at least some changes would be necessary if

integration into Euro-Atlantic structures is the goal. For instance, a report on the Bosnian constitutional set-up issued by the Venice Commission at the beginning of March 2005 pointed out that:

"...a central element of the first stage of constitutional reform has to be a transfer of responsibilities from the Entities to BiH by means of amendments to the BiH Constitution. This is an indispensable step if any progress is to be achieved in the process of European integration".

Consequently, today the Dayton agreement seems outdated; its shortcomings affect the daily functioning of the state, and they generate an enormous expenditure linked to the running of three parallel institutions (two entities and the state level). Neither complete centralization (ultra-integration) nor partition in independent states seems the right path to take. Although some international observers believe that a centralised state would be the best option, the realities on the ground make such a solution impossible. On the other hand, this process will not be successful if it seen as being imposed by external agents, or as the will of only one segment of the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina. As mentioned, reforms have been put into force as a result of external pressures (the requirements established both by the EU and NATO), the engagement of the HR, and the economic support from international donors.

The lack of will from the local authorities, the end of the HR mandate, as well as the "Bosnian-fatigue" among international donors and international institutions can slow down the process of state-building. Because of that, the role of the EU in the country continues to be crucial: a coherent strategy, a clear message, and the necessary assistance to help with the implementation of the reforms are expected from the EU. For the moment, Brussels keeps reminding Bosnian authorities that, in the process towards Europe, BiH will be treated according to the criteria previously established and judged according to its own merits, and that membership can only be earned through economic and political reforms. However, some observers have asked for a stronger commitment by the EU to provide assistance. At this juncture, when the enlargement process has been partially contested due to economic crisis, a clear signal

that BiH is really welcome is particularly needed. Mixed signals from the EU, the wrong approach, or tough conditions without the necessary assistance could spoil the process of integration of BiH into the EU.

There have been progress in the evolution of the EU's intervention in BiH from the paralysis of a civilian power to an increasingly committed normative power, promoting democracy, rule of law and human rights. The EU has deployed in the BiH the full spectrum of instruments at its disposal, including military instruments, to promote its external objectives and to pave the way for BiH to attain EU membership. Indeed, the membership carrot has become one of the main instruments of the EU to support its normative power.

5.6 Genocide is still ongoing in Bosnia and Herzegovina

“Genocide means any of the acts committed with intent to destroy in whole or in part, a nation, ethnical, racial or religious group”

UN Genocide Convention

Some may confuse this statement as mere rhetoric. However, facts and legality teach us that the story of genocide is not just about the past. It is also about a genocide that continues today. Genocide is most horrible and perhaps memorable at the moment of killing and terrorizing the targeted population to leave its home. Ethnic cleansing is just another term that some perhaps believed would lessen the crime or get us to forget the actual purpose. The purpose is a premeditated effort to first drive a people away and ultimately for them to be discouraged and to forget about returning to reclaim their homes, culture and history.

The project of not only “Greater Serbia” but also “Republika Srpska,” (RS) is the effort to realize the fruit of genocide. The murders, terrorizing, and expulsion of the population is but only the initial part of realizing the project. Efforts to deny or discourage return are integral to the realization of genocide and thus a continuation of the crime of genocide. Within Bosnia and Herzegovina, this effort is manifested in several ways, each which should be confronted by the rule of law as a perpetuation of the crime:

Denial of equal political rights in terms of voting or selection of candidates where such distinction did not exist before genocide was initiated;

Efforts to eradicate victims' historical, cultural and religious connection to territory in question;

Re-labeling, in such fashion to be exclusionary, the territory or towns within it, (and thus RS and such other names are intended to deny that victim population belonging to and rights within such areas);

Discriminate with regard to economic opportunities based upon ethnic identity of victims;

Instill fear with state institutions acquiescing or complicit rather than confronting threats to security;

Deny that the crime of genocide has been perpetrated as means of refuting the responsibility to remedy.

This is not a passive crime but one that requires ongoing pro-activism. Some, though, might try to marginalize genocide committed in Bosnia by arguing that history is full of such examples, encoded in the books of the Abrahamic religions to the lands of North America: the vanquished are erased by the victor. However, the genocide of Bosnia is distinct in the historical and legal context:

Genocide has been defined as an international crime for the first time encoded by the Convention for the Prevention of the Crime of Genocide born out of the horrific experiences of the Holocaust and WWII.

International courts, including the International Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia and International Court of Justice have issued judgments confirming genocide as well as other grave violations of international humanitarian law.

The crimes judged in the Nuremberg trials had largely been reversed by the Allied victories. In either the instance of WWII or the conflict in the former Yugoslavia, the rule

of law necessitates that the perpetrators be denied the fruits of genocide and that the consequences be rolled back.

The European Court of Human Rights and the Council of Europe have concluded also as to the genocidal scheme and more recently addressed some of its persisting elements.

The victims of the genocide in Bosnia, (and we should include all those targeted as “non-Serbs,” Croats, “others” and not just Bosniaks), may be confronted with efforts to even now marginalize their claims by references to other grievances, previous and then current, very real and illusory. Nonetheless, history gives even more credence to concerns that new “pogroms” may be already hatching now to be realized in the near or longer term. Jews, “Muslims,” and at times other defined population groups have been targeted for extermination and expulsion based on the rhetoric that such were not “Europeans.” The “Muslims” of SE Europe have been the targets of pogroms for several centuries on the basis of their religion even if the vast majority is founded upon indigenous ethnic groups, from Albanians to Bosnians and Herzegovinians.

In the latest effort at genocide directed at the Bosniaks, again their religion has been a rally cry for perpetrating the crimes. More alarmingly, it was also the underlying logic for those European powers, many of their political leaders, that were inclined to allow, acquiesce in the genocide accepting and promoting the argument that the victims did not belong and somehow were less deserving of the rights of Europeans as well as protection of international humanitarian law. This rationalization is strong as ever and has infected many layers of the Euro-Atlantic democracies. While it is most evidenced in xenophobic rants translated into policies against immigrants, Bosniaks, as indigenous to their European country, are again affected by the logic that they are “Muslims” without a place in Europe.

This exclusionary ideology has been deployed to counter an inclusive, integrated society within Bosnia and Herzegovina, even if such coexistence was more the norm rather than exception at least the recent past. In particular, any attempt to restore the Bosniak population and its rights, is misrepresented as an effort at “Muslim nationalism” rather than remedying the consequences of genocide or imparting more normal values of an open, democratic even pluralistic society idealized in the rest of the Euro-Atlantic world.

Faced with this prejudice, what can be done to reverse the course of ethnic cleansing and address the ongoing manifestations of this scheme? It will neither be adequate nor consistent with the status of victim to pursue a largely defensive posture. The problem is not just Belgrade's continuing scheme but also the revisionism of at least some key capitals. Their silence, from Washington to Brussels exhibits not mere acquiescence but now active complicity.

5.7 The legal and political tools to confront ongoing genocide

**“They preach but do not confess.
They demand forgetfulness but ask for no forgiveness.
Perhaps they believe that by preaching to the victims,
they will then avoid accountability for their own failings.
Their sermons cannot go unchallenged.
These are efforts at rewriting history, and also a tactic to
evade their own responsibility for the betrayal of
Srebrenica, Zepa and, indeed, all of Bosnia and
Herzegovina”.**

Ambassador Muhamed Sacirbey

There needs to be a proactive approach, and it should be emphasized from the outset that while political and diplomatic considerations may carry significant weight, they do not trump the rule of law. The Dayton Accords or other such international arrangements cannot provide immunity or amnesty to the crimes or their perpetrators. Further, the crimes are still ongoing and those who would block remedies to reverse ethnic cleansing, urge that the crimes be ignored may be subject to legal and criminal sanctions along with those who actually instigated and physically perpetrated if such action or, more accurately, call to non-action have effect of perpetuating genocide.

Bosniaks and all committed Bosnian and Herzegovinians must expose these prejudices while also proactively evidencing the multi-ethnic and multi-religious nature of the country's history and most recent defense.

Political and legal remedies must continue to be pursued consistent with the verdicts of the ICTY and ICJ within broader Euro-Atlantic and international institutions, (including the Council of Europe, European of Human Rights and United Nations and its

institutions). While the ICJ decision in particular leaves much wanting in recognizing the full scope of the victimization and all those responsible, Bosnia and its loyalists have been neglectful in pursuing the potential remedies enabled by such verdicts.

The ICJ case should be renewed, (as already provided for by the existing verdict), and this time all the relevant evidence must be presented to the Court. It cannot be allowed that by some decision of prosecutors or judges (or more likely some shadowy elements) that evidence available to the ICTY is denied justice before the ICJ.

National courts as well as international forums need to be accessed to pursue remedies, including the courts of Bosnia despite the fact that such are currently politicized and even more under influence of foreign officials who would restrain their judicial activity in favor of political expediency.

The European Court of Human Rights can be a most effective to counter the inertia of national courts, particularly those within Bosnia.

Civil remedies should continue to be sought against individuals but also the institutions on whose behalf such ethnic cleansing and crimes were committed ***and continue to be perpetrated.*** (Judgments have been won by Bosnia rape victims in US Courts against Radovan Karadzic, but remain uncollected. However, Karadzic committed such crimes in his capacity as “RS President” or agent on behalf the plan of a “Greater Serbia.”

The role of foreign officials, (and potentially their states), should be fully exposed in allowing the ethnic cleansing to continue. Appeasement is the minimum responsibility and evidence points to acquiescence and perhaps complicity, (from Srebrenica and Zepa where there was a direct obligation to the contrary to protect the safe areas in Bosnia).

A revised inquiry into betrayal of Srebrenica and Zepa, should be pursued, consistent with above.

Criminal as well as civil action should be initiated with respect those who are responsible for perpetuating the current genocide as well as the past criminal actions. This may include RS, BiH or foreign, international persons who by their actions contribute to the continuing crime of genocide. This action may be brought before Bosnia courts, other national courts or the ICTY for now, (and we understand that all

such courts are so politically blocked *under the current conditions* from pursuing action against “non-Yugoslav” actors except those who challenge the same courts as in case of Florence Hartmann).

The new International Criminal Court, “ICC,” would have jurisdiction over any crimes committed subsequent to its inception, 2002, after the exclusive international jurisdiction of the ICTY expires.

Institution, (as Wiesenthal Center(s)), to not only remember the past crimes but to address ongoing violations and impunity must be operationalized and undertake proactive measures with respect to potential remedies outlined above and others considered relevant and appropriate.

Bosnian and Herzegovinians, particularly Bosniaks, debate to what degree the crimes of the past should be discussed, remembered in the national tradition. Unfortunately, most do not see the injustices, actual crimes and violations of international humanitarian law that are and continue to be perpetrated today. It is ironic that many outside of Bosnia including within Serbian society, better understand the continuing dangers. Only those who represent the government that committed genocide, who represent governments that allowed genocide to continue and some Bosnian political leaders would urge to forget about genocide and ignore its ongoing considerations. This would be to forget the now as well as the future.

Conclusion

“It is hard exaggerate this. If it had been for Alija Izetbegovic, Bosnia would not exist today... He was the visionary. It was his ruthlessness and vision that helped to create Bosnia and Herzegovina.” Richard Holbrooke

The conflict in Bosnia and Herzegovina was the first major test in the post-Cold War period of the ability of the international community to resolve ethnic conflicts. These efforts failed to prevent a catastrophic war or to establish the conditions for a stable peace once the war was ended. As a result, Bosnia and Herzegovina remained haunted by the contradiction between integration and partition. With the U.S. decision in December 1997 to keep troops in Bosnia and Herzegovina indefinitely, it appears that a peacekeeping operation of indefinite duration is in the making; one more ambitious and costly than its closest counterpart, in Cyprus.¹⁸⁵

In this conclusion I address three compelling questions that arise out of the tragedy of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The first is whether the catastrophe that has befallen Bosnia and Herzegovina could have been averted. To answer this question, I examined in chapter 3 whether the West missed opportunities for preventive engagement, and whether early intervention in the conflict might have succeeded. Also, I discussed in chapter 3 why it was not possible to avert the war and what for the reasons. I stressed that the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1992 could not have been avoided or it could have if our government declared capitulation and raise up its hands. Since this was not acceptable for major part of Bosnian people, the war could not have been avoided in that or this way. It means that the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina would have happened even if the national parties had not come to power, for example if it had been SK-SDP party, the war would break out also for this reason, but now between Serbia and Croatia willing to carve up Bosnia and Herzegovina among themselves. Consequently, Milosevic wants clearly to create a Greater Serbia, on the other, Tudjman with his idea to take part in that deal and to create a Greater Croatia on behalf of Bosnia and Herzegovina territory. The second is whether the Bosnian-Herzegovina experience offers any lessons for the more effective management of

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Ejup Ganic, *Bosanska otrovana jabuka*, Bosanska knjiga, Sarajevo 1995, p 125.

future conflicts. Based on the analyses in the preceding chapters, I offered some ideas about humanitarian intervention, the use of force, and the role of diplomacy in conflict management; and pointed out how such conflicts are brought to a negotiated end. I discussed about this dilemmas in chapter 4 and 5. The third question is whether, despite the shortcomings of the Dayton Peace Agreement and the apparent difficulties of implementation, there still remains a way to resolve the contradiction between ideals and reality that haunts Bosnia and Herzegovina in the post-Dayton period.

In the end, I would like to point out why I believe that, in spite of everything, Bosnia and Herzegovina will survive as an integral state. I have at least five strong arguments for that. The first argument is the Dayton Peace Agreement. The second argument is that the majority of citizens in Bosnia want an integral state. All Bosniak people are absolutely in favour of such a state and Bosniaks are the spine of Bosnia and they will not allow the destruction of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The third argument is that the majority, the vast majority, of the world is for Bosnia: America, Europe, the Islamic world, as well as very important nations such as Japan and China. I have to point out that we are also enjoying the strong support of England which is sometimes accused of playing a double game. The fourth argument regards the current changes in our environment which are moving in the right direction. Croatia will become a democratic country, and democratic Croatia will support an integral Bosnia. As for Serbia, in my opinion, she will be busy with herself for a long period of time; she will not be able to occupy herself with Bosnia. Consequently, neither Croatia nor Serbia will want or be able to undermine Bosnia and Herzegovina. The fifth argument concerns the integrations reached by state of Bosnia on the way to European Union: Council of Europe, Partnership for Peace, Stability Pact, Membership Action Plan, etc. Consequently, the five factors are acting in the direction of survival of Bosnian state. Basically, these five factors: The Dayton Peace Agreement, majority of Bosnian population, majority of the world, changes in the environment, and finally joining European integrations, are our big trump for the future. Also, the main ally of Bosnia and Herzegovina is America. We may have countries which like us more than America, but they cannot help us. Some could, but they do not want to. Only America wants and can like during the war 1992.-1995.

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