New and Old Wars

Organized Violence in a Global Era

Mary Kaldor

Stanford University Press
Stanford, California
1999
Contents

Acknowledgements vi
Abbreviations vii

1 Introduction 1
2 Old Wars 13
3 Bosnia-Herzegovina: A Case Study of a New War 31
4 The Politics of New Wars 69
5 The Globalized War Economy 90
6 Towards a Cosmopolitan Approach 112
7 Governance, Legitimacy and Security 138

Notes 153
Index 171
In the summer of 1992, I visited Nagorno-Karabakh in the Transcaucasian region in the midst of a war involving Azerbaijan and Armenia. It was then that I realized that what I had previously observed in the former Yugoslavia was not unique; it was not a throwback to the Balkan past but rather a contemporary predicament especially, or so I thought, to be found in the post-communist part of the world. The wild west atmosphere of Knin (then the capital of the self-proclaimed Serbian republic in Croatia) and Nagorno-Karabakh, peopled by young men in home-made uniforms, desperate refugees and thugs, neophyte politicians, was quite distinctive. Later, I embarked on a research project on the character of the new type of wars and I discovered from my colleagues who had first-hand experience of Africa that what I had noted in Eastern Europe shared many common features with the wars taking place in Africa and perhaps other places, for example South Asia. Indeed, the experience of wars in other places shed new light on my understanding of what was happening in the Balkans and the former Soviet Union.1

My central argument is that, during the 1980s and 1990s, a new type of organized violence has developed, especially in Africa and Eastern Europe, which is one aspect of the current globalized era. I describe this type of violence as 'new war'. I use the term 'new' to distinguish these wars from prevailing perceptions of war drawn from an earlier era, which I outline in
Introduction

chapter 2. I use the term 'war' to emphasize the political nature of this new type of violence, even though, as will become clear in the following pages, the new wars involve a blurring of the distinctions between war (usually defined as violence between states or organized political groups for political motives), organized crime (violence undertaken by privately organized groups for private purposes, usually financial gain) and large-scale violations of human rights (violence undertaken by states or politically organized groups against individuals).

In most of the literature, the new wars are described as internal or civil wars or else as 'low-intensity conflict'. Yet although most of these wars are localized, they involve a myriad of transnational connections so that the distinction between internal and external, between aggression (attacks from abroad) and repression (attacks from inside the country), or even between local and global, are difficult to sustain. The term 'low-intensity conflict' was coined during the Cold War period by the US military to describe guerrilla warfare or terrorism. Although it is possible to trace the evolution of the new wars from the so-called low-intensity conflicts of the Cold War period, they have distinctive characteristics which are masked by what is in effect a catch-all term. Some authors describe the new wars as privatized or informal wars; yet, while the privatization of violence is an important element of these wars, in practice, the distinction between what is private and what is public, state and non-state, informal and formal, between what is done for economic or political motives, cannot easily be applied. A more appropriate term is perhaps the term 'post-modern', which is used by several authors. Like 'new wars', it offers a way of distinguishing these wars from the wars which could be said to be characteristic of classical modernity. However, the term is also used to refer to virtual wars and wars in cyberspace; moreover, the new wars involve elements of pre-modernity and modernity as well.

Finally, Martin Shaw uses the term 'degenerate warfare'. For him there is a continuity with the total wars of the twentieth century and their genocidal aspects; the term draws attention to the decay of the national frameworks, especially military forces.

Among American strategic writers, there is a discussion about what is known as the Revolution in Military Affairs. The argument is that the advent of information technology is as significant as was the advent of the tank and the aeroplane, or even as significant as the shift from horsepower to mechanical power, with profound implications for the future of warfare. However, the Revolution in Military Affairs is conceived by these writers within the inherited institutional structures of war and the military. They envisage wars on a traditional model in which the new techniques develop in a more or less linear fashion from the past. Moreover, they are designed to sustain the imagined character of war which was typical of the Cold War era and utilized in such a way as to minimize own casualties. The preferred technique is spectacular aerial bombing which reproduces the appearance of classical war for public consumption and which has very little to do with reality on the ground. Hence Baudrillard's famous remark that the Gulf War did not take place.' These complex sophisticated techniques have been used not only in Iraq, but also in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Somalia with, I would argue, relatively little practical relevance even though they have caused many civilian casualties.

I share the view that there has been a revolution in military affairs, but it is a revolution in the social relations of warfare, not in technology, even though the changes in social relations are influenced by and make use of new technology. Beneath the spectacular displays are real wars, which, even in the case of the 1991 Iraq war in which hundreds and thousands of Kurds and Shiites died, are better explained in terms of my conception of new wars.

I argue that the new wars have to be understood in the context of the process known as globalization. By globalization, I mean the intensification of global interconnectedness - political, economic, military and cultural. Even though I accept the argument that globalization has its roots in modernity or even earlier, I consider that the globalization of the 1980s and 1990s is a qualitatively new phenomenon which can, at least in part, be explained as a consequence of the revolution in information technologies and dramatic improvements in communication and data-processing. This process of intensifying interconnectedness is a contradictory process involving both integration and fragmentation, homogenization and diversification, globalization and localization. It is often argued that the new wars are a consequence of the end of the Cold War; they reflect a power vacuum which is typical of transition periods in world affairs. It is undoubtedly true that the consequences of the end of the Cold
War— the availability of surplus arms, the discrediting of socialist ideologies, the disintegration of totalitarian empires, the withdrawal of superpower support to client regimes— contributed in important ways to the new wars. But equally, the end of the Cold War could be viewed as the way in which the Eastern bloc succumbed to the inevitable encroachment of globalization— the crumbling of the last bastions of territorial autarchy, the moment when Eastern Europe was 'opened up' to the rest of the world.

The impact of globalization is visible in many of the new wars. The global presence in these wars can include international reporters, mercenary troops and military advisers, diaspora volunteers as well as a veritable 'army' of international agencies ranging from non-governmental organizations (NGOs) like Oxfam, Save the Children, Médecins Sans Frontières, Human Rights Watch and the International Red Cross to international institutions like the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the European Union (EU), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), the Organization for African Unity (OAU) and the United Nations (UN) itself, including peacekeeping troops. Indeed, the wars epitomize a new kind of global/local divide between those members of a global class who can speak English, have access to fax, e-mail and satellite television, who use dollars or deutschmarks or credit cards, and who can travel freely, and those who are excluded from global processes, who live off what they can sell or barter or what they receive in humanitarian aid, whose movement is restricted by roadblocks, visas and the cost of travel, and who are prey to sieges, forced famines, landmines, etc.

In the literature on globalization, a central concern has to do with the implications of global interconnectedness for the future of the territorially based sovereignty— that is to say, for the future of the modern state. The new wars arise in the context of the erosion of the autonomy of the state and in some extreme cases the disintegration of the state. In particular, they occur in the context of the erosion of the monopoly of legitimate organized violence. This monopoly is eroded from above and from below. It has been eroded from above by the transnationalization of military forces which began during the two world wars and was institutionalized by the bloc system during the Cold War and by innumerable transnational connections between armed forces that developed in the post-war period. The capacity of states to use force unilaterally against other states has been greatly weakened. This is partly for practical reasons— the growing destructiveness of military technology and the increasing interconnectedness of states, especially in the military field. It is difficult to imagine nowadays a state or group of states risking a large-scale war which could be even more destructive than what was experienced during the first and second world wars. Moreover, military alliances, international arms production and trade, various forms of military cooperation and exchanges, arms control agreements, etc. have created a form of global military integration. It is also due to the evolution of international norms. The principle that unilateral aggression is illegitimate was first codified in the Kellogg-Briand pact of 1928, and reinforced after World War II in the UN Charter and through the reasoning used in the war crimes trials in Nuremberg and Tokyo.

At the same time, the monopoly of organized violence is eroded from below by privatization. Indeed, it could be argued that the new wars are part of a process which is more or less a reversal of the processes through which modern states evolved. As I argue in chapter 2, the rise of the modern state was intimately connected to war. In order to fight wars, rulers needed to increase taxation and borrowing, to eliminate ‘wastage’ as a result of crime, corruption and inefficiency, to regularize armed forces and police and to eliminate private armies, and to mobilize popular support in order to raise money and men. As war became the exclusive province of the state, so the growing destructiveness of war against other states was paralleled by a process of growing security at home; hence the way in which the term ‘civil’ came to mean internal. The new wars occur in situations in which state revenues decline because of the decline of the economy as well as the spread of criminality, corruption and inefficiency, violence is increasingly privatized both as a result of growing organized crime and the emergence of paramilitary groups, and political legitimacy is disappearing. Thus the distinctions between external barbarity and domestic civility, between the combatant as the legitimate bearer of arms and the non-combatant, between the soldier or policeman and the criminal, are breaking down. The barbarity of war between states may have become a thing of the past. In its place is a new type of organized violence.
that is more pervasive, but also perhaps less extreme.

In chapter 3, I use the example of the war in Bosnia-
Herzegovina to illustrate the main features of the new wars, mainly because it is the war with which I am most familiar. The war in Bosnia-Herzegovina shares many of the characteristics of wars in other places. But in one sense it is exceptional; it has become the focus of global attention. More resources – governmental and non-governmental – have been concentrated there than in any other new war. On the one hand, this means that, as a case study, it has atypical features. On the other hand, it also means that it has become the paradigm case, from which different lessons are drawn, the example which is used to argue out different general positions, and, at the same time, a laboratory in which different ways of managing the new wars are experimented.

The new wars can be contrasted with earlier wars in terms of their goals, the methods of warfare and how they are financed. The goals of the new wars are about identity politics in contrast to the geo-political or ideological goals of earlier wars. In chapter 4, I argue that, in the context of globalization, ideological and/or territorial cleavages of an earlier era have increasingly been supplanted by an emerging political cleavage between what I call cosmopolitanism, based on inclusive, universalist, multicultural values, and the politics of particularist identities. This cleavage can be explained in terms of the growing divide between those who are part of global processes and those who are excluded, but it should not be equated with this division. Among the global class are members of transnational networks based on exclusivist identity, while at the local level there are many courageous individuals who refuse the politics of particularism.

By identity politics, I mean the claim to power on the basis of a particular identity – be it national, clan, religious or linguistic. In one sense, all wars involve a clash of identities – British against French, communists against democrats. But my point is that these earlier identities were either linked to a notion of state interest or to some forward-looking project – ideas about how society should be organized. Nineteenth-century European nationalisms or post-colonial nationalisms, for example, presented themselves as emancipatory nation-building projects. The new identity politics is about the claim to power on the basis of labels – in so far as there are ideas about political or social change, they tend to relate to an idealized nostalgic representation of the past. It is often claimed that the new wave of identity politics is merely a throwback to the past, a resurgence of ancient hatreds kept under control by colonialism and/or the Cold War. While it is true that the narratives of identity politics depend on memory and tradition, it is also the case that these are ‘reinvented’ in the context of the failure or the corrosion of other sources of political legitimacy – the discrediting of socialism or the nation-building rhetoric of the first generation of post-colonial leaders. These backward-looking political projects arise in the vacuum created by the absence of forward-looking projects. Unlike the politics of ideas which are open to all and therefore tend to be integrative, this type of identity politics is inherently exclusive and therefore tends to fragmentation.

There are two aspects of the new wave of identity politics which specifically relate to the process of globalization. First, the new wave of identity politics is both local and global, national as well as transnational. In many cases, there are significant diaspora communities whose influence is greatly enhanced by the ease of travel and improved communication. Alienated diaspora groups in advanced industrial or oil-rich countries provide ideas, funds and techniques, thereby imposing their own frustrations and fantasies on what is often a very different situation. Second, this politics makes use of the new technology. The speed of political mobilization is greatly increased by the use of the electronic media. The effect of television, radio or videos on what is often a non-reading public cannot be overestimated. The protagonists of the new politics often display the symbols of a global mass culture – Mercedes cars, Rolex watches, Rayban sunglasses – combined with the labels that signify their own brand of particularistic cultural identity.

The second characteristic of the new wars is the changed mode of warfare – the means through which the new wars are fought. The strategies of the new warfare draw on the experience of both guerrilla warfare and counterinsurgency, yet they are quite distinctive. In conventional or regular war, the goal is the capture of territory by military means; battles are the decisive encounters of the war. Guerrilla warfare developed as a way of getting around the massive concentrations of military force which are characteristic of conventional war. In guerrilla warfare,
The third way in which the new wars can be contrasted with earlier wars is what I call the new ‘globalized’ war economy, which is elaborated in chapter 5 along with the mode of warfare. The new globalized war economy is almost exactly the opposite of the war economies of the two world wars. The latter were centralized, totalizing and autarchic. The new war economies are decentralized. Participation in the war is low and unemployment is extremely high. Moreover, these economies are heavily dependent on external resources. In these wars, domestic production declines dramatically because of global competition, physical destruction or interruptions to normal trade, as does tax revenue. In these circumstances, the fighting units finance themselves through plunder and the black market or through external assistance. The latter can take the following forms: remittances from the diaspora, ‘taxation’ of humanitarian assistance, support from neighbouring governments or illegal trade in arms, drugs or valuable commodities such as oil or diamonds. All of these sources can only be sustained through continued violence so that a war logic is built into the functioning of the economy. This retrograde set of social relationships, which is entrenched by war, has a tendency to spread across borders through refugees or organized crime or ethnic minorities. It is possible to identify clusters of war economies or near war economies in places like the Balkans, the Caucasus, Central Asia, the Horn of Africa, Central Africa or West Africa.

Because the various warring parties share the aim of sowing ‘fear and hatred’, they operate in a way that is mutually reinforcing, helping each other to create a climate of insecurity and suspicion – indeed, it is possible to find examples in both Eastern Europe and Africa of mutual cooperation for both military and economic purposes. Often, among the first civilians to be targeted are those who espouse a different politics, who try to maintain inclusive social relations and some sense of public morality. Thus though the new wars appear to be between different linguistic, religious or tribal groups, they can also be presented as wars in which those who represent particularist identity politics cooperate in suppressing the values of civility and multiculturalism. In other words, they can be understood as wars between exclusivism and cosmopolitanism.

This analysis of new wars has implications for the management of conflicts, which I explore in chapter 6. There is no
possible long-term solution within the framework of identity politics. And because these are conflicts with extensive social and economic ramifications, top-down approaches are likely to fail. In the early 1990s there was great optimism about the prospects for humanitarian intervention to protect civilians. However, the practice of humanitarian intervention has, I would argue, been shackled by a kind of myopia about the character of the new warfare. The persistence of inherited mandates, the tendency to interpret these wars in traditional terms, has been the main reason why humanitarian intervention has not only failed to prevent the wars but may have actually helped to sustain them in various ways, for example, through the provision of humanitarian aid, which is an important source of income for the warring parties, or through the legitimization of war criminals by inviting them to the negotiating table, or through the effort to find political compromises based on exclusivist assumptions.

The key to any long-term solution is the restoration of legitimacy, the reconstitution of the control of organized violence by public authorities, whether local, national or global. This is both a political process – the rebuilding of trust in and support for public authorities – and a legal process – the re-establishment of a rule of law within which public authorities operate. This cannot be done on the basis of particularistic politics. An alternative forward-looking cosmopolitan political project which would cross the global/local divide and reconstruct legitimacy around an inclusive, democratic set of values has to be counterposed against the politics of exclusivism. In all the new wars there are local people and places who struggle against the politics of exclusivism – the Hutus and Tutsis who called themselves Hutusis and tried to defend their localities against genocide, the non-nationalists in the cities of Bosnia-Herzegovina, particularly Sarajevo and Tuzla, who kept alive civic multicultural values, the elders in Northwest Somaliland who negotiated peace. What is needed is an alliance between local defenders of civility and transnational institutions which would guide a strategy aimed at controlling violence. Such a strategy would include political, military and economic components. It would operate within a framework of international law, based on that body of international law that comprises both the laws of warfare and human rights, which could perhaps be termed cosmopolitan law. In this context, peacekeeping could be reconceptualized as cosmopolitan law-enforcement. Since the new wars are, in a sense, a mixture of war, crime and human rights violations, so the agents of cosmopolitan law-enforcement have to be a mixture of soldiers and policemen. I also argue that a new strategy of reconstruction, which includes the reconstruction of social, civic and institutional relationships, should supplant the current dominant approaches of structural adjustment or humanitarianism.

In the final chapter of the book, I discuss the implications of the argument for global order. Although the new wars are concentrated in Africa, Eastern Europe and Asia, they are a global phenomenon not just because of the presence of global and global networks, nor because they are reported globally. The characteristics of the new wars I have described are to be found in North America and Western Europe as well. The right-wing militia groups in the United States are not so very different from the paramilitary groups in Eastern Europe or Africa. Indeed, in the United States it is reported that private security officers outnumber police officers by 2:1. Nor is the salience of identity politics and the growing disillusionment with formal politics just a Southern and Eastern phenomenon. The violence in the inner cities of Western Europe and North America can, in some senses, be described as new wars. It is sometimes said that the advanced industrial world is integrating and the poorer parts of the world are fragmenting. I would argue that all parts of the world are characterized by a combination of integration and fragmentation even though the tendencies to integration are greater in the North and the tendencies to fragmentation may be greater in the South and East.

It is no longer possible to insulate parts of the world from other parts. Neither the idea that we can re-create some kind of bipolar or multipolar world order on the basis of identity – Christianity versus Islam, for example – nor the idea that the 'anarchy' in places like Africa and Eastern Europe can be contained is feasible if my analysis of the changing character of organized violence has some basis in reality. This is why the cosmopolitan project has to be a global project even if it is, as it must be, local or regional in application.

The book is based, first and foremost, on direct experience of the new wars, especially in the Balkans and the Transcaucasian region. As one of the Chairs of the Helsinki Citizens' Assembly (HCA), I have travelled extensively in these areas and learned
much of what I know from the critical intellectuals and activists involved in local branches of the HCA. In particular, in Bosnia-Herzegovina, HCA was given the status of an implementing agency of UNHCR, which enabled me to move around the country during the war in support of local activists. I was also lucky enough to have access to the various institutions responsible for carrying out the policies of the international community; as chair of HCA, it was one of my tasks, along with others, to present the ideas and proposals of local branches to governments and international institutions such as the EU, NATO, the OSCE and the UN. As an academic, I was able to supplement and put into context this knowledge through reading, through exchanges with colleagues working in related fields and through research projects undertaken for the United Nations University (UNU) and the European Commission. In particular, I was greatly helped by the newsletters, news digests, pleas for help and monitoring reports that now can be received daily on the internet.

The aim of this book is not simply to inform, although I have tried to provide information and to back my assertions with examples. The aim is to offer a different perspective, the perspective derived from the experiences of critically minded individuals on the ground, tempered by my own experience in various international fora. It is a contribution to the reconceptualization of patterns of violence and war that has to be undertaken if the tragedies that are encroaching in many parts of the world are to be halted. I am not an optimist, yet my practical suggestions may seem utopian. I offer them in hope, not in confidence, as the only alternative to a grim future.

2

Old Wars

As Clausewitz was fond of pointing out, war is a social activity. It involves the mobilization and organization of individual men, almost never women, for the purpose of inflicting physical violence; it entails the regulation of certain types of social relationships and has its own particular logic. Clausewitz, who was arguably the greatest exponent of modern war, insisted that war could not be reduced either to art or to science. Sometimes, he likened war to business competition and often used economic analogies to illustrate his points.

Every society has its own characteristic form of war. What we tend to perceive as war, what policy-makers and military leaders define as war, is, in fact, a specific phenomenon which took shape in Europe somewhere between the fifteenth and eighteenth centuries, although it has passed through several different phases since then. It was a phenomenon that was intimately bound up with the evolution of the modern state. It went through several phases, as I have tried to show in table 2.1, from the relatively limited wars of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries associated with the growing power of the absolutist state, to the more revolutionary wars of the nineteenth century such as the Napoleonic Wars or the American Civil War, both of which were linked to the establishment of nation-states, to the total wars of the early twentieth century, and the imagined Cold War of the late twentieth century, which were wars of alliances and, later, blocs. Each of these phases was characterized by a different mode
of warfare, involving different types of military forces, different strategies and techniques, different relations and means of warfare. But despite these differences, war was recognizably the same phenomenon: a construction of the centralized, 'rationalized', hierarchically ordered, territorialized modern state. As the centralized, territorialized modern state gives way to new types of polity emerging out of new global processes, so war, as we presently conceive it, is becoming an anachronism.

This chapter aims to provide a stylized description of old wars. Actual warfare never exactly fitted the stylized description. This type of war was predominantly European. There were always rebellions, colonial wars or guerrilla wars, both in Europe and elsewhere. They were sometimes described as 'irregular warfare' or else not called war at all. Instead, they were called uprisings, insurgencies or, more recently, low-intensity conflict. Nevertheless, it is the stylized notion of war that still profoundly affects our thinking about war and dominates, even today, the way policy-makers conceive of security.

### War and the Emergence of the Modern State

Clausewitz defined war as 'an act of violence intended to compel our opponent to fulfill our will.' This definition implied that 'we' and 'our opponent' were states, and the 'will' of one state could be clearly defined. Hence war, in the Clausewitzean definition, is war between states for a definable political end, i.e. state interest.

The notion of war as state activity was only firmly established towards the end of the eighteenth century. The only precedent for this type of war was ancient Rome, although even in this case it was one-sided; the state, i.e. Rome, fought against barbarians who had no notion of the separation of state and society. Van Creveld argues that war between the Greek city-states did not count as state warfare since there was no clear distinction between the state and the citizens. Wars were fought by citizen militias, and contemporary accounts of warfare tended to refer to war between 'the Athenians' and 'the Spartans' rather than to war between 'Athens' and 'Sparta'.

- Between the fall of the Roman Empire and the late Middle Ages, war was fought by a variety of actors – the Church, feudal barons, barbarian tribes,
city-states – each with its own characteristic military formations. Hence, the barbarian mode of fighting was generally based on warrior cults, the individual warrior being the key military unit. Feudal barons depended on knights, with their codes of honour and chivalry, supported by serfs. The city-states of Northern Italy typically depended on citizen militias much like the earlier Greek city-states.

In the early stages of European state formation, monarchs raised armies to fight wars from coalitions of feudal barons rather than the UN Secretary-General, today, has to mobilize voluntary contributions from individual states in order to raise a peacekeeping force. Gradually, they were able to consolidate territorial borders and to centralize power by using their growing economic power, derived from customs duties, various forms of taxation and borrowing from the emergent bourgeoisie, to raise mercenary armies which gave them a certain degree of independence from the barons. However, mercenary armies turned out to be unreliable; their loyalty could not be counted on. Moreover, they were disbanded after wars or for the winter. The cost of disbandment and of re-enlistment was often prohibitive and, in the closed seasons, the mercenaries could always find other less acceptable ways of making a living. Thus, mercenary armies came to be replaced by standing armies which enabled monarchs to create specialized, professional military forces. The introduction of drill and exercise, pioneered by Gustav Adolphus of Sweden and Prince William of Orange, kept the army occupied in periods when there was no open warfare. According to Keegan, the establishment of permanent infantry troops, the creation of compagnies d’ordonnance or regiments became the ‘device for securing the control of armed force by the state’. They were kept in garrison towns which became ‘schools of the nation’. Uniforms were introduced to distinguish soldiers from civilians. As Michael Roberts puts it, ‘the soldier became the King’s man for he wore the King’s coat’. Literally, as it turned out, because kings increasingly tended to wear military uniforms to exhibit their roles as military commanders.

The new type of military organization was to become typical of the emerging administrative arrangements that were associated with modernity. The soldier was the agent of what Max Weber called rational-legal authority:

The modern military officer is a type of appointed official who is clearly marked out by certain class distinctions... In this respect, such officers differ radically from elected military leaders; from charismatic condottieri; from the type of officers who recruit and lead mercenary armies as a capitalistic enterprise; and finally from the incumbents of commissions which have been purchased. There may be gradual transitions between these types. The patrimonial ‘retainer’ who is separated from the means of carrying out his function and the proprietor of a mercenary army for capitalistic purposes, have along with the private capitalistic entrepreneur, become pioneers of the modern type of bureaucracy.

The establishment of standing armies under the control of the state was an integral part of the monopolization of legitimate violence which was intrinsic to the modern state. State interest became the legitimate justification for war, supplanting concepts of justice, jus ad bellum, drawn from theology. The Clausewitzian insistence that war is a rational instrument for the pursuit of state interest – the continuation of politics by other means – constituted a secularization of legitimacy that paralleled developments in other spheres of activity. Once state interest had become the dominant legitimation of war, then claims of just cause by non-state actors could no longer be pursued through violent means.

In the same vein, there developed rules about what constituted legitimate warfare which were later codified in the laws of war. All types of warfare are characterized by rules; the very fact that warfare is a socially sanctioned activity, that it has to be organized and justified, requires rules. There is a thin dividing line between socially acceptable killing and what is ostracized by society. But that dividing line is defined differently in different periods. In the Middle Ages, the rules of warfare, jus in bello, were derived from papal authority. Under the modern state, a new set of secular rules had to be evolved. According to van Creveld:

To distinguish war from mere crime, it was defined as something waged by sovereign states and by them alone. Soldiers were defined as personnel licensed to engage in armed violence on behalf of the state... To obtain and maintain their license, soldiers had to be carefully registered, marked and controlled to the exclu-
sion of privateering. They were supposed to fight only when in uniform, carrying their arms 'openly' and obeying a commander who could be held responsible for their actions. They were not supposed to resort to 'dastardly' methods such as violating truces, taking up arms again after they had been taken prisoner, and the like. The civilian population was supposed to be left alone, 'military necessity' permitting.7

In order to finance standing armies, administration, taxation and borrowing had to be regularized. Throughout the eighteenth century, military spending accounted for around three-quarters of state budgets in most European states. Administrative reform had to be undertaken to improve tax-raising capacities; corruption had to be limited, if not eliminated, to prevent 'leakage'.8 War offices and secretaries of war had to be established to organize and improve the efficiency of expenditure. To extend borrowing, it was necessary to regularize the banking system and the creation of money, to separate the king's finance from the finance of the state and, ultimately, to establish central banks.9

Likewise, other means had to be found to establish law and order and justice within the territory of the state both to provide a secure basis for taxation and borrowing and for legitimacy. A kind of implicit contract was established whereby kings offered protection in exchange for funds. The elimination and/or outlawing of brigands, privateers and highwaymen eliminated private forms of 'protection', thus swelling the king's revenue-raising capacity, and created a basis for legitimate economic activity. Hence, parallel to the redefinition of war as war between states, as an external activity, was the process Anthony Giddens calls internal pacification, which included the introduction of monetary relations – e.g. wages and rent – in place of more direct coercion, the phasing out of violent forms of punishment such as flogging and hanging, and the establishment of civilian agencies for tax collection and domestic law-enforcement. Particularly important was the emerging distinction between the military and the civilian police responsible for domestic law and order.10

The process of monopolization of violence was by no means smooth and uninterrupted, nor did it take place at the same time or in the same way in different European states. The Prussian state, created after the Treaty of Westphalia out of the vari-

uous pieces of territory held by the House of Hohenzollern, is often considered a model. This state, which was an entirely artificial creation, was able in the eighteenth century to match the military strength of France with only one-fifth of the population, owing to the vigorous combination of military reform and rational administration introduced by Frederick William, the Great Elector, and his successors. In contrast, French kings faced continuous rebellions by the nobility and had enormous difficulty in regularizing administration and tax collection. Skocpol argues that a central consideration in explaining the French Revolution was the inability of the ancien régime to develop the administrative and financial capacity necessary to realize its military ambitions.11

Nor was the process as rational or as functional as this stylized description suggests. Michael Roberts insisted that it was military logic that led to the formation of standing armies. But it is difficult to distinguish the exigencies of war from the demands of domestic consolidation. Cardinal Richelieu favoured the establishment of a standing army because he saw it as a way to bring the nobles under control. Rousseau consistently argued that war was directed as much against subjects as against other states:

Again, anyone can understand that war and conquest without and the encroachments of despotism within give each other mutual support; that money and men are habitually taken at pleasure from a people of slaves to bring others beneath the same yoke; and that conversely war furnishes a pretext for exactions of money and another, no less plausible, for keeping large armies constantly on foot, to hold people at awe. In a word, anyone can see that aggressive princes wage war at least as much on their subjects as on their enemies, and that the conquering nation is left no better off than the conquered.12

While rational state interest was claimed to be the goal of war, more emotive causes have always been required to instil loyalty and to persuade men to risk their lives. It was, after all, religious fervour that inspired Cromwell's New Model Army, which was the earliest example of a modern professional force. Prussian success is often attributed to the force of Lutheranism.

By the end of the eighteenth century, it was possible to define the specific socially organized activity which we perceive as war.
It could be situated in the context of a whole series of new distinctions which were characteristic of the evolving state. These included:

- the distinction between public and private, between the sphere of state activity and non-state activity;
- the distinction between internal and external, between what took place within the clearly defined territory of the state and what took place outside;
- the distinction between the economic and the political which was associated with the rise of capitalism, the separation of private economic activity from public state activities, and the removal of physical coercion from economic activities;
- the distinction between the civil and the military, between domestic non-violent legal intercourse and external violent struggle, between civil society and barbarism;
- the distinction between the legitimate bearer of arms and the non-combatant or the criminal.

Above all, there emerged the distinction between war and peace itself. In place of more or less continuous violent activity, war became a discrete event, an aberration in what appeared to be a progressive evolution towards a civil society, not in today's sense of active citizenry and organized NGOs, but in the sense of day-to-day security, domestic peace, respect for law and justice. It became possible to conceive of 'perpetual peace'. Even though many of the great liberal thinkers understood the connection between state consolidation and war, they also anticipated that increasing interchange between states and growing accountability of states towards an informed public could usher in a more integrated Europe and a more peaceful world, an extension of civil society beyond national borders. It was Kant, after all, who pointed out in 1795 that the global community had shrunk to the point where a 'right violated anywhere could be felt everywhere'.

Clausewitz and the Wars of the Nineteenth Century

Clausewitz began to write On War in 1816, one year after the ending of the Napoleonic Wars. He had participated in the war on the losing side and had been taken prisoner, and the book is profoundly influenced by his experience. The Napoleonic Wars constituted the first people's war. Napoleon introduced conscription, the levée en masse, in 1793, and in 1794 he had 1,169,000 men under arms – the largest military force ever before created in Europe.

The central thesis of On War, particularly the first chapter which was the only chapter Clausewitz considered to be completed, is that war tends towards extremes. War is composed of three levels – the level of the state or the political leaders, the level of the army or the generals, and the level of the people. Roughly speaking, these three levels operate through reason, chance and strategy, and through emotion. From this trinitarian depiction of war, Clausewitz derived his concept of absolute war. Absolute war is best interpreted as a Hegelian abstract or ideal concept; it is the inner tendency of war that can be derived from the logic of the three different levels. It has its own existence, which is in tension with empirical realities.

The logic was expressed in terms of three 'reciprocal actions'. At a political level, the state always meets resistance in achieving its objectives and therefore has to press harder. At a military level, the aim has to be disarmament of the opponent in order to achieve the political objective, otherwise there is always a danger of counterattack. And, finally, the strength of will depends on popular feelings and sentiments; war unleashes passion and hostility that may be uncontrollable. For Clausewitz, war was a rational activity even though emotions and sentiments were mobilized in its service. In this sense, it is also a modern activity based on secular considerations and not confined by prohibitions derived from pre-rational conceptions of the world.

Real war differs from abstract war for two main reasons – political and military. First, the political objective may be limited and/or popular backing may be insufficient:

The more violent the excitement which precedes a war, by so much nearer will the war approach to its abstract form so much the more will it be directed to the destruction of the enemy so much the nearer will the military and political ends coincide so much the more purely military and less political the war appears to be but the weaker the motives and the tensions so much the less will be the natural direction of the military element – that is
force - be coincident with the direction which the political element indicates, so much the more must, therefore, the war become diverted from its natural direction.¹⁴

Second, war is always characterized by what Clausewitz calls 'friction' - problems of logistics, poor information, uncertain weather, indiscipline, difficult terrain, inadequate organization and so on - all of which slow down war and make it different in reality from paper plans. War, says Clausewitz, is a 'resistant medium' in which uncertainty, inflexibility and unforeseen circumstance all play their part. Real war is the outcome of the tension between political and practical constraints and the inner tendency for absolute war.

As forces increased in scale, it became more and more difficult for organization and command to be carried out by a single person. Hence there was a growing need for a strategic theory which could provide the basis for a shared discourse about war through which war could be organized. As Simkin puts it, there was a need for a 'jargon' which could guide common military doctrines and what later became known as standard operating procedures.¹⁵

Clausewitz provided the basic building blocks of a body of strategic thinking that was developed during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The two main theories of warfare - attrition theory and manoeuvre theory - were initially developed in On War along with his discussion of offence and defence and of concentration and dispersion. Attrition theory means that victory is achieved by wearing down the enemy, by imposing on the enemy a higher casualty rate or 'attrition rate'. Attrition theory is usually associated with defensive strategies and with high concentrations of force. Manoeuvre theory depends on surprise and pre-emption. In this case, mobility and dispersion are important to create uncertainty and to achieve speed. As Clausewitz pointed out, these two theories are necessarily complementary. It is very difficult to achieve a decisive victory through attrition. Yet at the same time, a strategy based on manoeuvre ultimately needs a superiority of force to be successful.

The most salient conclusion of On War is the importance of overwhelming force and a readiness to use force. This apparently simple point was not obvious in the early nineteenth-century context in which Clausewitz was writing. In the eighteenth century wars were fought, by and large, prudently, in order to conserve professional forces. There was a tendency to avoid battle; defensive sieges were preferred to offensive assaults; campaigns were halted for the winter and strategic retreats were frequent. For Clausewitz, battle was the 'single activity of war'; it was the decisive moment, which he compared to cash payment in the marketplace. The mobilization of force and the application of force were the most important factors in determining the outcome of war:

As the use of physical power to the utmost extent by no means excludes the cooperation of the intelligence, it follows that he who uses force unsparingly, without reference to the bloodshed involved, must obtain a superiority if his adversary uses less vigour in its application. The former then dictates the law to the latter and both proceed to extremities to which the only limitations are those imposed by the amount of counteracting force on each side.¹⁶

The Napoleonic model in which all citizens were mobilized was not to be repeated until the First World War. However, several developments during the nineteenth century brought the Clausewitzian version of modern war closer to reality. One was the dramatic advance in industrial technology which began to be applied to the military field. Particularly important was the development of the railway and the telegraph which enabled much greater and faster mobilization of armies; these techniques were used to great effect in the Franco-Prussian War, which ended with the unification of Germany in 1871. The mass production of guns, particularly small arms, was pioneered in the United States so that the American Civil War is often described as the first industrialized war. The development of military technology was one reason for the extension of state activity into the industrial sphere. The late nineteenth-century naval arms race marked the emergence of what was later to be described as the military-industrial complex in both Germany and Britain.

A second development was the growing importance of alliances. If overwhelming force was what mattered in war, then force could be augmented through alliances. By the end of the nineteenth century, alliances began to solidify - an important reason why the major powers were all drawn into the First World War.
A third important development was the codification of the laws of war which began in the mid-nineteenth century with the Declaration of Paris (1856), which regulated maritime commerce in wartime. In the American Civil War, a prominent German jurist was employed to draw up the so-called Lieber Code, which laid down the rules and basic principles for war on land and treated the rebels as an international opponent. The Geneva Convention of 1864 (inspired by Henri Dunant who founded the International Red Cross), the St Petersburg Declaration of 1868, the Hague Conferences of 1899 and 1907, and the London Conference of 1908, all contributed to a growing body of international law concerning the conduct of war – the treatment of prisoners, the sick and wounded, and non-combatants, as well as the concept of ‘military necessity’ and the definition of weapons and tactics that do not conform to this concept. While these rules were not always followed, they contributed importantly to a delineation of what constitutes legitimate warfare and the boundaries within which unsparing force could be applied. In a sense, they were an attempt to preserve the notion of war as a rational instrument of state policy in a context where the logic of war, the extremist tendencies of war combined with growing technological capacities, were leading to ever-increasing levels of destructiveness.

To sum up, modern war, as it developed in the nineteenth century, involved war between states with ever-increasing emphasis on scale and mobility, and an increasing need for ‘rational’ organization and ‘scientific’ doctrine to manage these large conglomerations of force.

The Total Wars of the Twentieth Century

In Clausewitz’s work, there was always a tension between his insistence on reason and his emphasis on will and emotion. Men of genius and military heroes are central characters in *On War*; sentiments like patriotism, honour and bravery are part of the fabric of the book. Equally significant, however, are his conclusions about the instrumental nature of war, the importance of scale and the need for an analytical conceptualization of war. Indeed, the tension between reason and emotion, art and science, attrition and manoeuvre, defence and offence, instrumentalism and extremism constitute the key components of Clausewitzian thought. This tension can be said to have reached breaking-point in the twentieth century.

First of all, the wars of the first half of the twentieth century were total wars involving a vast mobilization of national energies both to fight and to support the fighting through the production of arms and necessities. Clausewitz could not possibly have envisaged the awesome combination of mass production, mass politics and mass communications when harnessed to mass destruction. Nevertheless, war in the twentieth century has come as close as can be conceived to Clausewitz’s notion of absolute war, culminating in the discovery of nuclear weapons which, in theory, could wreak total destruction without ‘friction’. But at the same time, some of the characteristics of the new wars were anticipated in the total wars of the twentieth century. In a total war, the public sphere tries to incorporate the whole of society, thus eliminating the distinction between public and private. The distinction between the military and the civil, between combatants and non-combatants correspondingly starts to break down. In World War I, economic targets were considered legitimate military targets. In World War II, the term ‘genocide’ entered into legal parlance as a result of the extermination of the Jews.

On the Allied side, the indiscriminate bombing of civilians, creating a scale of devastation of genocidal proportions (even if it did not match the scale of extermination carried out by the Nazis), was justified on the grounds of breaking enemy morale – as ‘military necessity’, to use the language of the laws of war.

Second, as war involved more and more people, the justification of war in terms of state interest became increasingly hollow, if it ever had any convincing validity. War, as van Creveld points out, is a proof that men are not selfish. No individualistic utilitarian calculation can justify risking death. The main reason why mercenary armies were so unsatisfactory is that economic incentive is, of its nature, inadequate as a motivation for warfare. The same is true of ‘state interest’ – a concept that derives from the same school of positivistic thinking that gave rise to modern economics. Men go to war for a variety of individual reasons – adventure, honour, fear, comradeship, protection of ‘home and hearth’ – but socially organized legitimate violence needs a common goal in which the individual soldier can believe and which he shares with others. If soldiers are to be treated as
heroes and not as criminals, then heroic justification is needed to mobilize their energies, to persuade them to kill and risk being killed.

In the First World War, patriotism seemed sufficiently powerful to demand sacrifice and millions of young men volunteered to fight in the name of King and Country. The terrible experience of that war led to disillusion and despair and an attraction to more powerful abstract causes – what Gellner calls secular religions.¹⁹ For the Allied nations, World War II was literally a war against evil; whole societies were mobilized, knowing what war entailed in a way that their predecessors in World War I did not: the fight against Nazism and the protection of their own ways of life. They fought in the name of democracy and/or socialism against fascism. In the Cold War, the same ideologies were called upon to justify the ever-continuing arms race. To justify the threat of mass destruction, the Cold War was presented as a struggle of good against evil along the lines of the wartime experience. That this justification was either unconvincing or insufficient is probably the main explanation for the failure of post-war military interventions, particularly the American intervention in Vietnam and the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan. The obstacles to successful counterinsurgency have been extensively analysed, but the central point is that soldiers did not feel like heroes. These were faraway countries where the rights and wrongs of the situation were not self-evident. At best, those who participated in the wars felt like pawns in a game of high politics they could not comprehend and, at worst, like murderers. In the United States – although not in Russia, which was to repeat the same mistake in Chechnya – where political leaders are highly conscious of public opinion, this experience has led to a deep reluctance to risk American casualties. The consequence has been the development of strategies, largely based on air power in which force can be applied without risking loss of life on the American side, which Edward Luttwak calls ‘Post-Heroic Warfare’²⁰

Gabriel Kolko, in his monumental work on twentieth-century warfare,²¹ argues that wars are always started by a ‘handful of men’ who suffer from ‘socially sanctioned blindness’. Political leaders operate within an elite consensus that excludes dissenters, and consequently this allows for the transmission of false information and misleading illusions about what a war involves. His argument offers strong support for the thesis that democracies are less likely to be involved in wars. Undoubtedly, more accountable leaders would be less likely to embark on impossible adventures. In the case of World War I, however, the blindness of political leaders seems to have been shared by ordinary men and women. In the case of World War II, at least in Britain, public opinion was probably more belligerent than the appeasing political leaders. But embarking on wars is only the beginning; what matters in sustaining war is the extent to which the goal of war is recognized by those who participate in the war as legitimate. War is a paradoxical activity. On the one hand, it is an act of extreme coercion, involving socially organized order, discipline, hierarchy and obedience. On the other hand, it requires loyalty, devotion and belief from each individual. What has become clear in the post-war period is that there are few causes that constitute a legitimate goal for war, for which people are prepared to die.

In fact, the idea that war is illegitimate already began to gain acceptance after the trauma of the First World War. The Kellogg-Briand Pact of 1928 renounced war as an ‘instrument of policy’ except in self-defence. This prohibition was reinforced by the Nuremberg and Tokyo trials in which German and Japanese leaders were prosecuted for ‘planning aggressive war’ and codified in the UN Charter. Nowadays, it does seem to have become widely accepted that the use of force is only justifiable either in self-defence or if it is sanctioned by the international community, in particular, the UN Security Council.

Third, the techniques of modern war have developed to a point of sharply diminishing utility. The great battleships of the late nineteenth century turned out to be more or less irrelevant in the First World War. What mattered was mass-produced firepower. World War I was a defensive war of attrition in which rows of young men, directed by generals schooled in nineteenth-century strategic thought to use force unsparingly, were mowed down by machine guns. Towards the end of the war, the introduction of tanks and aircraft enabled an offensive breakthrough which made possible the type of manoeuvre warfare which was to characterize World War II. In the post-war period, the increase in the lethality and accuracy of all munitions, at least in part due to the revolution in electronics, has greatly increased the vulnerability of all weapons systems. The weapons platforms
of World War II have become extraordinarily complex and expensive, thus diminishing their utility because of cost and logistical requirements, combined with ever-diminishing improvements in performance. The problems of mobilization and inflexibility, and the risks of attrition, have been magnified in the post-war period, making it almost prohibitive to mount a major operation except against a clearly inferior enemy, as in the Falklands/Malvinas war of 1982 or the Gulf operation of 1991.

The logical endpoint of the technological trajectory of modern war is, of course, weapons of mass destruction, particularly nuclear weapons. A nuclear war would be one in which force is applied in the extreme in a matter of minutes. But what rational purpose could ever justify their use? In the post-war period, many strategic thinkers have grappled with this problem. Do not nuclear weapons nullify the premise of modern warfare – state interest?

Finally, in the post-war period, alliances have been rigidified so that the distinction between what is internal and what is external is also eroded. Already in the Second World War, it became apparent that individual nation-states could not fight wars unilaterally. This lesson was applied in the construction of the post-war alliances. Integrated command systems established a military division of labour in which only the superpowers had the independent capacity to wage full-scale wars. Essentially, European countries, in the post-war period, abandoned one of the essential attributes of sovereignty – the monopoly of legitimate organized violence – and, at least in Western Europe, what was effectively a transnational civil society was extended to a group of nations. There is a widespread discussion about the social science finding that democracies do not go to war with each other. Interestingly enough, what is not discussed is the integration of military forces on a transnational basis which provides a practical constraint against war. Claus Offe makes a similar point about the 1989 revolutions in Eastern Europe; the reason they were so peaceful, he argues, was because of the integration of military forces in the Warsaw Pact and this also explains the Romanian exception.

Outside the alliances, a network of military connections was established through looser alliances, the arms trade, the provision of military support and training, creating a set of patron-client relationships which also inhibited the capacity to wage war unilaterally. Since 1945, there have been very few interstate wars and these (India and Pakistan, Greece and Turkey, Israel and the Arab states) were generally restrained by superpower intervention. The exception, which proves the rule, was the Iran–Iraq war. This war lasted for eight years and could be waged unilaterally because of the availability of oil revenues. Both sides learned the disutility of modern conventional warfare. To quote van Creveld again:

A million or so casualties later, the belligerents found themselves back at their starting points. The Iranians were taught that, in the face of massive firepower assisted by gas, their fanatic young troops would not be able to achieve a breakthrough except on the road to heaven. The Iraqis learnt that conventional superiority alone was incapable of inflicting a meaningful defeat on a large country with almost three times their own population. Both sides were constantly hampered by the fear that, should the flow of oil be seriously disrupted, their conflict would attract superpower intervention. Both wanted a cease-fire and were relieved when one was finally concluded.

The erosion of the distinctions between public and private, military and civil, internal and external, also calls into question the distinction between war and peace itself. The Second World War was a total war, representing a fusion between war, state and society – a fusion which continued to characterize totalitarian societies. The Cold War sustained a kind of permanent war psychosis based on the theory of deterrence which is best encapsulated in the slogan ‘War is Peace’ in Orwell’s Nineteen Eighty-four. The Cold War kept alive the idea of war, while avoiding its reality. The maintenance of large standing armies integrated in military alliances, the continued technological arms race, and the levels of military spending hitherto never experienced in peacetime, were supposed to have guaranteed peace because no war of the stylized type described in this chapter broke out on European soil. At the same time, many wars took place all over the world, including Europe, in which more people died than in the Second World War. But because these wars did not fit our conception of war, they were discounted.

The irregular, informal wars of the second half of the twentieth century, starting with the wartime resistance movements
and the guerrilla warfare of Mao Tse-tung and his successors represent the harbingers of the new forms of warfare. The actors, techniques and counter-techniques which emerged out of the cracks of modern warfare were to provide the basis for new ways of socially organizing violence. During the Cold War, their character was obscured by the dominance of the East/West conflict; they were conceived as a peripheral part of the central conflict. Even before the end of the Cold War, when the threat of another ‘modern war’ really began to recede, we began to become aware of what Luttwak calls the new bellicosity.

3

Bosnia-Herzegovina: A Case Study of a New War

The war in Bosnia-Herzegovina lasted from 6 April 1992 until 12 October 1995, when a ceasefire agreement, brokered by the US Assistant Secretary of State Richard Holbrooke, came into effect. Some 260,000 people died and around two-thirds of the population were displaced from their homes. Violations of human rights took place on a massive scale, including forced detention, torture, rape and castration. Many historic monuments of incalculable value were destroyed.

The war in Bosnia-Herzegovina has become the archetypal example, the paradigm of the new type of warfare. There are many other wars in the world, as Boutros Boutros-Ghali insensitively pointed out to Sarajevans, when he visited the city on 31 December 1992. If human tragedies can be measured in numbers, it can even be asserted, as Boutros-Ghali did, that more terrible things have happened in other places. But the war in Bosnia-Herzegovina has impinged on global consciousness the way no other recent war has done.

The war mobilized a huge international effort, including high-level political talks involving all the major governments, the humanitarian efforts of international institutions and NGOs, as well as far-ranging media attention. Individual careers were made or broken, world status in the post-Cold War era was, at least partially, determined — the dismal inadequacy of the EU foreign policy-making capacity, the floundering of the UN, the US comeback, the redefinition of Russia’s role. The current massive
involvement of NATO troops, as well as troops from Partnership for Peace countries, will have profound consequences both for the future of NATO and the institutional framework of European security and for the way in which we conceive of peacekeeping.

For these reasons, the war in Bosnia–Herzegovina is likely to turn out to be one of those defining events, in which entrenched political assumptions, strategic thinking and international arrangements are both challenged and reconstructed. While the Gulf War was significant as the first post-Cold War international crisis, the Bosnian crisis lasted longer and is more representative of wars of the 1990s. When the war began, the central actors in the so-called international community had not had time to adjust their inherited mindsets either about the character of war or about their perception of Yugoslavia. The international reaction was at best confused and sometimes stupid, at worst culpable for what happened. But during the war some attitudes changed, especially among those operating on the ground. A few far-sighted individuals, both from Bosnia itself and from within international institutions, were, in perhaps marginal ways, able to influence and encourage new ways of thinking. As the century draws to a close, much depends, perhaps Europe’s future itself, on how far lessons will have been learned and even absorbed.

This chapter traces the deficiencies of inherited ways of perceiving the war and sets out the need for a new type of analysis in relation to political and military assumptions about why and how wars are fought in the turn-of-the-century context and the implications for international involvement.

Why the War was Fought – Political Goals

Bosnia–Herzegovina was the most ethnically mixed republic of former Yugoslavia; according to the 1991 census, the population consisted of Muslims (43.7 per cent), Serbs (31.4 per cent), Croats (17.3 per cent) and the remainder included Yugoslavs, Jews, Roma and people who described themselves in a variety of other ways such as ‘giraffes’ or ‘lampshades’. In fact, around a quarter of the population were intermarried and, in urban areas, a secular pluralistic culture flourished. The main difference between the ethnic groups was religion – the Serbs were Orthodox and the Croats were Catholic. In the first democratic elections of November 1990, parties which claimed to represent the different ethnic groups received over 70 per cent of the votes and controlled the National Assembly. These parties were the SDA (the Party of Democratic Action) which was the Muslim nationalist party, the SDS (the Serbian Democratic Party) and the HDZ (the Croatian Democratic Party). Although they promised during the election campaign that their aim was for the three communities to live peacefully together, these three groups became the parties to the conflict.

The political goals of the Bosnian Serbs and the Bosnian Croats, backed by Serbia and Croatia, respectively, were ‘ethnic cleansing’. This phenomenon has been defined by the UN Commission of Experts as ‘rendering an area ethnically homogeneous by using force or intimidation to remove from a given area persons from another ethnic or religious group’. They wanted to establish ethnically homogeneous territories which would eventually become part of Serbia and Croatia, and to partition the ethnically mixed Bosnia–Herzegovina between a Serbian and a Croat part. To justify these goals, they used the language of self-determination which was drawn from the earlier communist rhetoric about wars of national liberation in the third world. The goal of the Bosnian government, which was controlled by the Bosnian Muslims, was the territorial integrity of Bosnia–Herzegovina, since Muslims were a majority in Bosnia–Herzegovina and had most to lose from partition; from time to time, the Bosnian government was prepared to consider a rump Muslim state or ethnic cantonization.

Ethnic cleansing has been a characteristic of East European nationalism in the twentieth century. The term was first used to describe the expulsion of Greeks and Armenians from Turkey in the early 1920s. Ethnic cleansing takes a variety of forms, ranging from economic and legal discrimination to appalling forms of violence. The milder form was practised by Croatia after the elections of 1990 when Serbs began to lose their jobs and when Serb policemen in Serb majority areas were replaced. The form of violent ethnic cleansing that was to be typical of the war in Bosnia–Herzegovina was initiated by the Serbs in Croatia together with the JNA (the Yugoslav National Army), and sundry paramilitary groups, systematized by the Bosnian
Serbs and their allies in Bosnia–Herzegovina, and copied by theCroats both in Bosnia–Herzegovina and in Croatia.

How is this form of virulent ethnic nationalism to be explained?The dominant perception of the war is expressed in the terms'Balkanization' or 'tribalism'. The Balkans, it is argued, situatedat the confluence of civilizations and caught historically betweenthe shifting borders of the Ottoman and Austro-Hungarianempires, has always been characterized by ethnic divisions andri/valries, by ancient hatreds that persist just beneath the surface.These divisions were temporarily suppressed during the communistperiod, only to burst forth again in the first democraticelections. 'A Letter from 1920', a short story written by IvoAndrić between the two world wars, is widely quoted as evi-dence for this view. In the story, a young man decides to leaveBosnia for ever, because it is 'a country of fear and hate'.4

This perception of the war, evident, for example, in DavidOwen's book, pervaded European policy-making circles and thehigh-level negotiations.5 It was deliberately fostered by some ofthe parties to the conflict themselves. Thus Karadžić, the BosnianSerb leader, said that Serbs, Croats and Muslims were like 'catsand dogs', while Tudjman, the Croatian president, repeatedlyemphasized that Serbs and Croats could not live together becauseCroats were Europeans while Serbs were Easterners, likeTurks or Albanians.6 (Interestingly enough, he seems, at leastfrom time to time, to think it is possible to live with Muslimssince in his view they are really Croats, and Croatia and Bosnia–Herzegovina were traditionally united. On the other hand, theSerbs consider Muslims to be like Turks, in other words, likethemselves according to Croat conceptions!)

It is a view which corresponds to the primordial view ofnationalism, that nationalism is inherent and deeply rooted inhuman societies deriving from organically developed 'ethnies'.7What it does not explain is why there are long periods of coexis-tence of different communities or nationalities, nor why wavesof nationalism take place at particular times. It does not explainthe undoubted existence of alternative conceptions of Bosnianand indeed Yugoslav society as a rich unified culture, as opposedtomulticulturalism, which includes the various religiouscommunities and languages and also important elements of secul-arity.8 Undoubtedly, Bosnia–Herzegovina has a grim history,especially during the twentieth century, but so do other parts ofEurope. The view that aggressive nationalism is somehow pecu liar to the Balkans allows us to assume that the rest of Europe isimmune to the Bosnian phenomenon. The former Yugoslavia,despite the fact that it was earlier considered to be the mostliberal of the communist regimes and first on the list of potentialnew members of the EU, has become a black spot in the middleof Europe surrounded by other supposedly more 'civilized'societies - Greece to the south, Bulgaria and Romania to the east,Austria, Hungary and Italy to the north and west. But what ifthecurrent wave of nationalism has contemporary causes? Doesnot the primordial view amount to a kind of myopia, an excusefor inaction, or worse?

There is an alternative view which holds that nationalism has beenreconstructed for political purposes. This view correspondsmore closely to the 'instrumentalist' conception of nationalism,according to which nationalist movements reinvent particularversions of history and memory to construct new cultural forms thatcan be used for political mobilization.9 What happened inYugoslavia was the disintegration of the state both at a federallevel and, in the case of Croatia and Bosnia–Herzegovina, at arepublican level. If we define the state in the Weberian sense asthe organization which 'successfully upholds the monopoly oflegitimate organized violence', then it is possible to trace firstthecollapse of legitimacy and, second, the collapse of the monop-olgy of organized violence. The emergence of virulent na-tionalism, which did indeed construct itself on the basis of certaintraditional social divisions and prejudices divisions which bynob means encompassed the whole of contemporary Yugoslav societysociety has to be understood in terms of the struggle, onthepart of increasingly desperate (and corrupt) elites, to control theremnants of the state. Moreover, in a post-totalitarian society,control is much more extensive than in more pluralistic socie-ties, extending to all major social institutions - enterprises,schools, universities, hospitals, media and so forth.

To understand why the state ruptured along national linescan be best explained in terms of the recent history of Yugo sla-via rather than by delving into the pre-communist past. TheTitoist regime was a totalitarian regime in the sense of central ized control over all aspects of social life. It was more liberalthan other regimes in Eastern Europe; it allowed a certain de gree of economic pluralism; from the 1960s Yugoslav citizens
were allowed to travel and hold foreign currency accounts; artistic and intellectual freedom was much greater than in other communist countries. The political identity of the Yugoslav regime was derived, in part, from the struggle of the partisans during World War II; in part, from its capacity to provide reasonable living standards for the population; and, in part, from its special international position as a bridge between East and West, with its own indigenous brand of socialism, and its role as leader of the non-aligned movement. As the memory of World War II faded and as the economic and social gains of the post-war period began to disappear, it was inevitable that its legitimacy would be called into question. The fall of the Berlin Wall, the democracy movements in the rest of Eastern Europe, and the end of the East/West division added a final blow to former Yugoslav identity.

Although the Yugoslav partisans had fought on the slogan 'Brotherhood and Unity' and the aim was to develop a new socialist Yugoslav man or woman, as in the Soviet Union, the regime had built into its functioning a complicated system of checks and balances to ensure that no ethnic group became dominant; in effect, it institutionalized ethnic difference. In order to counterbalance the numerical dominance of Serbs, six republics were established, each (with the exception of Bosnia–Herzegovina) with a dominant nationality – Serbia, Montenegro, Croatia, Bosnia–Herzegovina, Slovenia and Macedonia. In addition, there were two autonomous provinces inside Serbia – Kosovo (where there was an Albanian majority) and Vojvodina (with a mixed population of Serbs, Croats and Hungarians). Despite this, polls consistently showed, up until the 1980s, growing support for Yugoslavism. This system was augmented by the 1974 constitution which devolved power to republics and autonomous provinces and established a mechanism for elite rotation based on ethnic arithmetic. Although the League of Communists retained its monopoly position, after 1974 the party itself increasingly divided along national lines. In a situation in which other political challenges were disallowed, a nationalist political discourse became the only form of legitimate debate. In effect, there were ten communist parties – one for each republic and autonomous province, one for the federation and one for the JNA. As Ivan Vejvoda points out, the 1974 constitution empowered collective actors, notably nomenklatura at the republican and provincial levels, while further disenfranchising individual citizens. It was decentralization of totalitarianism. In this context, national communitarian identities were the obvious candidates to fill the vacuum created by the loss of Yugoslavism.

Yugoslavia experienced the strains of economic transition some ten years earlier than other East European countries. During the 1950s and 1960s, the country experienced fast economic growth based on a model of rapid defence-oriented heavy industrialization that was typical of centrally planned economies. In the Yugoslav case, this was somewhat modified by the self-management model and the fact that agriculture, for the most part, remained in private hands. During this period, Yugoslavia received substantial amounts of foreign assistance because it was seen as a buffer against a possible Soviet attack on Southeast Europe. In the 1970s, Western aid began to decline and was replaced by commercial loans, which were relatively easy to acquire following the oil crisis. As in the case of other centrally planned economies, Yugoslavia had great difficulty restructuring its economy; this was compounded by the slowdown in growth in Western countries, which inhibited the growth of exports and reduced the earnings from remittances from Yugoslavs working abroad, and by the growing autonomy of the republics and autonomous provinces who felt no responsibility for the balance of payments and competed with each other to create money.

By 1979, the debt had reached crisis proportions – some $US 20 billion. An International Monetary Fund (IMF) Recovery Plan was agreed in 1982 which included both liberalization and austerity. The main effect of this plan was to intensify the competition for resources at the level of the republics and to contribute to the growing criminalization of the economy. The federation was unable to control the creation of money and by December 1988, the monthly inflation rate had reached 2500 per cent. Unemployment averaged 14 per cent throughout this period; particularly hard hit were urban middle classes largely dependent on state salaries and pensions, and rural based industrial workers who were forced to survive on what they could produce from their small agricultural plots. A series of corruption scandals in the late 1980s, especially in Bosnia–Herzegovina, revealed the growing links between the degenerate ruling elite and a new class of mafia types. Typical in this respect was the...
Agromerc scandal which revealed the nefarious activities of Fikret Abdić, long time party boss in Bihać, who was later to become a key figure in the war. Nationalist arguments were a way of coping with economic discontent, appealing to the victims of economic insecurity and concealing the growing nomenklatura–mafia alliance.

By the end of the 1980s the unravelling of Yugoslav statehood had gathered pace. The last federal Prime Minister, Ante Marković, tried to reimpose control at a federal level with a programme of ‘shock therapy’ introduced in January 1990. Despite the success of the programme in reducing inflation, it caused immense resentment at the level of republics because it effectively removed their ‘license to print money’.

By November 1990, Yugoslavia as a single economic space was challenged by various unilateral economic actions – above all, massive Serbian borrowing to pay for the imposition of Serbian rule in Kosovo known as the ‘Great Bank Robbery’, but also the Slovene refusal to contribute to the Fund for Underdeveloped Regions, and the unilateral Croatian abolition of excise tax on cars effectively bribing voters with the promise of cheaper foreign cars.

Yugoslavia as a single communicative space unravelled alongside the unravelling of the economy. By the 1970s, each republic and province controlled its own television and radio. There was occasional rotation of news programmes on the first channel and news from other republics and autonomous provinces could be seen (by rotation) on the second channel. This broke down in the late 1980s. Despite the last-ditch attempt by Marković to establish an all-Yugoslav television, Jutal, the media were effectively nationalized, providing a powerful basis for nationalist propaganda.

By 1990 federal legitimacy had been challenged, at the level both of legislatures and of the judiciary. The first democratic elections were held in the republics and not at a federal level. When the federal constitutional court challenged decisions taken by the newly elected republican parliaments, such as the Slovene decision not to contribute to the Fund for Underdeveloped Regions or the Slovene and Croatian declarations of sovereignty, these legal opinions were ignored. A similar disregard for constitutional decisions taken at a republican level was shown by those Serbs in Croatia who wanted to declare a ‘Serbian Autonomous Region’.

Finally, the last vestige of Yugoslav statehood was removed in 1991, when the monopoly of organized violence broke down. The JNA had been the bastion of Yugoslavism. Already by the 1970s Territorial Defence Units (TOs) were established in the republics as a result of a new ‘Generalized Popular Defence System’ introduced after the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968. By 1991 the JNA was increasingly being used as a tool of Slobodan Milošević, the President of Serbia, while the Slovenes and Croats were secretly organizing and arming their own independent forces based on the TOs and the police through the growing black market for surplus arms then emerging in Eastern Europe. At the same time, the Serbs were creating their own paramilitary groups. In particular, they initiated their plan ‘RAM’ (Frame), secretly to arm and organize the Serbs in Croatia and Bosnia–Herzegovina. The JNA utterly failed in its efforts to disarm the paramilitaries (the Croats and Slovenes claimed that their forces were not paramilitary groups but legal defence forces) and ended up siding with the Serb paramilitary groups in Croatia and Bosnia.

The emergence of a new form of nationalism paralleled the disintegration of Yugoslavia. It was new in the sense that it was associated with the disintegration of the state in contrast to earlier ‘modern’ nationalisms which aimed at state-building and that, unlike earlier nationalisms, it lacked a modernizing ideology. It was also new in terms of the techniques of mobilization and the forms of organization. It was Milošević who was the first to make extensive use of the electronic media to propagate the nationalist message. His ‘anti-bureaucratic revolution’, which aimed to remove the Titoist system of checks and balances perceived as discriminating against Serbs, provided the basis for a populist political appeal over the heads of the existing communist hierarchy. Through mass rallies, he legitimized his hold on power. The victim mentality often characteristic of majorities who feel themselves minorities was nurtured with an electronic diet of tales of ‘genocide’ in Kosovo, first by the Turks in 1389 and more recently by the Albanians, and of holocaust in Croatia and Bosnia–Herzegovina, with clips of the Second World War interspersed with current developments. In effect, the Serbian public experienced a virtual war long before the real war was to take place – a virtual war that made it difficult to distinguish truth from fiction so that war became a continuum in which the 1389
battle of Kosovo, the Second World War and the war in Bosnia were all part of the same phenomenon. David Rieff describes how Bosnian Serb soldiers after a day of shooting from the hills around Sarajevo would ring their Muslim friends in the town. This extraordinarily contradictory behaviour made perfect sense to the soldiers because of the psychological dissonance produced by this virtual reality. They were not shooting at their private friends, but at Turks. 'Before the summer ends', one soldier told Rieff, 'we will have driven the Turkish army out of the city, just as they drove us from the field of Kosovo in 1389. That was the beginning of Turkish domination of our lands. This will be the end of it, after all these cruel centuries ... We Serbs are saving Europe even if Europe does not appreciate our efforts.'

If Milošević perfected the media technique, it was Tudjman who developed the horizontal transnational form of organization. Unlike Milošević, he came from a dissident background, having spent time in prison in the early 1970s for his nationalist views, although formerly he had been a JNA general. His party – the HDZ – had little time to prepare for the first democratic elections, and did not control the media. Tudjman, however, had been mobilizing support among the Croatian diaspora in North America. He claimed that the HDZ had branches in thirty-five North American cities, each with fifty to several hundred members and some with up to two thousand members. The diaspora was always regarded with great suspicion by the Communist authorities; emigrés were largely considered to be former Ustashe (the wartime Croatian fascists). Tudjman said later that the most crucial political decision he had ever made was to invite the emigrés back for the HDZ Congress in February 1990. This transnational form of organization was a highly significant source of funds and election techniques, and, subsequently, arms and mercenaries. It induced another form of virtual reality arising from the time-space distantiation of diaspora party members, who were, in effect, imposing on a contemporary situation an image of Croatia which dated from when they had left.

The process of disintegration and the rise of a new form of virulent nationalism was encapsulated in Bosnia–Herzegovina, which had always been a mixed society. The differentiation of communities along religious lines (Orthodox, Catholic, Muslim and Jewish) had been institutionalized during the latter part of Ottoman rule through the millet system and, in various forms, this 'institutionalised communitarianism', as Xavier Bougarel calls it, was sustained throughout Austro-Hungarian rule (1878–1914) and during the first and second Yugoslavias. Nevertheless, in the post-war period there were many mixed marriages and, particularly in cities, the communitarian logic was supplanted by a modern secular culture. Yugoslavism was particularly strong in Bosnia–Herzegovina. It was in this republic that Yutel was most popular and that Marković was to choose to launch his reform party.

Bougarel distinguishes 'institutionalised communitarianism' from political and territorial nationalism. The former depends on a balance between communities which is known as komšiluk (good neighbourliness) and which is threatened by political or military mobilization as happened during the two world wars. The re-emergence of political nationalism in the late 1980s occurred, as was the case earlier, for instrumental reasons. It was a response, according to Bougarel, to discontent arising from uneven development and to the growing divide between the economic and scientific elite and backward rural regions. This divide was especially acute in Bosnia–Herzegovina and was exacerbated during the 1980s. It was also a response to the loss of legitimacy of the ruling party.

Six months before the 1990 elections, a poll conducted in Bosnia–Herzegovina showed that 74 per cent of the population favoured the banning of nationalist parties. Yet when the election did take place, 70 per cent of the voters supported these parties. This discrepancy can be explained in terms of Bougarel's argument. Most people feared the threat to komšiluk represented by the nationalist parties. But once political mobilization took place, they found it necessary to rally to their community. Even so, other factors also need to be taken into account. On the one hand, the League of Communists in Bosnia–Herzegovina was traditionally considered hard line and slow to adapt to the wave of pluralism that was affecting the rest of Eastern Europe – the nationalist parties represented the most obvious alternative to the communists. Moreover, it was discredited by a series of corruption scandals in the late 1980s. On the other hand, the speed of nationalist mobilization is explained partly by the role of Croata and Serbia. The HDZ, the Croat nationalist party, was actually a branch of Tudjman's party, and the SDS, the Serb nationalist party, was a branch of the Serbian nationalist party.
that was established in the Krajina, the Serb-dominated part of Croatia. In addition, Matica Hrvatska, the Croatian cultural centre in Zagreb, and the Serbian Academy of Sciences, responsible for the notorious 1986 memorandum which first set out a Serb nationalist programme, both played an active role in mobilising nationalist sentiment, together with the religious institutions.

The elections were won by the nationalist parties and they formed an uneasy coalition - not surprisingly, given the conflicting nature of their political goals. In particular, the SDS members of the Assembly were repeatedly outvoted by the SDA and the HDZ. The non-nationalist civic parties won 28 per cent of the vote; they were supported largely by urban intellectuals and industrial workers. The war was precipitated by the decision of the international community to recognize Slovenia and Croatia and any other former Yugoslav republic provided it held a referendum and recognized minority rights (something that was ignored in the Croatian and Bosnian cases). The SDA and HDZ favoured independence; the Serbs did not.

Bougarel concludes that the contradictory portrayals of Bosnia-Herzegovina as a land of tolerance and coexistence and as a country of fear and hate are, in fact, both true. Fear and hate are not endemic but, in certain periods, are mobilized for political purposes. The very scale of the violence can be interpreted not as a consequence of 'fear and hate', but rather as a reflection of the difficulty of reconstructing 'fear and hate'. As Živanović, an independent-minded liberal who remained in Serb-controlled areas throughout the war, put it: 'The war had to be so bloody because the ties between us were so strong'.19 This mobilization of 'fear and hate' takes specific forms in specific periods and has to be explained in terms of specific causes. In other words, the new nationalism is a contemporary phenomenon arising from recent history and shaped by the current context.

It is sometimes argued that Muslim nationalism is a different phenomenon from Serb and Croatian nationalism. Those who oppose the dominant perception of the war as a civil war often argue that this was a war of Serbian and, to a lesser extent, Croatian aggression. It is certainly true that Bosnian Serb nationalists, aided and abetted by the Serbian and Yugoslav governments, were the aggressors in this war, and it was they who initiated and applied most systematically and extensively the policy of ethnic cleansing. Likewise, Croat nationalists, backed by the Croatian government, followed their example, albeit on a lesser scale. It is also the case that the SDA, the Muslim nationalist party, was always in favour of a unified multicultural Bosnia-Herzegovina. However, multiculturalism, for the Muslim nationalists, meant political organization along communitarian lines - hence, Izetbegović's attempts to organize 'acceptable' ethnic groupings such as the Serb Civic Council or the Croat Peasants' Party. Moreover, the SDA did display some of the tendencies of other nationalist parties - such as the tendency to impose rigid political control over all institutions, or the use of the media to generate a virtual war against other communities: the SDA magazine, Dragon of Bosnia, has been especially shrill in its calls for nationalist violence.20 The UN Commission of Experts says that Bosnian forces did not engage in ethnic cleansing, although they committed war crimes. However, Croats were certainly expelled or chose to leave from parts of Central Bosnia captured by Bosnian forces during the Muslim-Croat conflict, and this was also true of Serbs in areas captured during the last days of the war. In other words, this was a war of Serbian and Croatian aggression, but it was a new nationalist war as well.

That fear and hate were not endemic to Bosnian society became apparent in the outburst of civic activism during the run-up to the war.21 A mass peace movement developed with strong support from the Bosnian media, trade unions, intellectuals, students and women's groups. Tens of thousands of people formed a human chain across every single bridge in Mostar in July 1991. A Yutel-organized rally in Sarajevo in August 1991 was attended by 100,000 people. In September, 400 European peace activists, travelling as the Helsinki Citizens Assembly Peace Caravan, joined thousands of Bosnians in a human chain which linked the Mosque, the Orthodox Church, the Catholic Church and the Synagogue in Sarajevo. Similar demonstrations were organized in Tuzla and in Banja Luka and other towns and villages.

The highpoint and the end of the movement came in March and April 1992. On 5 March, peace activists succeeded in pulling down barricades erected by Muslim and Serb nationalist groups after a Serb bridegroom had been shot at his wedding. On 5 April, 50 -100,000 demonstrators marched through Sarajevo to the parliament building to demand the resignation of the government and to ask for an international protectorate. Thousands more came in busloads from Tuzla, Zenica and Kakanj.
but could not enter the city because of Serb and Muslim barricades. The war began when Serb snipers fired on the demonstrators from the Holiday Inn – the first person to die was a twenty-one-year-old medical student from Dubrovnik.22 The following day, Bosnia–Herzegovina was recognized by European states and the Serbs left the Bosnian Assembly. The state was recognized at the very moment of its disintegration. According to Bougarel, the Bosnian war was a civil war in the sense that it was a war against the civilian population and against civil society.23 And Tadeusz Mazowiecki, the Special Rapporteur for the UN Commission on Human Rights, reports the belief of some observers that ‘the attacking forces are determined to “kill” the city [Sarajevo] and the tradition of tolerance and ethnic harmony that it represents’.24 Or to put it another way, the war could be viewed as a war of exclusivist nationalists against a secular multicultural pluralistic society.

How the War was Fought – Military and Economic Means

Yugoslavia was probably the most militarized country in Europe outside the Soviet Union. Until 1986, military spending amounted to 4 per cent of GNP – more than any other non-Soviet European country except Greece.25 The JNA itself consisted of some 70,000 regular officers and staff, plus around 150,000 conscripts. In addition, each republic and autonomous province was responsible for organizing and equipping the TOs, largely reserve forces, which were reportedly one million strong.

The JNA remained a Yugoslav entity up to 1991. The army controlled a network of interconnected bases, weapons stores and enterprises, which, in contrast to the rest of the economy, were organized on a Yugoslav-wide basis. Even though the partisan strategy which informed JNA organization was based on decentralized local combat formations, control remained centralized at a Yugoslav level. Among JNA officers, 70 per cent of whom were Serbian or Montenegrin, Yugoslavism continued to grow at a time when it was declining in other spheres of social life. The JNA accounted for the bulk of the federal budget and, by 1991, it seemed as though the JNA and the League of Communists were virtually all that was left of the Yugoslav idea – hence, Yugoslavism came to be associated with totalitarianism and militarism.

From 1986 to 1991 military spending fell dramatically, from $US2,491 million in constant 1988 prices to $US1,376 million,26 thus contributing to a growing sense of victimization and paranoia about internal and external enemies within the JNA. (The arrest of young Slovenian journalists who had criticized arms exports to the third world in 1988, and the subsequent notorious trial, was an expression of this paranoia.) The story of the wars in Slovenia, Croatia and, above all, Bosnia–Herzegovina, is also the story of the break-up of the Yugoslav military-industrial complex. The JNA and the TOs disintegrated into a combination of regular and irregular forces augmented by criminals, volunteers and foreign mercenaries competing for control over the former Yugoslavia’s military assets.

At the outset of the war in Bosnia–Herzegovina, there was a bewildering array of military and paramilitary forces. In theory, there were three parties to the conflict – the Serbs, Croats and Bosnians. In practice, different forces cooperated with each other in differing combinations throughout the war. Thus, in the early stages of the war, the Croats and Bosnians cooperated against the Serbs. Then, after the publication of the Vance–Owen Plan in 1993, which was based on ethnic cantonization, the Croats and Muslims started fighting each other, since the Croats wanted to establish control of ‘their’ cantons. Then came the Washington Agreement between the Muslims and Croats, imposed by the Americans, and, in the final stages of the war, the Muslims and Croats cooperated again, at least officially. During the course of the war, the forces of each party to the conflict were increasingly centralized and regularized. By the end of the war, the main regular forces were the Bosnian Serb Army (BSA), the Croatian Defence Council (HVO) and the Army of Bosnia–Herzegovina (ABiH).

After the ten-day war in Slovenia in June 1991, the JNA withdrew to Croatia (leaving their weapons behind). By mid-July 1991, the JNA had moved an estimated 70,000 troops into Croatia. Together with some 12,000 irregular Serb forces, both local volunteers and (often criminal) groups imported from Serbia proper, they experimented with the strategies that were to be used in Bosnia–Herzegovina. After the ceasefire in Croatia, the JNA withdrew to Bosnia–Herzegovina taking with them their equipment. In May 1992, the JNA formally withdrew from
but could not enter the city because of Serb and Muslim barricades. The war began when Serb snipers fired on the demonstrators from the Holiday Inn – the first person to die was a twenty-one-year-old medical student from Dubrovnik.22 The following day, Bosnia–Herzegovina was recognized by European states and the Serbs left the Bosnian Assembly. The state was recognized at the very moment of its disintegration.

According to Bougarel, the Bosnian war was a civil war in the sense that it was a war against the civilian population and against civil society.23 And Tadeusz Mazowiecki, the Special Rapporteur for the UN Commission on Human Rights, reports the belief of some observers that ‘the attacking forces are determined to “kill” the city [Sarajevo] and the tradition of tolerance and ethnic harmony that it represents’.24 Or to put it another way, the war could be viewed as a war of exclusivist nationalists against a secular multicultural pluralistic society.

How the War was Fought – Military and Economic Means

Yugoslavia was probably the most militarized country in Europe outside the Soviet Union. Until 1986, military spending amounted to 4 per cent of GNP – more than any other non-Soviet European country except Greece.25 The JNA itself consisted of some 70,000 regular officers and staff, plus around 150,000 conscripts. In addition, each republic and autonomous province was responsible for organizing and equipping the TOs, largely reserve forces, which were reportedly one million strong.

The JNA remained a Yugoslav entity up to 1991. The army controlled a network of interconnected bases, weapons stores and enterprises, which, in contrast to the rest of the economy, were organized on a Yugoslav-wide basis. Even though the partisan strategy which informed JNA organization was based on decentralized local combat formations, control remained centralized at a Yugoslav level. Among JNA officers, 70 per cent of whom were Serbian or Montenegrin, Yugoslavism continued to grow at a time when it was declining in other spheres of social life. The JNA accounted for the bulk of the federal budget and, by 1991, it seemed as though the JNA and the League of Communists were virtually all that was left of the Yugoslav idea

– hence, Yugoslavism came to be associated with totalitarianism and militarism.

From 1986 to 1991 military spending fell dramatically, from $US2,491 million in constant 1988 prices to $US1,376 million,26 thus contributing to a growing sense of victimization and paranoia about internal and external enemies within the JNA. (The arrest of young Slovenian journalists who had criticized arms exports to the third world in 1988, and the subsequent notorious trial, was an expression of this paranoia.) The story of the wars in Slovenia, Croatia and, above all, Bosnia–Herzegovina, is also the story of the break-up of the Yugoslav military-industrial complex. The JNA and the TOs disintegrated into a combination of regular and irregular forces augmented by criminals, volunteers and foreign mercenaries competing for control over the former Yugoslavia’s military assets.

At the outset of the war in Bosnia–Herzegovina, there was a bewildering array of military and paramilitary forces. In theory, there were three parties to the conflict – the Serbs, Croats and Bosnians. In practice, different forces cooperated with each other in differing combinations throughout the war. Thus, in the early stages of the war, the Croats and Bosnians cooperated against the Serbs. Then, after the publication of the Vance–Owen Plan in 1993, which was based on ethnic cantonization, the Croats and Muslims started fighting each other, since the Croats wanted to establish control of their cantons. Then came the Washington Agreement between the Muslims and Croats, imposed by the Americans, and, in the final stages of the war, the Muslims and Croats cooperated again, at least officially. During the course of the war, the forces of each party to the conflict were increasingly centralized and regularized. By the end of the war, the main regular forces were the Bosnian Serb Army (BSA), the Croatian Defence Council (HVO) and the Army of Bosnia–Herzegovina (ABiH).

After the ten-day war in Slovenia in June 1991, the JNA withdrew to Croatia (leaving their weapons behind). By mid-July 1991, the JNA had moved an estimated 70,000 troops into Croatia. Together with some 12,000 irregular Serb forces, both local volunteers and (often criminal) groups imported from Serbia proper, they experimented with the strategies that were to be used in Bosnia–Herzegovina. After the ceasefire in Croatia, the JNA withdrew to Bosnia–Herzegovina taking with them their equipment. In May 1992, the JNA formally withdrew from
Bosnia-Herzegovina. In practice, only some 14,000 troops withdrew to Serbia and Montenegro; approximately 80,000 troops transferred to the Bosnian Serb Army.

The HVO was formed out of the militia attached to the HDZ. It operated together with the Croatian army (HV), which was formed on the basis of Croatian territorial defence forces and built up during the course of the war with training assistance from a private company formed by American retired generals called Military Professional Resources Incorporated (MPRI). 27

There was no Bosnian army when the war broke out. Essentially, the defence of Bosnian territory was locally organized. Sarajevo was defended by a motley crew of patriotic leagues and other paramilitary groups, largely organized by the Sarajevo underground. Tuzla was defended by the local police force augmented by a locally organized patriotic league. Although Izetbegović announced the formation of a regular army in May 1992, it was not until Silajdžić became Prime Minister in the autumn of 1993 that the various gangster groups were controlled and the army command was centralized. Even at that time, the UN Commission of Experts estimated that of 70,000 troops only 44,000 were armed.28

The BSA was much better equipped than the other regular forces, as can be seen from table 3.1. In particular, it had a considerable advantage in heavy weapons – tanks, artillery, rocket launchers and mortars. It inherited the JNA’s equipment and, more importantly, it controlled most of the JNA’s weapons stores, which had been situated in the hills of Bosnia-Herzegovina because this was envisaged to be the heartland of any guerrilla-based defence of Yugoslavia and which had been well stocked in anticipation of a long war. The ABiH, which was the least well equipped, and suffered, in particular, from a dearth of heavy weapons, was dependent on Croatian supply routes to acquire arms.29 The HVO received equipment from Croatia. In addition to equipment taken from weapons stocks in Croatia, various black-market sources were used to acquire mainly surplus ex-Warsaw Pact equipment. (Interestingly, there was some evidence that ex-JNA enterprises in Croatia, Slovenia and Serbia continued to cooperate to produce spare parts and equipment.30)

In addition to the regular forces, it is possible to identify three main types of irregular force: paramilitary organizations, generally under the control of an individual; foreign mercenary groups; and local police augmented by armed civilians. The UN Commission of Experts identified eighty-three paramilitary groups on the territory of former Yugoslavia – some fifty-six were Serbian, thirteen were Croatian and fourteen were Bosnian. The estimated size of these forces was 20–40,000, 12–20,000 and 4–6,000 respectively. The vast majority of these acted locally, but certain groups operated much more widely in conjunction with regular forces and gained considerable notoriety.

On the Serb side, the two most well-known groups were Arkan’s ‘Tigers’ and Šešelj’s Chetniks or ‘White Eagles’. Arkan, whose real name was Željko Ražnjatović, was a big figure in the Belgrade underworld. He owned a string of ice-cream parlours which were allegedly a cover for his smuggling activities, which expanded considerably during the war. Before the war, he had apparently been recruited by a special unit in the Yugoslav government in order to assassinate émigrés. He also owned the fan club of the Belgrade Red Star football team and his Tigers were recruited from the club. The Tigers initially operated in Croatia; in Bosnia-Herzegovina they were reported as operating in twenty-eight counties. According to reports collected by the UN Commission: ‘Their hair was cut short and they wore black woollen caps, black gloves cut off mid-finger, and black badges on the upper arm. According to other reports, they wore multicoloured uniforms, red arrows, knit caps, a badge showing the Serbian flag on the right arm, and an emblem showing a tiger and the words “Arkanove delije” on the shoulder.’31 The Tigers were well armed, including tanks and mortars.

Šešelj had been a dissident. He had taught at the University of

### Table 3.1 Regular forces in Bosnia-Herzegovina 1995

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Armed forces</th>
<th>Main battle tanks</th>
<th>Artillery</th>
<th>Multiple rocket launchers</th>
<th>Mortars</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ABiH</td>
<td>92,000</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HVO</td>
<td>50,000</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BSA</td>
<td>75,000</td>
<td>370</td>
<td>700</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>900</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sarajevo and, reportedly, spent a year at the University of Michigan. He was imprisoned in the early 1980s for his anti-communist writings. After he was released, he moved to Belgrade, where he joined the Serbian nationalists. His party, the Serbian National Renewal Party, gained seats in the 1990 elections and was particularly successful in the federal elections of May 1992, when he won 33 out of 138 seats. Like the Tigers, the Chetniks were initially active in Croatia. In Bosnia-Herzegovina, they were reported to operate in thirty-four counties. The Šešeljovci were 'bearded men'. They wore Serbian military berets with a Serbian military flag on the front, or black fur hats with a Serbian cockade. They were reportedly always drunk and they recruited additional 'weekend fighters'.

Both Arkan and Šešelj seem to have operated together with the JNA. According to the UN Commission: 'In many of these counties, Šešelj and Arkan exercised control over other forces operating in the area. These forces consisted of local paramilitary groups, and sometimes the JNA. In some counties, Šešelj's and Arkan's forces operated under the command of the JNA. Šešelj always insisted that his forces were armed and equipped by Milošević. The most well-known Croatian paramilitary group was HOS, a wing of the Croatian Party of Rights (HSP). Its members wore black uniforms and the Croatian chequered shield like the wartime Ustashe. Up to 1993, when their leader Dobroslav Paraga was arrested for trying to overthrow the Croatian government, HOS operated in conjunction with the HVO. Another Croatian paramilitary group was the 'Wolves' led by Jusuf Przazina, known as Juka. He was an underworld figure from Sarajevo before the war broke out and had been in prison five times. The Wolves wore 'crew-cuts, black jump-suits, sun glasses and sometimes masks'. They operated together with the ABiH until August 1992 and then worked with the HVO.

The two notorious gangsters Caco and Čelo operated in Sarajevo up until the autumn of 1993. Caco had been a club musician called Musan Topalović, and Čelo was a criminal who had just come out of prison after serving eight years for rape. Most paramilitary groups on the Bosnian side were referred to as Green Berets or Muslim Armed Forces (MOS) and reportedly operated under the command of the ABiH.

The names of other paramilitary groups include Black Swans, Yellow Ants (which referred to their looting abilities), Mečet's Babies, Mosque Pigeons, Knights, Serbian Falcons and so on.

Among mercenaries, the most well-known were the Mujahidin, mostly veterans from the Afghan war. They have been expelled under the Dayton Agreement. They reportedly operated in Zenica, Travnik, Novi Travnik, Mostar and Konjic. According to Croat intelligence, they were organized by a man named Abdulah, who owned the Palma video shop in Travnik. The UN Commission suggests that the Mujahidin acted more or less independently of the ABiH. Other mercenaries included the Garibaldi Unit (Italians fighting alongside the Croats), Russians fighting on the Serbian side, as well as mercenaries from Denmark, Finland, Sweden, Britain and the United States. British soldiers made redundant in the post-Cold War cuts took up positions training both Bosnian and Croatian forces.

Local militia were organized by municipalities as in Tuzla, or by big enterprises as in Velika Klusa, Fikret Abdić's Agromerc, or in Zenica, where the former communists still controlled the steelworks.

During the war, the formal economy collapsed. This was the result of a combination of factors: physical destruction, impossibility of acquiring inputs, and loss of markets. Industrial production was estimated at 10 per cent of its pre-war level and unemployment was between 60 and 90 per cent. The currency collapsed; exchange was based on a combination of barter and deutschmarks. For the most part, people faced a painful choice: they could live insufficiently off humanitarian aid; they could volunteer for the army or become a criminal or both; or they could try to leave. Many people left, especially the young and educated, so that the population decline was even more dramatic than the figures on ethnic cleansing suggest.

The various military forces were totally dependent on outside sources of assistance. These included direct support from outside governments, 'taxation' of humanitarian assistance, and remittances from individuals. The regular forces were largely funded and equipped by sponsor governments. The BSA was funded by the Serbian government up to the embargo, imposed by Milošević in August 1994. The HVO was funded by Croatia, and the ABiH received support from Islamic states and, covertly, from the USA. The paramilitaries were funded from loot and extortion of expelled people, as well as confiscation of
equipment, etc. from conquered territories, 'taxation' of humanitarian aid which they collected at many checkpoints, and the black market. The local militia were funded by municipalities who received the 'taxes' from humanitarian assistance collected on their territory and also continued to tax citizens, including those who were abroad, and enterprises on their territory. All three types of force cooperated with each other both militarily and economically.

The strategy adopted by this combination of regular and irregular forces - a strategy practised most consistently and systematically by the Bosnian Serbs as well as by the Bosnian Croats - was territorial gain through political control rather than military offence. Violence was used to control populations rather than to capture territory. The difficulty of acquiring territory through military offence was made plain quite early on in the war in Croatia. The JNA experienced the classic problems of offence which have become typical of modern war, as was illustrated by the Iran-Iraq war. The two-month siege of Vukovar, a town in East Slovonia, Croatia, from September to October 1991, showed how massive superiority in both firepower and manpower was insufficient to capture a relatively small town. When Vukovar eventually fell on 20 November 1991, it had been reduced to rubble. The attempt to take Dubrovnik, which, according to the memoirs of the then Minister of Defence, General Kadijević, was part of a plan to occupy Split and the Dalmatian Coast, failed.35 A characteristic feature of the war in Bosnia was the siege of the main Bosnian cities. Although they could not be captured, they could be shelled continuously and cut off from supplies.

Except in the early stage of the war in Bosnia-Herzegovina, when the Bosnian Serbs faced very little opposition and, in the last stages of the war when they had become very weak, little territory changed hands. Essentially, the war was directed not against opposing sides, but against civilian populations. This explains why there was no continuous front. Instead, different areas were controlled by different parties, and forces were interspersed in what the UN Commission describes as a 'chequered' military map, with confrontation lines in and around cities encircling the areas of control. Indeed, in late 1993, before the Washington Agreement between Muslims and Croats, territory under Bosnian control basically consisted of a few enclaves surrounded by hostile forces, what some described as a 'leopard skin' territory. With the exception of Banja Luka, which was under Serb control, and Mostar, which was divided between Croats and Muslims, most towns remained under Bosnian control while the countryside was divided between Serbs and Croats.

Apart from a few strategic points, e.g. the Brcko corridor which connected Serb territories and which potentially provided a communication route from Northern Bosnia to Zagreb, there was relatively little fighting between the opposing sides. There were, indeed, various examples of cooperation, mostly in the black market, but also differing short-term and local military cooperation between different parties. On one occasion, UNPROFOR (the United Nations Protection Force) intercepted a telephone conversation between the local Muslim Commander in Mostar and the local Serb Commander discussing the price in German marks to be paid if the Serbs would shell the Croats. The nadir was reached when the Serbs took Mount Igman, overlooking Sarajevo, in July 1993; the paramilitary groups at that time defending Mount Igman were ready to 'sell' their positions in order to control the black-market routes. Most of the violence was directed against civilians - the shelling of cities and towns combined with sniper fire and various forms of atrocity within the towns and villages - and became, in effect, what was known as ethnic cleansing.

The Bosnian Serbs wanted to create an autonomous Bosnian Serb territory. But since there were almost no areas except Banja Luka where Serbs were numerically dominant and, perhaps more importantly, extremist Serbs were numerically dominant, this had to be brought about through ethnic cleansing. The areas seem to have been chosen for strategic reasons, to link the Serb-held territories in Krajina with Serbia, and to control JNA bases and weapons stores. The tactic of establishing 'Serb autonomous areas' seems to have followed a consistent pattern first worked out in the war in Croatia. Descriptions of the process can be found in numerous reports of journalists, UN agencies and independent NGOs such as Helsinki Watch.

The typical pattern applied to rural areas - villages and small towns. First, the regular forces would shell the area and issue frightening propaganda so as to instil a mood of panic. Reports of terror in neighbouring villages would add to the panic. Then the paramilitary forces would close in and terrorize the non-
Serb residents with random killing, rape and looting. Control over local administration would then be established. In the more extreme cases, non-Serb men were separated from the women and taken to detention centres. Women were robbed and/or raped and allowed to go or taken to special rape detention centres. Houses and cultural buildings such as mosques were looted, burned or blown up. The paramilitary groups also seem to have had lists of prominent people—community leaders, intellectuals, SDA members, wealthy people—who were separated from the rest and executed. 'It was the conscious elimination of an articulate opposition and of political moderation. It was also the destruction of a community from the top down.' The television journalist Michael Nicholson refers to this process as 'eliticide' and the Mayor of Tuzla talks about 'intellectual cleansing'.

The existence of detention centres became known in August 1992. The UN Commission of Experts identified some 715, of which 237 were operated by Bosnian Serbs, 89 by the AbiH and government and 77 by Bosnian Croats. According to the Commission, they were the scene of 'the worst inhumane acts', including mass executions, torture, rape and other forms of sexual assault. (Although grave breaches of the Geneva Conventions were reported in the Bosnian camps, the allegations were fewer and less systematic than in the Serbian and Croatian camps.) A specific aspect of the process of ethnic cleansing has been widespread rape. Although mass rape has taken place in other wars, its systematic character, in detention centres and in particular places and at particular times, suggests that it may have been part of a deliberate strategy.

In urban areas, in particular Banja Luka, ethnic cleansing was a slower, more legalistic process. The lives of non-Serbs were made untenable. For example, they were removed from their jobs, with no access to medical care; communication was cut off; they were not allowed to meet in groups of more than four. In many towns, variously described Bureaux for Population Exchange were established through which non-Serbs or non-Croats could surrender their property and pay large sums to be allowed to leave.

Similar techniques were adopted in Croat-controlled areas. In Bosnian-controlled areas the evidence does not suggest deliberate ethnic cleansing, although many non-Muslims, especially Serbs, left for a variety of reasons, including psychological pressure, discrimination and forced recruitment in the army. By the end of 1995, ethnic cleansing was almost complete, as can be seen from table 3.2. Only 13,000 Muslims remained in Northern Bosnia, according to UNHCR estimates, out of an original population totalling around 350,000, and only 4,000 Muslims and Croats remained in East Bosnia and South Herzegovina, out of an original population totalling 300,000. Many Serbs and Croats had also left Tuzla and Zenica.

The worst atrocities, certainly in the early stages of the war, seem to have been committed by paramilitary groups. According to the UN Commission: 'There is a . . . strong correlation between reports of para-military activity and reports of rape and sexual assault, detention facilities and mass graves. These types of activity (i.e. para-military activity and grave breaches of the Geneva Conventions) tended to occur in the same counties and evidence the localised nature of the activity.' On the Serbian side, the activities of Arkan and Šešelj are well known; the UN Commission suggests that these were coordinated with the activities of the JNA (BSA), whereas, on the Croatian and Bosnian sides, the paramilitary groups acted more independently of regular forces. On the Croatian side, Paraga is said to have organized the detention camps at Capljina and Dretelj, while Juka was reported to have killed some 700 Muslims in Mostar and was responsible for the detention camp at the heliport. On the Bosnian side, the worst atrocities seem to have been committed by the Mujahidin.

The motivation of the paramilitary groups seems to have been largely economic, although there were clearly nationalist fanatics among them. According to Vasić, around 80 per cent of the paramilitaries were common criminals and 20 per cent were fanatical nationalists: 'The latter did not last long (fanaticism is bad for business). Arkan, reportedly, had lists of rich Muslims in possession of gold and money. The 'right to be the first to loot' was viewed as a form of payment. Many former criminal groups were able to expand their pre-war rackets; most of the paramilitary groups were involved in black-market activities and, indeed, cooperated with each other across supposed confrontation lines in order to profit from the situation in besieged enclaves. Effectively, paramilitary groups were 'hired' to do the dirty work necessary to instil the 'fear and hate' which was not yet endemic in Bosnian society. Thus, the mafia economy was
### Table 3.2 Ethnic cleansing in Bosnia-Herzegovina

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1991 Census</th>
<th>Estimates November 1995</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Serbs</td>
<td>Croats</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bihac</strong></td>
<td>29,398</td>
<td>6,470</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Northern Bosnia-</strong></td>
<td>624,840</td>
<td>180,593</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Herzegovina</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Zenica</strong></td>
<td>79,355</td>
<td>169,657</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tuzla</strong></td>
<td>82,235</td>
<td>38,789</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sarajevo</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Enclaves</strong></td>
<td>157,526</td>
<td>35,867</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>West Herzegovina/</strong></td>
<td>20,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>West-Central Bosnia</strong></td>
<td>43,959</td>
<td>245,586</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>East Bosnia/South</strong></td>
<td>304,017</td>
<td>40,638</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Herzegovina</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total 1,340,966 717,600 1,655,300 3,692,692 1,206,500 470,000 1,476,500 3,628,000

(-Sarajevo)

Figures in square brackets show numbers in November 1994.

*These figures are almost certainly overestimates, since more than a million Bosnian refugees left the country.

This figure refers to both Croat and Muslim communities.

n/a Not available.

of the Interior and "ethnic cleansing". It quotes an article in the Slovenian newspaper Delo which claimed that along with the plan 'RAM' (to arm the Serbs in Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina) the JNA had an additional plan for mass killings of Muslims and mass rapes as a weapon of psychological warfare: 'Analysis of the Muslims' behaviour showed their morale, desire for battle, and will could be crushed most easily by raping women, especially minors and even children, and by killing members of the Muslim nationality inside their religious facilities."

It is sometimes suggested that the JNA drew on its history as a partisan movement. It is certainly true that the localized and decentralized nature of the war has many parallels with guerrilla warfare. The organization of TOs meant that many trained reservists could be drawn into the war at a local level and that small arms in local weapons caches were easily available. However, in many ways, ethnic cleansing is the exact opposite of guerrilla warfare, which depended on the support of the local population; the guerrilla was supposed to be the 'fish in the sea', to use Mao's words. The aim of ethnic cleansing was the wholesale destruction of communities, the manufacture of 'fear and hate'. One speculation is that JNA thinking was perhaps influenced by counterinsurgency doctrines, as developed by the Americans in Vietnam and tried out in the low-intensity conflicts of the 1980s. Alex de Waal has suggested that African military strategists were influenced by these doctrines, and this may, in part, explain the similarities of the Bosnian war to the wars in Africa. Undoubtedly, JNA staff would have studied these wars. The last Yugoslav Minister of Defence, General Kadijevic, had spent six months at West Point Military Academy, although counterinsurgency was only a minor part of the curriculum there, and other JNA officers had also studied in the United States. It is probably more convincing to argue that the strategy of ethnic cleansing was developed on the ground, although prior discussions and experience must have had some relevance.

It was not only members of other ethnic groups who were targeted in the strategy of ethnic cleansing. It was moderate as well, those who refused to hate. This was first learned in Croatia when Babic and Martic, the leaders of the Krajina Serbs, seized control of the town of Pakrac and removed Serbs as well as people of other nationalities in positions of authority. Throughout the war, there have been people on all sides who refused to be

drawn into the mire of 'fear and hate'. The reports of the Special Rapporteur for the UN Commission on Human Rights consistently notes the actions of brave Serbs who tried to protect their Muslim and Croat neighbours. The Guardian newspaper reported a Serb 'Schindler' living in Prijedor who organized his friends and neighbours to protect Muslims. The Jewish community in Mostar organized itself to help Muslims escape. Even though their ranks have been greatly depleted by death and flight, non-nationalist groups and parties still exist in different parts of Bosnia-Herzegovina.

The Nature of International Involvement

From the beginning, international involvement in the war in Bosnia-Herzegovina, and indeed in all the conflicts on the territory of former Yugoslavia, was extensive. This involvement took place both at an official level and at the level of civil society. The war became the focus of media attention and of peace, humanitarian and human rights groups, as well as of civic institutions like churches or universities. Within the former Yugoslavia, great hopes were vested in the role of the international community. For many people, the term 'Europe' had an almost mystical significance; it was considered synonymous with civilized behaviour and emblematic of an alternative 'civic' outlook to which those who opposed nationalism aspired. What actually happened was deeply disappointing, giving rise to cynicism and despair.

In fact, there were two quite distinct forms of international involvement. One was the high-level political talks and missions. The other was, in effect, a new form of humanitarian intervention. The latter, I would argue, did in fact represent a considerable innovation in international action both in its goals and in its scale and in the way it fostered cooperation between international institutions and civil society. But it was fatally thwarted by the contradictions between what was happening at a humanitarian level and what was happening at the level of high politics, and, connectedly, by misconceptions about the political and military nature of the war.

There have been many explanations for the failure of the international community to prevent or stop the wars in the former Yugoslavia – lack of cohesion in the EU, unwillingness of
governments to provide adequate resources, the short-termism of politicians. All these explanations have something in them. But the fundamental problem was conceptual, the failure to understand why or how the war was fought and the character of the new nationalist political formations that emerged after the collapse of Yugoslavia. Both politically and militarily, the war was perceived as a conflict between competing nationalisms of a traditional essentialist type, and this was true both of the Europeans who, like the Serbs, argued that the nationalisms were all equally to blame, and of the Americans, who tended to see the Serbs as bad 'totalitarian' nationalists and the Croats and Muslims as good 'democratic' nationalists. While Serbian and Croatian nationalism was definitely bad nationalism and Muslim nationalism was not quite so bad, such an analysis missed the point that this was a conflict between a new form of ethnic nationalism and civilized values. The nationalists had a shared interest in eliminating an internationalist humanitarian outlook, both within the former Yugoslavia and globally. Both politically and militarily, their war was not against each other but, to repeat the argument of Bougarel, against the civilian population and against civil society.

The so-called international community fell into the nationalist trap by taking on board and legitimizing the perception of the conflict that the nationalists wished to propagate. In political terms, the nationalists had a common totalitarian goal: to re-establish the kind of political control the Communist Party had once enjoyed on the basis of ethnic communities. To this end, they had to partition society along ethnic lines. By assuming that 'fear and hate' were endemic to Bosnian society and that the nationalists represented the whole of society, the international negotiators could see no other solution but the kind of compromise which the nationalists themselves aimed to achieve. By failing to understand that 'fear and hate' were not endemic but were being manufactured during the war, they actually contributed to the nationalist goals and helped to weaken the internationalist humanitarian outlook.

In military terms, it was assumed that the main violence was between the so-called warring parties, and that civilians were, so to speak, caught in the crossfire. While the evidence of ethnic cleansing was plain to see, this was treated as a side-effect of the fighting, not as the goal of the war. The UN troops that were sent to Bosnia–Herzegovina to protect the civilian population were hamstrung because their masters were so fearful of being dragged into a conventional war. A sharp distinction was drawn between peacekeeping and war-fighting. Peacekeeping meant that the troops operated on the basis of consent between the warring parties. War-fighting would have meant taking sides. Throughout the war, the fear that any use of force would mean taking sides and would escalate the international military involvement prevented UN troops from effectively carrying out the humanitarian tasks they were sent to perform. What was not understood was that there was rather little fighting between the sides in the conventional sense and that the main problem was the continuing violence against civilians. The UN troops were supposed to be peacekeeping troops; they operated on the basis of consent. The consequence was that they were unable to protect aid convoys or safe havens; instead, they stood by, as one Sarajevoan wag put it, 'like eunuchs at the orgy'.

The predominant approach in the high-level talks was an approach 'from above', a realpolitik approach, in which it was assumed that the leaders of political parties spoke for the people they represented. The problem of how to deal with the debris of Yugoslavia was thus understood as a problem of reaching a compromise with those leaders. Essentially, the problem was conceived as a problem of borders and territory, not as a problem of political and social organization. Since ethnic cleansing was seen as a side-effect of the war, the main concern was to stop the fighting by finding a political compromise acceptable to the warring parties. If the political leaders in the former Yugoslavia insisted that they could not live together, then some new set of territorial arrangements had to be found for the post-Yugoslav political space. Hence, the answer was partition. But partition was a cause of war as much as a solution. It was self-perpetuating since, as everyone knew, there was no way to create ethnically pure territories without population displacement. Since ethnic cleansing was the goal of the war, the only possible solution was one which accepted the results of ethnic cleansing. Thus, the very principle of partition legitimised nationalist claims.

The first partition was that of Yugoslavia, when Slovenia and Croatia, and later Bosnia–Herzegovina, were recognized. At the same time, Croatia was partitioned after the ceasefire negotiated by Cyrus Vance, the UN envoy, in December 1991. The
recognition of Bosnia–Herzegovina took place on the day that war broke out. In the efforts to halt the fighting, a series of doomed plans to partition Bosnia–Herzegovina were put forward, culminating in the Dayton Agreement. The first plan was the Carrington–Cuteleiro Plan of the spring of 1992, which proposed to partition Bosnia–Herzegovina in three parts. After the failure of this plan, Lord Carrington resigned as EU negotiator and was replaced by David Owen, who became joint Chairman with Cyrus Vance of the International Conference on Former Yugoslavia (ICFY) established after the London Conference in August 1992. The Vance–Owen Plan was considered to be an improvement on the Carrington–Cuteleiro Plan because it divided Bosnia–Herzegovina into ten cantons, nine of which were based on the domination of one or other of the ethnic groups. The plan was eventually rejected by the Bosnian Serb Assembly in May 1993, but not before it had provided the legitimacy for the Croats to ethnically cleanse the regions they were awarded under the plan – this marked the beginning of the Croat–Muslim conflict. (It was said that HVO stands for ‘Hvala Vance Owen’ – Thank you Vance Owen.) Under pressure from the Americans, a Muslim–Croat ceasefire was negotiated in the spring of 1994; essentially, the Washington Agreement, as the ceasefire agreement was known, established a Bosnia–Croat federation partitioned into even smaller ethnically dominated cantons. Meanwhile, the Vance–Owen Plan was replaced by the Owen–Stoltenberg Plan (Cyrus Vance having been replaced by Thorvald Stoltenberg), which was in turn supplanted by the Contact Group Plan – the Contact Group being a new negotiating forum involving the major outside players (the USA, Russia, Britain, France and Germany). Both these plans and the Dayton Agreement that eventually succeeded in halting the fighting were very similar to the original Carrington–Cuteleiro Plan.

The Dayton Agreement finally succeeded in bringing about a ceasefire, partly because of military pressure (NATO finally undertook air strikes and an Anglo–French Rapid Reaction Force was sent to Bosnia), partly because of the collapse of Bosnian Serb morale, and perhaps most importantly because the military situation on the ground had been ‘rationalized’, with the Serb capture of two of the Eastern enclaves and the Croatian capture of the Krajina.49 In other words, ethnic cleansing was virtually complete. Such was the ease of the military endgame that it has been suggested that there may have been some tacit understanding between Serbia and Croatia, perhaps even encouraged by outside players.50 Certainly, the eventual partition was close to what Milošević and Tudjman had discussed way back in March 1991, at a famous meeting in Karadjordjevo.51

The problem with partition is that it entrenches the new form of nationalism and can only be sustained through force. The situations in the Serb-controlled areas of Croatia, before they were captured by the Croatian government, within the Croat-Muslim federation after the Washington Agreement, and in the whole post-Dayton Bosnia–Herzegovina are very similar. There is less killing; the unbearable pressure of daily vulnerability to shelling and sniper fire is lessened. However, the nationalists remain in power; evictions and violations of human rights continue; freedom of movement is restricted, as are political freedoms; the mafia economy continues to function. Moreover, there is an ever-present threat of renewed war since the absence of war has a tendency to weaken the effectiveness of the nationalist narrative.

The negotiators were strongly criticized for even talking to the warring parties. How could they be seen to shake hands with people named as war criminals? How could they treat Izetbegović, the President of a recognized country, on a par with the Bosnian Serbs and the Bosnian Croats?52 Those engaged in the negotiations make the point that those who make the war are the only ones who can stop it and therefore there are no alternatives to talks between the warring parties. There is something in this argument, but these talks should not have been given the priority they received in the overall policy. There were ways in which the non-nationalist political and civic parts of Bosnian society could have been given access to governments and international institutions, in which their ideas and proposals, including proposals for alternatives to partition, could have been heard and taken seriously and in which they were publicly seen to have the respect of the international community. They represented the hope for international values; they should have been seen as the main partners in the search for peace. There was an utter failure to understand that the nationalists did not and could not, because of the nature of their goals and the way in which they were pursued, appeal to ‘hearts and minds’, and that it was of vital importance to foster an alternative.

In parallel with the high-level talks was the humanitarian
intervention. At an early stage in the conflict, Mrs Ogata, the High Commissioner for Refugees, put forward a seven-point humanitarian response plan which was accepted by governments and international agencies in July 1992. The seven points were: respect for human rights and humanitarian law, preventive protection, humanitarian access to those in need, measures to meet special humanitarian needs, temporary protection measures, material assistance, and repair and rehabilitation. UNHCR took the lead role in a massive humanitarian effort providing aid to around two-thirds of the population of Bosnia–Herzegovina, and it coordinated the activities of a range of international humanitarian agencies and NGOs. Many courageous individuals contributed to this effort as aid workers, medical personnel, convoy drivers, etc. In addition to the aid effort, a series of measures were adopted by the UN aimed at protecting the civilian population and upholding international humanitarian law. These included the decision to protect humanitarian convoys, by force, if necessary (Security Council Resolution (SCR) 770 (1991)); the declaration of safe areas (SCR 836 (1993)); the appointment of a Special Rapporteur for Human Rights by the Commission on Human Rights (August 1992); the appointment of a Commission to investigate war crimes (October 1992) and, in particular, rape (December 1992); and the establishment of an international tribunal for the prosecution of persons responsible for serious violations of international humanitarian law‘ (SCR 808 (1993)). The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) was charged with gaining access to detention camps and organizing prisoner releases. And in the Washington Agreement, an EU administration was established to administer Mostar with the aim of reuniting the city.

These measures, at least in theory, represented a very significant innovation in international practice. Adopted under pressure from the international media, which exposed the reality of the war, and from campaigning groups, they constituted a potential new form of international humanitarianism. Although elements of the package had been introduced in previous conflicts – the safe haven/area concept in Iraq, the protection of humanitarian convoys in Somalia – this was the most ambitious deployment of UN peacekeeping troops designed to assist and protect the civilian population and to uphold humanitarian law. Moreover, the wording of the relevant Security Council resolu-

tions were strong. Both SCR 770 (1992), which called for protection for humanitarian convoys and unimpeded access for the ICRC and other humanitarian organizations to ‘camps, prisons and detention centres’, and SCR 836 (1993), which established safe areas, were under Chapter VII of the UN Charter which authorizes the use of force. Some 23,000 UNPROFOR troops were sent to Bosnia–Herzegovina.

In addition to the UNPROFOR troops, NATO and the Western European Union (WEU) maintained naval forces in the Adriatic monitoring the arms embargo, and NATO was responsible for enforcing the No Fly Zone over Bosnian air space, which was also authorized under Chapter VII (SCR 816 (1993)).

However, almost none of these measures was effectively implemented. Humanitarian aid was constantly obstructed and ‘taxed’ by the warring parties. The safe areas became vast insecure refugee camps constantly subjected to shelling; humanitarian supplies were controlled sadistically by the Bosnian Serbs. War crimes continued to be committed, despite the efforts of Mazowiecki, the UN Commission of Experts and the Tribunal, the ICRC and other humanitarian organizations – indeed some of the worst instances of ethnic cleansing occurred in the last few months of the war. The No Fly Zone was violated on countless occasions and the arms embargo was never strictly maintained. Despite the EU administration, Mostar continued to be divided, freedom of movement was still restricted and numerous violations of human rights were recorded. Many UN personnel themselves engaged in black-market activities, and allegations of crimes committed by UN personnel, especially rape, were never properly investigated. The nadir for the UN came in July 1995, when the so-called safe areas of Srebrenica and Zepa were overrun by Bosnian Serb forces.

Was any other approach possible once the war had begun? In political terms, David Owen argues that the first priority was to stop the fighting. But even now, after Dayton, it can be asked whether an agreement would ever have been reached before the parties were ready for it and whether the role of the international negotiators was anything more than a way of facilitating and legitimizing an agreement which, at least, the Serbs and the Croats wanted to reach. The consequence is that it is now extremely hard, as has already become clear, to dislodge the nationalists and war criminals from power, making long-term peace
or normality a distant prospect.

Had the war been understood as, first and foremost, a war of genocide, then the first priority would have been the protection of the civilian population. Negotiations and political pressure could have focused on concrete goals on the ground to ease the humanitarian situation – such as the opening of Tuzla airport or the Mount Igman route to Sarajevo, or the release of prisoners – rather than on partition. The inclusion of non-nationalist parties and groups in the negotiation process could have assisted this task and made possible other take-it-or-leave-it overall solutions not based on partition such as an international protectorate. At the very least, such an approach would have strengthened the alternatives to nationalism, thus obstructing the manufacture of 'fear and hate', and would have left the legitimacy of international organizations more intact. On several occasions, Mazowiecki complained about the lack of cooperation with ICFY: 'The Special Rapporteur requested that human rights concerns should have priority in the peace process, and pointed out that peace negotiations should not have been conducted without ensuring the cessation of massive and gross human rights violations.'

Militarily, a different perception might have led to a tougher, more 'robust' approach to peacekeeping. The belief that this was a war with 'sides' led to an extreme timidity about the use of force for fear that this would escalate and drag the international community into the war on one side or another. General Michael Rose was obsessive about crossing what he called the 'Mogadishu line', in reference to the failure of the UN mission in Somalia. It can, with equal justice, be argued that a tougher approach would have made the task easier and UN forces and personnel much less vulnerable than they were to hostage-taking or sporadic attacks. When in 1993 British soldiers, escorting a relief convoy to Tuzla from Kladanj, started to shoot back at Serbs firing from the hills, harassment was dramatically reduced. Yet General Morillon, the then Commander of UNPROFOR troops in Bosnia-Herzegovina, was reprimanded by the UN Secretary General for 'exceeding his mandate'. A similar story can be recounted when a Danish officer in Tuzla ordered a tank to fire on the Serbs in retaliation for shelling.

For those on the ground, the frustration was immense, both for the UNPROFOR personnel themselves who were being or-}

| Bosnia-Herzegovina: A Case Study | 65 |
|----------------------------------|

...dered to appear to be cowards and for the personnel of humanitarian organizations who found their task as difficult as it had been before the arrival of the UN troops. Since humanitarian passage had to be negotiated anyway, this could as easily be done by the sheer willpower of people like UNHCR’s Larry Hollingsworth or Gerry Hulme than by a toothless UNPROFOR. As Larry Hollingsworth pointed out when leaving Bosnia:

If you send in an army but don’t allow it to be aggressive, why send in firepower and tanks? I’m left sadly with the conclusion that the troops were sent in not to be tough but to look tough... We should have been much tougher from the beginning. The UN missed the chance to seize the initiative and be forceful, and we have seen a gradual chipping away of authority ever since.'

Owen himself argues that tougher peacekeeping was impossible because there were insufficient troops. He points out that it is impossible, for example, to defend the 55-mile route from Sarajevo to Gorazde which crosses two mountain ranges, forty-four bridges and two narrow ravines: ‘Calls for “robust” or “muscular” action from politicians, retired generals and commentators in television studios were greeted with hollow laughs from the men on the ground.’ But the argument can be put the other way round. The troops were equally, if not more, vulnerable if they were not prepared to use force, and this was clearly understood by the warring parties; hence, the temptation to expose this and to humiliate the international community by, for example, hostage-taking. Tougher action would have required regrouping and refusal to undertake certain tasks, for example monitoring as opposed to destroying heavy weaponry.

For similar reasons, Owen is very dismissive of the safe haven/area concept. It is true that UNPROFOR originally asked for 30,000 troops to defend the safe areas and argued that, at a pinch, they could make do with 10,000. In the end the Security Council authorized 7,500 troops, but money was only appropriated for 3,500 troops. The problem was that this argument was used to explain why nothing could be done, instead of intensifying the pressure for more troops. Towards the end of the war, increasing pressure from individuals such as General Morillon or Mazowiecki as well as public opinion did lead eventually to the deployment of the Rapid Reaction Force on Mount
Igman and the toughening of the rules of engagement for the Implementation Force (IFOR).

In the end, the main use of force was air strikes, which had always been advocated by the Americans because they are a way of using force without risking casualties. Operation Deliberate Force lasted from 29 August to 14 September 1995; in all, 3,515 sorties were flown and more than 1,000 bombs were dropped. Air strikes did help to put pressure on the Bosnian Serbs as a prelude to the Dayton Agreement and, supposedly, they deterred an attack on the last Eastern enclave, Goradze. But air strikes are a cumbersome instrument for protecting civilians on the ground, and it was the protection of civilians that was needed above all else. Many people argue that the deployment of the Rapid Reaction Force was more effective.

What was needed, in effect, was not peacekeeping but humanitarian law-enforcement. This does represent a considerable challenge. It requires new strategic thinking about how to counter strategies of population control through ethnic cleansing – how to develop support and promote alternative sources of legitimacy among the local population, new rules of engagement and norms of behaviour, appropriate equipment, forms of organization and command structures.

After Dayton

The longest and most destructive war in Europe since 1945 ended after three and a half years. The international operation mounted to implement the peace agreement involved an array of international institutions – the UN, the EU, the Council of Europe, the OSCE, NATO and the WEU. For NATO, IFOR and its successor, the Stabilization Force (SFOR), is the largest ever military operation undertaken by the Alliance. Moreover, NATO is working together with the Partnership for Peace countries, formerly members of the Warsaw Pact. In the process of implementation, political assumptions, military norms as well as the ‘architecture’ of international institutions, are likely to be determined for the foreseeable future.

The Dayton Agreement exhibited all the contradictions that have dogged international involvement from the start of the war in Bosnia. It was primarily an agreement borne of the realpolitik approach of high-level negotiators who perceive the world as divided into primordial nations. It was an agreement which partitioned Bosnia and Herzegovina into three ‘entities’ and in which the ‘parties to the agreement’ – i.e. the nationalists – were primarily responsible for its implementation. Nevertheless, the agreement also contained clauses which commit the parties, including the international community, to a humanitarian approach – clauses about human rights, the prosecution of war criminals, the return of refugees, freedom of movement, economic and social reconstruction. Effectively, the agreement grants considerable power to the NATO commanders and to the High Representative responsible for civic implementation, which, if utilized effectively and in conjunction with those groups and parties within Bosnia who still stand for civic values, could yet reintegrate the country. This is difficult, however, because of the way the Dayton Agreement legitimizes the warring parties.

These two approaches suggest two scenarios for the future shape of Europe. The first is the partition scenario in which peace is equated with the legitimation of authoritarian nationalist regimes and the role of international institutions, under the weakened leadership of the United States, with sporadic intervention to keep ongoing conflicts more or less under control. Peacekeeping, in this instance, consists of a more or less forceful separation of warring parties. This is not just a scenario for the former Yugoslavia or even Eastern Europe. It could eventually apply to all of Europe and, indeed, beyond, because of what such an approach would do to undermine the appeal of internationalism. This has been called the ‘Latin American scenario’.60

The second scenario is based on the humanitarian approach. It would envisage cooperation among international institutions and civic groups both in Bosnia and elsewhere to build a political and social alternative to nationalism. This would mean taking seriously the civic components of the agreement, particularly the enforcement of internal security – i.e. respect for human rights and prosecution of war criminals – as well as building, through social and economic reconstruction, an alternative to the mafia economy, and encouraging and assisting the return of refugees. Peacekeeping, in this instance, means enforcement of humanitarian law. If Bosnia has become the paradigm of the
new type of warfare and was metaphorically thrown out of Europe, it could also become a model for a new type of humanitarian reconstruction and a symbol of a new Europeanism or internationalism.

During the war in Bosnia–Herzegovina, Sarajevo was divided territorially between a Serb-controlled part and a Bosnian (mainly Muslim) part. But wartime Sarajevo could also be described in terms of a non-territorial divide. There was a group of people who could be described as the globalists – UN peacekeepers, humanitarian agencies, journalists and Sarajevans who spoke English and were employed as assistants, interpreters and drivers. They were able to move freely in and out of the city and across the territorial divide protected by armoured cars, flak jackets and blue cards. At the same time, there were also the local territorially-tied inhabitants of the city. On one (the Bosnian) side, they were under siege for the duration of the war, living off humanitarian aid or the black market (if they were lucky enough to have deutschmarks), prey to sniper fire and occasional shelling. On the other (Serb) side, material conditions were somewhat better, although the climate of fear was worse. On both sides, they were vulnerable to the press gang and the various militias and mafia-types who roamed the streets and claimed legitimacy in terms of the national struggle.

The political goals of the new wars are about the claim to power on the basis of seemingly traditional identities – nation, tribe, religion. Yet the upsurge in the politics of particularistic identities cannot be understood in traditional terms. It has to be explained in the context of a growing cultural dissonance between those who participate in transnational networks which