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# Contribution to understanding Yugoslavia's disintegration and Bosnia's peace process

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# Contribution to understanding Yugoslavia's disintegration and Bosnia's peace process

“Peace cannot be kept by force; it can only be achieved by understanding.”—Albert Einstein

## 1 Introduction

There is no shortage of writing – journalistic, academic and fictional – inspired by the disintegration of Yugoslavia, the Wars of Yugoslav Dissolution and their consequences. Moreover, the volume of literature on the subject continues to grow, as much of the region that was called Yugoslavia for most of the 20th century – now divided into seven successor states – remains unstable almost three decades after the country fell apart in war. Although hostilities ended more than 25 years ago in Bosnia and Herzegovina (Bosnia) and Croatia, more than 21 years ago in Kosovo, and more than 19 years ago in what is today called North Macedonia, the region has failed to leave the past behind. Despite international investment and attention on an unprecedented scale, and even the prospect of membership in the European Union and NATO, the region has struggled to move on politically. And peace processes launched amid optimism in Bosnia in 1995 and Kosovo in 1999 have failed to become self-sustaining or meet the hopes of both their international sponsors and the local populations.

Yugoslavia's tragedy and the enduring turmoil in most of its successor states have formed the backdrop to my career. I began following developments closely in the mid-1980s and have continued to do so to the present day in a variety of capacities, as a student, journalist, academic, think-tanker and diplomat. In the process, I have written extensively on the entire region with a view, above all, to improving understanding of events and contributing to the development of policies to foster sustainable solutions and rebuild stability. Of my many publications, three stand out, each of which was a multi-year endeavour. The first is a 100,000-word manuscript entitled *Yugoslavia's Bloody Collapse: Causes, Course and Consequences* (London and New York: Hurst and New York University Press, 1995). This work, which was written during the Bosnian War, places Yugoslavia's disintegration in its historical context, traces the events leading to that disintegration and part-covers the war, while also analysing trends to predict the likely course of events. The second is a 16,000-word chapter entitled “The Dissolution of Yugoslavia” co-authored with Andrew Wachtel in Charles Ingrao and Thomas A. Emmert, eds., *Confronting the Yugoslav Controversies: A Scholars' Initiative* (West Lafayette, IN: Purdue University Press, 2009). This formed part of a unique, long-term and ongoing project involving a multidisciplinary team of scholars seeking to understand and explain Yugoslavia's disintegration by analysing key controversies. And the third is a 130,000-word manuscript entitled *Bosnia's Paralysed Peace* (London and New York: Hurst and Oxford University Press, 2016), covering Bosnia's disintegration, war and peace process to 2016 and presenting ideas as to how to reform the settlement.

Each will be presented below in terms of what they sought to achieve; the wider literature on the subject; and the research methodology employed. The emphasis is on the third publication, which is the most recent and most academic, and which I hope will prove both to be the greatest contribution to scholarship and to have the most profound impact on the future of the region in terms of helping shape the debate about reform of the existing settlement in Bosnia.

## 2 *Yugoslavia's Bloody Collapse: Causes, Course and Consequences*

*Yugoslavia's Bloody Collapse: Causes, Course and Consequences* was completed in 1994 and published in 1995. It was written during the Bosnian War and was therefore one of the earliest attempts to explain Yugoslavia's disintegration. This section describes the genesis of the book, the experience I drew on and the research I undertook, as well as its originality, academic reception and enduring legacy, including a retrospective criticism reflecting how my views have evolved over the intervening quarter century.

### 2.1 Genesis

I started reporting from Yugoslavia on the eve of the outbreak of war. My first article to appear in *The Daily Telegraph*, the newspaper I started reporting for, appeared under the headline "Tanks ready to roll". The second was the front page of the newspaper, as those tanks began rolling and war erupted in Slovenia in the wake of that republic's declaration of independence. It was the beginning of 14 months of war reporting, covering the Slovene and Croatian Wars, as well as the formative events of the Bosnian War, that took me to every Yugoslav federal unit apart from Montenegro.

To a 24-year-old, war can be exhilarating. I was present at Ljubljana Airport on the first day of the Slovene War with the two Austrian photographers who were killed there later in the day and again in Glina, together with my wife, on 26 July 1991 in the first battle of the Croatian War when the first reporter to die in Croatia, Egon Scotland of the *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, lost his life. Together with a US colleague, I was the closest Western reporter to Vukovar, about 20 km away in Vinkovci, when that city fell after a three-month siege on 19 November 1991, trying to enter in the forlorn hope that the presence of foreign journalists might prevent summary killings. And later, I wrote, among others, the first stories to appear on the underground, parallel education system that Albanians were creating in Kosovo in February 1992 and on the first mass grave to be uncovered in Bosnia, in Mostar, in June 1992.

At the time, I was proud of my writing. I was a witness to ethnic cleansing and believed naively that my reporting might help influence international efforts to halt the fighting and pave the way for discussions on Yugoslavia's future. I first realised the limited impact of reporting when I returned to the UK after narrowly escaping death in the battle of Glina, assuming that the escalating conflict in Croatia would be top of the news agenda but discovering that there was minimal appetite for a complex story that did not translate easily into journalism. *The Daily Telegraph's* Deputy Foreign Editor sent me to have my photo taken, explaining to me that the photo was for my obituary, and pointing out how short it would be.

Despite the excitement of war reporting, I was more interested in researching the reasons that Yugoslavia was falling apart, analysing the country's likely trajectory and seeking to devise approaches to end the fighting and help mitigate the conflict. Moreover, I was frustrated that the conflict was being covered in media and discussed in diplomatic circles from the propaganda perspectives of the belligerents, rather than on the basis of what had, or had not, actually happened that had led to the tragedy that was unfolding. In parallel with earning a living from reporting, I began a series of in-depth interviews with actors, analysts and opinion-formers to try to piece together the dissolution of a country that, in common with many throughout Yugoslavia, I also experienced personally, given that I was half from that country through my mother, who is Slovene, and had visited most years during my childhood.

I set out, therefore, to write the most concise and accessible history of Yugoslavia and its disintegration possible, setting out the likely trajectory and prospects for the region, in the hope that such a book might help improve understanding of the conflict, thereby contributing to policies that might also end it.

## 2.2 Methodology

In terms of methodology, I synthesised the existing, then limited literature on Yugoslavia to present the disintegration in context and address the “ancient-hatreds” thesis, which, at the time, dominated popular discourse. I also compiled a comprehensive chronology of events covering Yugoslavia’s final decade, including the specific events on the ground leading to hostilities. And, in order to understand their significance, I looked to the insight provided by the many interviews I carried out with informed individuals from throughout Yugoslavia and, in particular, from Slovenia, Croatia and Serbia. Moreover, in addition to reporting, I was able to draw on my undergraduate and postgraduate studies, including extended periods in Yugoslavia.<sup>1</sup>

In terms of literature, there were no accounts of Yugoslavia’s disintegration to consult at the time I began researching the book. The most up-to-date, contemporary work was Stevan Pavlowitch’s *The Improbable Survivor: Yugoslavia and its Problems, 1918-1988* (London: Hurst, 1989), which, as the title indicates, explained how Yugoslavia had remained together. Ivo Banac’s *The National Question in Yugoslavia: Origins, History, Politics* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1984) was my starting point for understanding relations among the peoples of the former Yugoslavia. I drew extensively on Aleksa Djilas’ *The Contested Country: Yugoslav Unity and Communist Revolution, 1919-1953* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1991) in relation to national policy from the creation of the first Yugoslavia to its destruction, through the Second World War and the formation of the second Yugoslavia. Specifically on the Second World War, I looked to Jozo Tomasevich’s *War and Revolution in Yugoslavia: The Chetniks* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1975) and Walter Roberts’ *Tito, Mihailovic and the Allies, 1941-1945* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1973). I was also able to draw on recent research in Serbo-Croat to address the question of war dead: *Žrtve drugog svetskog rata u Jugoslaviji* [Victims of the Second World War in Yugoslavia] (London: Naša reč, 1985) by Bogoljub Kočović and *Jugoslavija: manipulacije žrtvama drugog svjetskog rata* [Yugoslavia: manipulation of the Victims of the Second World War] (Zagreb: Yugoslav Victimological Society, 1989) by Vladimir Žerjavić. Though Kočović was a Serb and Žerjavić a Croat, their results were very similar. Moreover, their research was little known at the time.

I looked, in particular, to Dennison Rusinow’s *The Yugoslav Experiment, 1948-1974* (London: Hurst, 1977) for analysis of the evolution of Tito’s Yugoslavia, to Stevan Pavlowitch’s *Yugoslavia’s Great Dictator: Tito, a Reassessment* (London: Hurst, 1992) and to David Dyker’s *Yugoslavia: Socialism, Development and Debt* (London: Routledge, 1990) in relation to Yugoslavia’s economic failings. For interpretation of the rise of Slobodan Milošević, I benefited from contemporary Serbian accounts: *Mrtvouzice* [Unbreakable Bond] (Zagreb: BST/Cesarec, 1988) by former Belgrade Mayor, Bodgan Bodganović, and *Olako obećana brzina* (Zagreb: Globus, 1988) by Milošević’s purged rival Dragiša Pavlović; and for perspective on Kosovo on Branko Horvat’s *Kosovsko pitanje* [The Kosovo Question] (Zagreb: Globus, 1988). Branka Magaš’s *The Destruction of Yugoslavia: Tracing the Break-up, 1980-92* (London: Verso, 1992), a compilation of her writing on Yugoslavia during the 1980s and early 1990s, originally published under the pen name of Michele Lee, and James Gow’s *Legitimacy and the Military: The Yugoslav Crisis* (London: Pinter, 1991) were particularly useful. I was also able to make use of the first publications to appear by participants in the events: *Premiki: Nastajanje in*

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<sup>1</sup>I had been inspired by the course “Search for Consensus in a Multinational State: Yugoslavia since 1918” taught by Dr Mark Wheeler at London University’s School of Slavonic and East European Studies that I completed in 1986-87 as part of my Bachelor’s degree in History, which I subsequently taught myself under an updated name in 1994-95. And I had written a dissertation for my Master’s degree in International Relations entitled “Yugoslavia and the European Community: towards a closer relationship?” that was published in the South Slav Journal (Vol. 3-4, 1990). I was also able to draw on the experience of spending one semester at Ljubljana University in 1985 and another at Zagreb University in 1989, as well as translating Slovene texts for Amnesty International on occasions during my studies.

*obramba slovenske države 1988–1992* [Movements: the Creation and Defence of the Slovene State 1988–1992] (Ljubljana: Mladinska knjiga, 1992) by Slovenia's Defence Minister (and current Prime Minister) Janez Janša and *Kako smo srušili Jugoslaviju* [How We Destroyed Yugoslavia] (Zagreb: Globus, 1992) by Croatia's last member of the Yugoslav Presidency, Stipe Mesić. The literature was presented in a biographical note at the end of the book, which was designed both to present the sources and to discuss them so as to indicate to readers where they could go for additional information.

The course and significance of events were pieced together through interviews conducted in Croatia,<sup>2</sup> Serbia<sup>3</sup> and Slovenia,<sup>4</sup> which shaped the narrative and, given who was interviewed, helped provide insight into developments. Many interviewees were members of the Association for a Yugoslav Democratic Initiative (*Udruženje za jugoslovensku/jugoslavensku demokratsku inicijativu* or UJDI), the first non-communist political organisation formed in Yugoslavia in February 1989, comprising some of the country's most celebrated thinkers, designed to be a forum for debate to analyse the best way for Yugoslavia to evolve beyond Communism. These individuals were especially good interlocutors, as they had followed events closely and were interested, above all, in exploring solutions which would enable Yugoslavia to remain together within a decentralised and democratic framework. This was in contrast to the prevailing nationalist narratives, though I also interviewed individuals who were able to present more nuanced nationalist arguments, such as the lawyer Kosta Čavoški in Serbia and former dissident and commentator, Ivan Zvonimir Čičak, in Croatia.

Only two people refused to be interviewed, Ante Marković, Yugoslavia's last Prime Minister, and Dragiša Pavlović, Milošević's rival who was purged at the eighth plenum of the League of Communists of Serbia in September 1987. Marković explained to me that he was too upset to discuss the events and only broke his silence to testify at Milošević's trial at the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia in 2003. The interview with Jovan Rašković, founder of the *Srpska demokratska stranka* (Serb Democratic Party) may have been especially significant, as he died shortly afterwards. I also benefited greatly from sharing an apartment with Vesna Knežević, Radio Belgrade's Zagreb correspondent between 1984 and 1992, who helped, in particular, in relation to events on the ground across Croatia in 1990 and 1991.

### 2.3 Originality, academic reception and enduring legacy

*Yugoslavia's Bloody Collapse* addressed and rejected the ancient-hatreds thesis as presented, in particular, by Robert D. Kaplan in *Balkan Ghosts: A Journey through History* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1993) as, ultimately, did every serious study of Yugoslavia's disintegration. It provided a concise and accessible history of the former Yugoslavia and relations among the peoples living there, challenging the many myths about the conflict that were then popular, as well as the propaganda positions of the belligerents. Moreover, it drew on publications in both Serbo-Croat and Slovene, in addition to the literature in English.

The book's originality at the time of publication was the way it traced Yugoslavia's disintegration in relation to events throughout the country, not just those republics most

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<sup>2</sup>Interviewees included (commentator and Croatian Spring student leader) Ivan Zvonimir Čičak; (economist and UJDI founder) Branko Horvat; (philosopher and UJDI member) Žarko Puhovski; (Serb Democratic Forum founder and UJDI member) Milorad Pupovac; and (former senior Croatian Communist leader) Stipe Šušteršič.

<sup>3</sup>Interviewees included (former Belgrade Mayor, architect and UJDI member) Bogdan Bogdanović; (lawyer) Kosta Čavoški; (journalist) Saša Čirić; (historian) Andrej Mitrović; (sociologist) Vesna Pešić; (psychiatrist and SDS founder) Jovan Rašković; (Milošević adviser and former Information Minister) Željko Simić; and (historian) Ljubinka Trgovčević.

<sup>4</sup>Interviewees included (political scientist) Anton Bebler; (Defence Minister and former dissident) Janez Janša; (economist and former Finance Minister) Jože Mencinger; (sociologist and UJDI member) Rastko Močnik; and (Foreign Minister and writer) Dimitrij Rupel.

involved in the fighting. In this way, it examined the evolution of attitudes in Slovenia, as much as in Serbia. It included, for example, discussion of the disintegration of the Yugoslav Association of Writers in 1986 in the wake of acrimonious dialogue between Slovene and Serbian intellectuals – five years before the shooting war began, and before Slobodan Milošević's rise to power – as well as Slovene responses to Serbian moves to centralise authority and, in particular, the clampdown in Kosovo. Moreover, it provided unique insight into events on the ground in Croatia in 1990 and 1991, including matters such as the Mlinar affair, which hardly feature elsewhere. The interviews and the draft manuscript were shared with Brian Lapping Associates, the production company that made *The Death of Yugoslavia series* for the BBC, on which I was a consultant on the first and second episodes in relation to events in Slovenia and Croatia. In this way, the research that went into *Yugoslavia's Bloody Collapse* also contributed to the quality of the BBC series.

In terms of the book's academic reception, three notable literature reviews were published by academic reviewers in 1995, 1996 and 1997. Robert Crampton, professor of Balkan history at Oxford, reviewed seven books on Yugoslavia's disintegration in the Times Literary Supplement in November 1995 and concluded: "Two of these books stand out from the rest. Susan Woodward's *Balkan Tragedy* is long and detailed and must be regarded as the most authoritative treatment yet. For a concise, intelligent, sensible and sensitive short account of the collapse of Yugoslavia, Christopher Bennett's book could scarcely be bettered."<sup>5</sup> Four US academics, Gale Stokes (Rice University), John Lampe (University of Maryland), Dennison Rusinow (University of Pittsburgh) and Julie Mostov (New York University), reviewed 33 books that had appeared by 1996 in *Slavic Review*, concluding that: "The four books by Bennett, Cohen, Woodward, and Silber and Little constitute the short list of required reading on the Yugoslav crisis. Bennett's is the most pointed, Cohen's the most balanced for undergraduates, Woodward's the book of most interest to policy makers, and Silber and Little's the most readable and detailed overall effort."<sup>6</sup> James Gow, professor of international peace and security at King's College, London, reviewed 38 books published by 1997 in *Slavonic and East European Review*, concluding that "Bennett's book, written largely without notes (revealing his background as a journalist), is perhaps the most balanced, directly written and easily absorbed of the accounts to date on Yugoslavia and its collapse."<sup>7</sup>

*Yugoslavia's Bloody Collapse* was, nevertheless, a product of its time, written during the fighting and completed a year and a half before the Dayton Peace Agreement ended the Bosnian War. As such, the subtext was the need to end the war, which I believed required international intervention and confrontation with Serbia, a reckoning that was eventually to come. In her *Thinking about Yugoslavia: Scholarly Debates about the Yugoslav Breakup and the Wars in Bosnia and Kosovo* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2005), Sabrina P. Ramet stresses the focus on "Serbia", "Belgrade" and "Milošević". Moreover, although the book successfully identified and traced the key developments in Yugoslavia's disintegration, it presented them chronologically, rather than examining them in a structural manner. In academic terms, therefore, the book has shortcomings, though it remains relevant in relation to discussions of the relative influence of personality and Serbian nationalism on Yugoslavia's demise. Moreover, Chapter 9, "Prospects", presenting a vision of the likely trajectory of the whole of what had been Yugoslavia, has proved extremely prescient and holds up well nearly 27 years after it was written.

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<sup>5</sup> *Swept under the carpet*, Times Literary Supplement, 24 November 1995.

<sup>6</sup> *Instant History: Understanding the Wars of Yugoslav Succession*, *Slavic Review* 55, no. 1 (Spring 1996).

<sup>7</sup> *After the Flood: Literature on the Context, Causes and Course of the Yugoslav War – Reflections and Refractions*, SEER, Vol. 75, No. 3, July 1997.



### 3 “The Dissolution of Yugoslavia” with Andrew Wachtel in Charles Ingrao and Thomas A. Emmert, eds., *Confronting the Yugoslav Controversies: A Scholars' Initiative*

This chapter and the book it forms part of represent a multi-disciplinary attempt by scholars – historians, social scientists and lawyers – to address controversies emerging out of Yugoslavia's disintegration with a view to contributing to regional reconciliation. As such, it was a remarkably ambitious project and one that may yet have an enduring legacy, as Yugoslavia's successor states seek to come to terms with the events that tore their country apart three decades ago. The Scholars' Initiative began in 1997 and the book was published in 2009. This section describes the project, research methodology and my contribution.

#### 3.1 Confronting the Yugoslav controversies

The project was the brainchild of Charles Ingrao, a historian of Central Europe and the Habsburg Monarchy at Purdue University, concerned by the long-term consequences of competing nationalist historical narratives to the prospects of reconciliation and, by extension, regional stability. During the Bosnian War, he engaged in a dialogue with Serbian historians that he subsequently sought to institutionalise through a Scholars' Initiative, for which he raised funding from the US Institute of Peace and other donors. In this way, he brought together researchers from both the former Yugoslavia and the West “to challenge the tendentious nationalistic narratives... by exposing and discrediting each belligerent's myths about the Yugoslav conflicts while simultaneously inserting indisputable but inconvenient facts known to their former adversaries.”<sup>8</sup> I met with Professor Ingrao when he first visited Bosnia in the aftermath of the Bosnian War, when I was working for the International Crisis Group, and therefore became involved from the outset. Moreover, in addition to co-authoring one of the chapters of the book, I presented the research process and findings at discussions marking its publication in Serbo-Bosno-Croat – *Suočavanje s jugoslavenkim kontroverzama* (Sarajevo: Buybook, 2010) – thereby also helping to take the project forward as a tool to promote understanding of the recent past and, potentially in time, regional reconciliation.

The Scholars' Initiative had an “open-enrolment” policy in order to bring in as many academics as possible, but not journalists. I was the exception. Participants were divided into 11 research teams, each addressing one of the most contentious issues impeding mutual understanding between Serbs, on the one hand, and their wartime adversaries, on the other, with a commitment to scholarly methodologies, and the impartial weighting and representation of evidence with maximum transparency. A detailed prospectus was drafted shortly after the project's initial meeting in September 2001, setting out principles, policies and procedures for posting on the project website. Research teams convened in July 2002 to draft a research agenda and team leaders subsequently reconvened on a regular basis.

The Dissolution of Yugoslavia team was led by Latinka Perović, historian and Secretary-General of the League of Communists of Serbia between 1968 and 1972, and Andrew Wachtel, Dean of the Graduate School at Northwestern University, and, in addition to me, comprised Mark Biondich; Audrey Helfant Budding; Cathie Carmichael; Dusan Djordjevich; Danica Fink-Hafner; Eric Gordy; Trtko Jakovina; Goran Jovanović; Dejan Jović; Matjaž Klemenčič; Todor Kuljić; Tomaz Masnak; Davorka Matić; Louis Sell; Predrag Simić; Arnold Suppan; Ljubinka Trgovčević;

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<sup>8</sup>“Introduction”, Charles Ingrao, in Charles Ingrao and Thomas A. Emmert, eds., *Confronting the Yugoslav Controversies: A Scholars' Initiative* (West Lafayette, IN: Purdue University Press, 2009), p3.

Frances Trix; and Mitja Žagar. The chapter rested substantially on research commissioned by the Scholars' Initiative, including, in particular, Lenard J. Cohen and Jasna Dragović-Soso, eds., *State Collapse in South-Eastern Europe: New Perspectives on Yugoslavia's Disintegration* (Purdue University Press, West Lafayette, IN, 2008).

### 3.2 Significance

The chapter contributed little new to an understanding of Yugoslavia's dissolution, given substantial agreement in the academic community by that stage of its causes and chronology. Indeed, this was made clear at the beginning. Instead, it sought to synthesise and sum up research by scholars in a number of fields that represented "a broad consensus". It did, nevertheless, present understanding of Yugoslavia's dissolution in terms of an original metaphor drawn from medicine, explaining:

"When a human being dies, it is sometimes the case that a single cause of death can be established: heart failure, a stroke, for example. In other cases, however, multiple organ systems fail more or less simultaneously in a cascading series of disasters. Death, when it occurs, cannot be ascribed to loss of liver or kidney function but to the combination of interlinked failures whose origins can often be seen to stretch back relatively far into the past, well before the final crisis began. The collapse of Yugoslavia in the early 1990s is analogous to a case of multiple organ failure. The patient had been in delicate health for some time. Although its ailments were not necessarily terminal, its survival required constant attention and careful treatment by a devoted staff of caregivers."<sup>9</sup>

It also represents a concise, yet comprehensive overview of Yugoslavia's dissolution that may be the best introduction to the topic. Moreover, of the 11 questions addressed in *Confronting the Yugoslav Controversies*, the most enduring in terms of regional debate, despite academic consensus, remains that of Yugoslavia's dissolution. The chapter, and the research and discussions behind it, including the web site,<sup>10</sup> therefore, represent a resource to improve understanding, if and when the political will exists to open up the subject in Yugoslavia's successor states.

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<sup>9</sup>"The Dissolution of Yugoslavia", Andrew Wachtel and Christopher Bennett, in Charles Ingrao and Thomas A. Emmert, eds., *Confronting the Yugoslav Controversies: A Scholars' Initiative* (West Lafayette, IN: Purdue University Press, 2009), p13.

<sup>10</sup><https://cla.purdue.edu/academic/history/research/si/>.

## 4 *Bosnia's Paralysed Peace*

*Bosnia's Paralysed Peace* was published in 2016, 21 years after the Dayton Peace Agreement came into force. It was the product of monitoring the entire peace process from a series of vantage points, including that of Deputy High Representative, extensive reading of relevant academic literature, and the conviction, based on long-term observation, that it would be necessary to reform the existing settlement to achieve sustainable peace. My aim, therefore, was to produce a resource for policy-makers, diplomats and students of conflict, explaining how Bosnia had got to where it is today, in the hope that it might contribute to eventual reform of the country's political system in the interests of all its communities and the wider international community.

Specifically, I wished to draw attention to the problems in Bosnia, including the danger of further hostilities; to present an analysis of relations among Bosnia's communities over the centuries, what I termed the "Bosnian Question"; to examine Bosnia's disintegration and war; to present a comprehensive analysis of the peace process, including successes as well as failures; to highlight the potential dangers of democracy in multi-ethnic states; to weave into the narrative political-science theory on managing deep-rooted conflict; and to demonstrate that there are alternative and better ways to balance the interests of Bosnia's communities and citizens.

This was effectively a two-decade research project from the beginning of the peace process to publication. It was based on long-term observation and data collection, examining what worked and what did not, looking to academic literature to understand why the country was evolving in the way it was, as well as its likely trajectory, and ultimately to devise alternative approaches. This section sets out the significance of the Bosnian peace process; describes the genesis of the book, relevant experience and research methodology; presents literature used in researching and writing the book; highlights the originality of the book; sets out the principal thesis; describes elements of a proposed paradigm shift; and considers the book's reception.

### 4.1 Peace process significance and policy debate

The Bosnian peace process is relevant primarily in relation to the future of Bosnia and Southeast Europe. However, it also has significance, which goes beyond the region, in terms of the issues that need to be addressed in the wake of ethno-national conflict. The peace process has been closely monitored, well-resourced and under-written by an international security presence with a peace-enforcement mandate. Moreover, thanks to geography, options have been available to policy-makers, such as the prospect of Euro-Atlantic integration, that do not exist in relation to other conflict areas. If, therefore, the international community is unable to achieve lasting peace and stability in Bosnia, it bodes poorly for other countries and regions seeking to transition from war to peace.

The peace accord negotiated in Dayton, Ohio, and signed in Paris, France, on 14 December ended three-and-a-half years of fighting and set in train processes for Bosnia's reconstruction. Implementation involved a plethora of international organisations, including the European Union, the International Monetary Fund, NATO, the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe, the United Nations and the World Bank, with coordination entrusted to the Office of the High Representative (OHR), an *ad hoc* institution established specially to oversee civilian implementation. Each organisation has reported periodically on the process, with the OHR, even today, reporting twice a year to the UN Security Council. Numerous think-tanks, non-governmental organisations and human-rights groups have published progress updates over the years. And scholars of peace and conflict have written extensively on the process.

Despite huge international investment in time, resources and effort, however, Bosnia is in a state of political, social and economic paralysis a quarter century after the Dayton Peace

Agreement came into force. Conditions throughout the country are deteriorating; irredentist agendas are resurfacing; and the outlook is increasingly negative. The consensus among diplomats is that the peace accord achieved its aim, namely to end a war, but has failed to build a self-sustaining peace. Moreover, policy-makers are frustrated with the systematic obstructionism of Bosnian political leaders and seemingly at a loss as to how to reverse the country's trajectory.

Failure has not been for want of trying. When the process appeared deadlocked, the international community became increasingly interventionist, employing executive powers to drive peace implementation forward and taking on a state-building reform agenda. From the beginning, however, the international role has been controversial. Indeed, the international military deployment was initially limited to 12 months. The debate around peace-building in Bosnia, therefore, has to a great extent been around the nature and degree of international involvement. While early scholarly works on the peace process were, at best, ambivalent about the use of executive powers, discussion took off among diplomats and policy-makers in the wake of publication of Gerald Knaus and Felix Martin's "Travails of the European Raj: Lessons from Bosnia and Herzegovina",<sup>11</sup> and a series of follow-up reports by the European Stability Initiative (ESI) think-tank, of which Knaus is Chairman, advocating a shift to local ownership of the peace process, closure of the OHR and reform processes overseen by the European Union, offering the prospect of eventual membership. Although the transition to local ownership proved disappointing, the focus of the policy debate in the intervening period has remained on the structure of the international presence and most effective policies to assist Bosnia's path towards Euro-Atlantic integration.

## 4.2 Genesis, relevant experience and research methodology

*Bosnia's Paralysed Peace* is not a conventional scholarly work. It is based in the first instance on my experience in a series of positions with international organisations and non-governmental organisations over the course of the Bosnian peace process, in particular with the International Crisis Group (ICG), NATO and the Office of the High Representative (OHR),<sup>12</sup> that enabled me to follow the peace process closely, to get to know all actors – international and Bosnian – personally, and to acquire insight into diplomatic discussions and decision-making on the future of Bosnia. It was researched and written in three phases: in the late 1990s on the basis of research undertaken at the ICG; in 2008 and 2009, when on a break from the OHR; and again in 2014-16, after leaving the OHR. I decided to write the book in 1998 already on the basis of my formative experience with the ICG, for whom I helped set up its first field mission immediately after the end of the Bosnian War, because of my concerns about where Bosnia was headed.<sup>13</sup> ICG's first field mission was, at the time, ground-breaking. Hitherto, think-tanks had not been

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<sup>11</sup>Journal of Democracy, Vol. 14, No. 3 (2003), pp. 60-74.

<sup>12</sup>I worked for the ICG for the first three years of the peace process (1996-1999), firstly as Political Analyst, then as Deputy Director of its Bosnia programme and eventually as Director of an expanded Balkan programme. In 1999 and 2000 I worked for the Institute for War and Peace Reporting as Editor of its newly launched Balkan Crisis Reports. Between 2000 and 2006, I served as Editor of *NATO Review* and UK Information Officer at NATO. Between 2006 and 2014, I was employed by the OHR in a variety of capacities, including as Communications Director of both the OHR and EUSR, Deputy High Representative (with two years in Banja Luka and two years in Mostar), and Special Adviser to the High Representative. And between 2014 and 2016, I was a Researcher writing analyses on the missing for the International Commission on Missing Persons.

<sup>13</sup>I had a fellowship from the US Institute of Peace to write the book, which I had intended to call "Bosnia's Flawed Peace". The fellowship was to be administered by London's Institute for War and Peace Reporting (IWPR), for whom I was also launching a news service called the Balkan Crisis Reports, which was scheduled to be one day's editing a week. In the event, however, the escalation of fighting in Kosovo and NATO's intervention meant that I was working seven days a week and the book-writing had to be put on hold.

able to deploy analysts on the ground in crisis regions or use the internet to make policy papers available. As Political Analyst, I was one of the first people to travel the length and breadth of Bosnia as soon as this became possible. I also edited most publications and helped develop the report-writing style that the ICG effectively uses to this day. In developing this approach to presenting information, my aim was to publish academic-standard research in real time, and thereby to help generate ideas, inform the policy debate and, ideally, influence decision-making. Moreover, the publications for which I was responsible in the first three years of ICG's presence in the Balkans remain a useful contemporary resource for conflict researchers.<sup>14</sup>

The initial mandate was to monitor implementation of the Dayton Peace Agreement. Given the focus on elections during the first year of peace implementation, much of my initial writing was on the conditions in which elections were taking place and the outcome on the day. A month before the vote, we published a report entitled *Why the Bosnian Elections Must be Postponed* (August 1996), documenting the many reasons why the prevailing conditions were not conducive to holding elections and that if they were, nevertheless, to be held, the consequences would be detrimental to the longer-term prospects for peace and reconciliation. And after the vote, we documented the many failings of the elections, including proving turnout greater than 100 per cent, in the papers *Elections in Bosnia and Herzegovina* (September 1996) and *Addendum to the 22 September 1996 ICG Report on Elections in Bosnia and Herzegovina* (October 1996).

The ruling ethno-national parties had not needed to resort to fraud to win the elections, but probably decided it was not worth running even the smallest risk of an upset. Although I had helped reveal and document the excessive turnout, I did not consider it to be the greatest failing of the election and was more concerned, in terms of the longer-term prospects of the peace process, by the incentives in the electoral system. While elections and democracy were being presented as a panacea for Bosnia's many ills, the electoral system appeared to me to be exacerbating conflict, rather than mitigating it, effectively condemning the country to zero-sum

<sup>14</sup>ICG papers I wrote either wholly or partly, or edited, include: *Inside Radovan's Republika*, June 1996 (author); *Electioneering in Republika Srpska*, July 1996 (author); *Why the Bosnian Elections Must be Postponed*, August 1996 (one of three authors); *Elections in Bosnia and Herzegovina*, September 1996 (one of two authors); *Addendum to the 22 September 1996 ICG Report on Elections in Bosnia and Herzegovina*, October 1996 (one of two authors); *Aid and Accountability*, December 1996 (one of three authors); *Media in Bosnia and Herzegovina: How International Support Can Be More Effective*, March 1997 (author); *Going Nowhere Fast: Refugees & Internally Displaced Persons in BiH*, April 1997 (one of four authors); *Why SFOR Should Stay in Bosnia beyond June 1998*, June 1997 (author); *House Burnings: Obstruction of the Right to Return in Drvar*, June 1997 (editor); *Constitutional Crisis in Republika Srpska*, August 1997 (editor); *Beyond Ballot Boxes: Municipal Elections in Bosnia and Herzegovina*, September 1997 (one of two authors); *A Review of the Dayton Peace Agreement's Implementation*, November 1997 (author); *A Peace or Just a Cease-Fire? The Military Equation in Post-Dayton Bosnia and Herzegovina*, December 1997 (editor); *Hollow Promise? Return of Serb DPs to Drvar, Grahovo & Glamoc*, January 1998 (editor); *Rebuilding a Multi-Ethnic Sarajevo: The Need for Minority Returns*, February 1998 (editor); *Kosovo Briefing, February 1998* (editor); *Serbia: The Milosevic Factor*, February 1998 (editor); *Changing the Logic of Bosnian Politics: Discussion Paper on Electoral Reform*, March 1998 (author); *Kosovo Spring*, March 1998 (editor and secondary author); *Working Towards Security Within a Political Framework*, April 1998 (author); *Minority Return or Mass Relocation?*, May 1998 (editor); *Inventory of a Windfall: Milosevic's Gains from the Kosovo Dialogue*, May 1998 (editor); *A Tale of Two Cities: Return of Displaced Persons to Jajce and Travnik*, June 1998 (editor); *The Konjic Comundrum: Why Minorities Have Failed to Return to Open City*, June 1998 (editor); *The View from Tirana: The Albanian Dimension of the Kosovo Crisis*, July 1998 (editor); *Western Gate of Central Bosnia: Politics of Return in Bugojno and Prozor*, July 1998 (editor); *The Albanian Question in Macedonia*, August 1998 (editor); *Changing Course? Implications of the Divide in Bosnian Croat Politics*, August 1998 (editor); *Impunity in Drvar*, August 1998 (editor); *Kosovo's Long Hot Summer*, September 1998 (editor); *Too Little Too Late: Implementation of the Sarajevo Declaration*, September 1998 (editor); *Doing Democracy a Diservice: 1998 Elections in BiH*, September 1998 (author); *Whither Bosnia?*, September 1998 (editor); *1998 Elections in Macedonia*, October 1998 (editor); *State of the Balkans*, November 1998 (author); *Breaking the Logjam: Refugee Return to Croatia*, November 1998 (editor); *Minority Employment Principles*, December 1998 (author); *Change in the Offing: Analysis of the Evolution of Croatian Politics*, December 1998 (editor); and *To Build a Peace: Recommendations for the Madrid Meeting of the Peace Implementation Council*, December 1998 (one of two authors).

politics, paralysis at best and a return to hostilities at worst. And it was this observation that set me on an intellectual voyage of discovery that culminated in the publication of *Bosnia's Paralysed Peace*.

At the time, I had no expertise in electoral systems. However, large numbers of academics and graduate students were carrying out field research in Bosnia, many of whom came by my office. One visitor lent me a copy of Donald L. Horowitz's *Ethnic Groups in Conflict* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985), which struck a chord. Finding important insights that seemed to apply to the situation in Bosnia, I began systematically reading the political-science literature on democracy in divided societies. I also called on the expertise of London's Electoral Reform Society and Stockholm's International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance. The outcome was a series of ICG reports on elections and electoral systems, including, in particular, *Changing the Logic of Bosnian Politics: Discussion Paper on Electoral Reform* (March 1998),<sup>15</sup> in which I attempted to tailor academic theory and electoral practice in other multi-ethnic states to Bosnia's circumstances. I subsequently helped launch another think-tank, similar to the ICG, called the European Stability Initiative (ESI) for whom I edited all papers on the Balkans for its first three years, several of which were focused on Bosnia.<sup>16</sup> Given the experience of several years of peace-building, our aim with these papers was to examine the successes and failures of the process in order to build on the effective use of international authority.

I returned to Bosnia in June 2006 on a leave of absence, having spent the previous six years working for NATO in Brussels, to serve as Communications Director of the Office of the High Representative and EU Special Representative. Had international strategy been successful, the "pull of Brussels" was supposed to replace the "push of Dayton". This was to be manifested in closure of the OHR, including the relinquishment of the High Representative's executive powers, and its replacement by an operation headed by an EU Special Representative, equipped with an advisory mandate. In the event, however, the transition did not take place, as the risks of proceeding were too great. The shift to local ownership had laid bare the shortcomings of the peace process.

As Communications Director, I was especially close to events. Indeed, I drafted both the June 2006 Peace Implementation Council communiqué heralding OHR closure<sup>17</sup> and the February 2007 communiqué reversing that decision.<sup>18</sup> And I again decided that I needed to write a book about the peace process. I therefore extended my leave of absence and drafted a manuscript that formed the basis for *Bosnia's Paralysed Peace*, covering the first 12 years of the peace process, but did not publish it, as I was asked to become Deputy High Representative. I subsequently served as Deputy High Representative in both Banja Luka, being responsible for matters relating to Republika Srpska, and in Mostar, being responsible for matters relating to Herzegovina and Croat issues. This experience, which is unique among international officials, had an important impact on my outlook on the Bosnian Question and ways to reform the existing settlement,

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<sup>15</sup>The other papers were *Beyond Ballot Boxes: Municipal Elections in Bosnia and Herzegovina* (September 1997); *Working Towards Security Within a Political Framework* (April 1998); and *Doing Democracy a Disservice: 1998 Elections in BiH* (September 1998).

<sup>16</sup>ESI papers I edited include: *Interim Evaluation of the Return and Reconstruction Task Force (RRTF): Minority Return Progress in 1999* (September 1999); *Reshaping International Priorities in Bosnia and Herzegovina: Bosnian Power Structures* (October 1999); *Power and Strategy in Bosnia and Herzegovina* (February 2000); *Reshaping International Priorities in Bosnia and Herzegovina: International Power in Bosnia* (March 2000); *Autonomy, Dependency, Security: The Montenegrin Dilemma* (August 2000); and *Rhetoric and Reform: A Case Study of Institution Building in Montenegro 1998-2001* (June 2001).

<sup>17</sup>*Towards Ownership: From Peace Implementation to Euro-Atlantic Integration*, PIC Steering Board Communiqué, 23 June 2006. [<http://www.ohr.int/communique-by-the-pic-steering-board-3/>]

<sup>18</sup>*Maintaining Progress*, PIC Steering Board Communiqué, 27 February 2007. [<http://www.ohr.int/communique-by-the-pic-steering-board/>]

which, I believe, helped make *Bosnia's Paralysed Peace* a more complete work.

In terms of methodology, therefore, I gathered relevant material over two decades in order to compile a comprehensive record of events. At the same time, I was able to discuss developments both with international officials on the ground and in capitals, including interviewing officials involved in all reform processes, many of whom were OHR colleagues, and with Bosnian officials and analysts throughout the peace process. I synthesised the relevant literature covering Bosnia's history, disintegration and war. I drew, in particular, on my own published research with the ICG and ESI for the early years of the peace process. And I looked to academic writing on divided societies, democratisation and peace processes to provide context, develop a structural framework for analysis and to help devise solutions.

### 4.3 Literature

The literature on Yugoslavia's disintegration and ensuing regional instability is vast and covers a wide range of themes and perspectives. Indeed, two books – Quintin Hoare and Noel Malcolm, eds., *Books on Bosnia: a critical bibliography of works relating to Bosnia-Herzegovina published since 1990 in West European languages* (London: The Bosnian Institute, 2000) and Sabrina P. Ramet's *Thinking about Yugoslavia: Scholarly Debates about the Yugoslav Breakup and the Wars in Bosnia and Kosovo* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005) – catalogue and analyse the competing interpretations in these many publications.

For historical context, I drew on two histories of Bosnia that were published during the Bosnian War – *Bosnia-Herzegovina: a Tradition Betrayed* (London: Hurst, 1994) by Robert J. Donia and John V.A. Fine and *Bosnia: a Short History* (London: Macmillan, 1994) by Noel Malcolm – and on Marko Attila Hoare's *The History of Bosnia: From the Middle Ages to the Present Day* (London: Saqi Books, 2007). Hoare's account is especially relevant in terms of the 1910 Bosnian constitution and electoral system that it describes.

On sections relating to Yugoslavia's disintegration, I generally relied on my own book *Yugoslavia's Bloody Collapse: Causes, Course and Consequences* in terms of the narrative, though I also benefited from other works covering the same events, including Susan L. Woodward's *Balkan Tragedy: Chaos and Dissolution after the Cold War* (Washington D.C.: Brookings, 1995), Laura Silber and Alan Little's *Yugoslavia: Death of a Nation* (London: Penguin, 1995), and, in particular, Josip Glaurdić's *The Hour of Europe: Western Powers and the Breakup of Yugoslavia* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2011). In terms specifically of Bosnia's disintegration and war, I drew extensively on *The War in Bosnia and Herzegovina: Ethnic Conflict and International Intervention* (Armonk, NY, and London: M.E. Sharpe, 1999) by Stephen L. Burg and Paul S. Shoup.

James Gow's *Triumph of the Lack of Will: International Diplomacy and the Yugoslav War* (London: Hurst, 1997) was my primary source on the international diplomacy around the Wars of Yugoslavia's Dissolution. Gow argues that a critical opportunity for peace was missed in 1993 when Washington failed to support the Vance-Owen Plan. This is also the lament of EU negotiator Lord David Owen in *Balkan Odyssey* (San Diego, New York and London: Harvest Book, 1995). And twenty years after the Vance-Owen Plan was rejected, Lord Owen returned to this theme in an edited volume of documents entitled *Bosnia-Herzegovina: The Vance-Owen Plan* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2013), which illustrates the extent of the effort and thinking that went into the process. In terms of international decision-making, I drew on the analysis in Peter Radan's *The Break-up of Yugoslavia and International Law* (London and New York, NY: Routledge) for interpretation of the opinions of the Badinter Commission, and on Richard Caplan's *Europe and the Recognition of New States in Yugoslavia* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005) in relation to the impact of international recognition of

Slovenia and Croatia on Bosnia. Ivo Komšić's *The Survived Country – Dividing Bosnia and Herzegovina: Who, When, Where* (Sarajevo: Synopsis, 2013) provided insight into the 1994 Washington Agreement, ending the war between Bosniaks and Croats. For US policy and negotiations leading to the Dayton Peace Agreement, I drew on three books by US participants and observers: Richard Holbrooke's *To End a War* (New York: Random House, 1998); Ivo H. Daalder's *Getting to Dayton: The Making of America's Bosnia Policy* (Washington D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 2000); and especially Derek Chollet's *The Road to the Dayton Accords: A Study of American Statecraft* (New York and London: Palgrave MacMillan, 2005).

In addition to the six books on the Bosnian peace process – David Chandler's *Faking Democracy After Dayton* (London: Pluto Press, 1999); Robert M. Hayden's *Blueprints for a House Divided: The Constitutional Logic of the Yugoslav Conflicts* (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 1999); Elizabeth M. Cousens and Charles K. Cater's *Toward Peace in Bosnia: Implementing the Dayton Accords* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 2001); Sumatra Bose's *Bosnia after Dayton: Nationalist Partition and International Intervention* (London: Hurst, 2002); Florian Bieber's *Post-War Bosnia: Ethnicity, Inequality and Public Sector Governance* (Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2006); and Roberto Belloni's *State Building and International Intervention in Bosnia* (London and New York: Routledge, 2007) – I benefited from a number of works covering specific aspects.

Books by the first, third and fourth high representatives – Carl Bildt's *Peace Journey: The Struggle for Peace in Bosnia* (London: Orion, 1997); Wolfgang Petritsch's *Bosna i Hercegovina od Dayton do Evrope* (Sarajevo: Svjetlost, 2002); and especially Lord Paddy Ashdown's *Swords And Ploughshares: Bringing Peace to the 21st Century* (London: Orion, 2007) – provide insight into their thinking. The Christophe Solioz and Svebor Dizdarevic, eds., *Ownership Process in Bosnia and Herzegovina: contributions on the International Dimensions of Democratization in the Balkans* (Baden-Baden: Nomos, 2003) and Solioz's *Turning Points in Post-War Bosnia: Ownership Process and European Integration* (Baden-Baden: Nomos, 2007) consider international intervention and the prospect of a European future. Andy Aitchison's *Making the Transition: International Intervention, State-Building and Criminal Justice Reform in Bosnia and Herzegovina* (Cambridge, Antwerp and Portland, OR: Intersentia, 2011) provides insight into judicial reform. Philippe Leroux-Martin's *Diplomatic Counterinsurgency: Lessons from Bosnia and Herzegovina* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2014) examines the conflict between the OHR and Republika Srpska in 2007 after then High Representative Miroslav Lajčák attempted to streamline decision-making procedures in state institutions. And Sofía Sebastián-Aparicio's *Post-War Statebuilding and Constitutional Reform: Beyond Dayton in Bosnia* (London: Palgrave MacMillan, 2014) analyses attempts to reform the Dayton settlement between 2006 and 2012. Three books cover international supervision in Brčko: first Supervisor Robert W. Farrand's *Reconstruction and Peace Building in the Balkans: The Brcko Experience* (London, Boulder, New York, Toronto and Plymouth: Rowman and Littlefield, 2011); Matthew Parish's *A Free City in the Balkans: Reconstructing a Divided Society in Bosnia* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2009); and Adam Moore's *Peacebuilding in Practice: Local Experience in Two Bosnian Towns* (Ithaca, NY, and London: Cornell University Press, 2013), which also covers the peace process in Mostar.

In addition to published sources, I benefitted greatly from two doctoral dissertations: Daniel Lindvall's "The Limits of the European Vision in Bosnia and Herzegovina: An Analysis of the Police Reform Negotiations" (Stockholm: Doctoral Dissertations, 2009) and Roland Kostić's "Ambivalent Peace: External Peacebuilding, Threatened Identity and Reconciliation in Bosnia and Herzegovina" (Uppsala: Uppsala University, 2007). The former was my primary source in relation to police reform. The latter examines external peace-building in Bosnia via political theory on social and ethno-national identity and includes the results of particularly insightful



opinion polling.

As mentioned above, my starting point for literature on divided societies was Donald L. Horowitz's *Ethnic Groups in Conflict*, followed rapidly by Arend Lijphart's *Democracy in Plural Societies: A Comparative Exploration* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1977). The writing of the so-called Copenhagen School – Barry Buzan, Ole Wæver and Jaap de Wilde – on the societal security dilemma in, for example, *Security: A New Framework for Analysis* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 1998) also influenced my outlook. And Michael Mann's *The Dark Side of Democracy: Explaining Ethnic Cleansing* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005) helped me to understand the potential dangers of democratisation in certain multi-ethnic settings, such as in Bosnia.

In attempting to develop alternative models for Bosnia's constitutional and electoral architecture, I drew inspiration from the following works: Peter Harris and Ben Reilly's edited *Democracy and Deep-Rooted Conflict: Options for Negotiators* (Stockholm: International IDEA, 1998); Andrew Reynolds, Ben Reilly, Andrew Ellis' edited *Electoral System Design: The New International IDEA Handbook* (Stockholm: International IDEA, 2005); Andrew Reynolds and Ben Reilly's *Electoral Systems and Conflict in Divided Societies* (Washington D.C.: National Academy Press, 1999); and Ben Reilly's *Democracy in Divided Societies: Electoral Engineering for Conflict Management* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001).

#### 4.4 Originality

*Bosnia's Paralysed Peace* drew on all existing books on the Bosnian peace process, but is a very different publication. This is, in part, because it benefits from the perspective of two decades of peace-building, as opposed to only the first three years in the earliest publications, Hayden's *Blueprints for a House Divided: The Constitutional Logic of the Yugoslav Conflicts* and Chandler's *Faking Democracy After Dayton*, and nine and 11 years in the most recent, Bieber's *Post-War Bosnia: Ethnicity, Inequality and Public Sector Governance* and Belloni's *State Building and International Intervention in Bosnia*. All analyse the contradictions of the peace agreement, evaluate the evolution of the peace process and assess the prospects for longer-term peace and stability, and each contributes to an understanding of the peace process in its own way.

In common with all earlier writers and especially with Hayden, whose criticisms are most strident, I, too, am pessimistic about the prospect for the Dayton Peace Agreement and the structures contained within it to bring long-term peace and stability to Bosnia. Likewise, I share their scepticism about the strategy of overriding democracy, as expressed by the results of internationally supervised elections, to implement Dayton via the High Representative's use of executive powers, as well as international attempts to promote "moderates". Chandler's insight into "democratisation", the promotion of liberal values, on the one hand, and "democracy", elections, institutions and self-government, on the other, remains very relevant, as does Belloni's discussion of the strengths and weaknesses of consociational democracy in relation to Bosnia. While all writers focus on the shortcomings of Bosnia's elections and international democratisation efforts, I go further and both present the issue in structural terms and propose potential solutions. I am also more generous to international intervention and peace-building efforts than Hayden and Chandler, closer to the positions of Cousens and Cater, Bose, and especially Bieber and Belloni, who also benefited from being able to consider the early results of these policies, as well as reforms emerging out of the 2000 Constitutional Court decision on Constituent Peoples and measures taken to build multi-ethnic governance in Brčko in the wake of the Brčko arbitral ruling.

In addition to covering a decade more than any other book and thereby being able to detail, analyse and assess the internationally overseen reform processes and their impact, as well as the transition to an EU-led peace process, *Bosnia's Paralysed Peace* has a different focus. It has been designed as a tool for the international community to understand how Bosnia has got to where it is today, and how to take the peace process forward with a view to the eventual reform of the Dayton settlement. Its originality, therefore, lies, in particular, in the way the peace process is framed; the structural analysis of shortcomings and implementation of the settlement; and the presentation of innovative solutions.

*Bosnia's Paralysed Peace* frames the peace process within what I call the Bosnian Question, which, at its simplest, boils down to two issues: how some 2.2 million Bosniaks can live amid 4.5 million Croats and 8.5 million Serbs in the former Yugoslavia; and how some 750,000 Croats and 1.3 million Serbs can live together with 1.9 million Bosniaks within Bosnia itself. Depending on where borders are drawn and whether or not they are respected, Bosniaks either form a minority squeezed between two more powerful ethno-national groups, or they comprise a relative majority in a territory shared with two large minority communities, both of whom generally consider the neighbouring states of Croatia and Serbia their mother countries. It is about relations among three peoples with three distinct ethno-national identities emanating from allegiance to three different faiths, who have lived together in Bosnia and the wider region for centuries, and how to balance the interests of each community. In addition to the internal and regional dynamics of the Bosnian Question, there has also been a significant international dimension, which is today manifested in the presence and mandates of a multitude of international organisations. The book begins and ends on this issue.

The prospects for democracy in a multi-ethnic country are better if the electoral system provides incentives for parties to be broad-based, than if it encourages parties to form around narrow appeals to ethno-national identity. While competitive elections are fundamental to democracy, the assumption that elections are of themselves positive, and that it is possible to learn democracy via repeated ballots, is false. Indeed, a poorly designed electoral system in a multi-ethnic state can have extremely negative, long-term consequences. The party system adopted in Bosnia in advance of the 1990 elections was inherited from Croatia, where an ethno-national party, the *Hrvatska demokratska zajednica* (Croat Democratic Union) had won an absolute majority of seats in the Croatian Parliament on the basis of a minority poll. Whether or not a more appropriate electoral system would have made any difference to the evolution of Yugoslavia's disintegration is debatable. What is clear is that the advent of democracy transformed the relationship between Croats and Serbs in Croatia. While the electoral system in Bosnia differed from that in Croatia, it was, nevertheless, flawed and it, too, transformed relations among Bosniaks, Croats and Serbs. Moreover, this structural shortcoming has not been addressed in the course of the peace process. While elections take place at regular intervals, the democratic process has failed to build stability or reconciliation, but has helped reinforce ethno-national divisions and reward extremist behaviour. Moreover, as discussed below, it is possible to devise better systems for balancing the interests of Bosniaks, Croats and Serbs.

#### **4.5 Thesis: structural problems require structural solutions**

The central thesis of *Bosnia's Paralysed Peace* that differentiates it from other works is that there is a structural explanation for both Bosnia's disintegration and the shortcomings of the peace process and that unless and until structural issues are addressed the country will continue on its current trajectory. Moreover, the behaviour of Bosnian political leaders that has dismayed international officials is perfectly rational when examined from the perspective of ethno-national

security. Zero-sum politics is a manifestation of the incentives in the political system, which predate the Dayton Peace Agreement, and only by changing those incentives will it be possible for the Bosnian peace process to become self-sustaining. To date, however, these structural issues have not been addressed.

International strategy in Bosnia has corresponded to the liberal peace-building model. The international community, in the form of the European Union, the International Monetary Fund, NATO, the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe, the World Bank and the many national development agencies as well as the OHR, has effectively sought to reproduce the Western liberal democratic model in Bosnia via, on the one hand, democratisation, including elections, civilian control over the armed forces and institution-building, and, on the other, the construction of a market economy, including tax reform, measures to build transparency and privatisation. This approach is not, however, sufficient to address the problems of a society emerging from ethno-national war.

In the wake of ethno-national war, ethno-national identity, however it may have been created, takes on a salience that is far greater than it would have been under other circumstances. Moreover, it will remain the key mobilising factor as long as group members and elites continue to feel that their ethno-national identities are threatened. In Bosnia, ethno-national security, or what Buzan, Wæver and de Wilde call the "societal security dilemma", became an issue in 1990 as the country prepared for multi-party elections. Bosnia's original electoral system was democratic in as much as electors were able to vote for different candidates. However, it was also fundamentally flawed because of the ethno-national composition of Bosnian society. This flaw was a manifestation of an ambiguity at the heart of democracy, or rule by the people, that Mann has termed the "dark side of democracy", where the "people" do not correspond to the *demos*, that is the citizenry, but to the *ethnos*, namely those sharing a distinct culture. Since politicians were elected exclusively by the votes of one of Bosnia's peoples, they considered themselves answerable to that people and no other. In this way, each ethno-national party pursued its own agenda working narrowly to promote the interests of its people, irrespective of the consequences for Bosnia's other communities.

The ethno-national democratisation manifested in the 1990 poll results created a "tyranny of the majority" at the municipal level and conflict at the state level. Ethno-nationally "pure" municipal governments were formed; non-dominant communities were purged from the municipal administration and public companies; and other trappings of the ethno-national state were introduced at the local level. In the absence of mechanisms to address the dangers presented by majoritarian politics, elections came, above all, to be about ethno-national hegemony. In the wake of the 1990 election, members of non-dominant communities found themselves systematically and institutionally marginalised. Moreover, the combination of ethno-national democratisation and the wider regional conflict generated a vicious cycle of fear, insecurity and loathing that domestic institutions and actors were incapable of managing. Well-intentioned state and nation-building reforms led by the international community may also have had unintended consequences in terms of the societal security dilemma. While generally presented as benign, rational and indispensable, reforms have often been perceived as threatening by one or more community, since they appear to confer advantages on another ethno-national group. Given the centralising tendency of most internationally sponsored reform processes, they have generally appealed to Bosniaks and been opposed by Serbs, with Croats less categorical, but generally hostile. Hence the backlash against internationally sponsored reform processes as soon as the international community stopped routinely deploying executive powers, began downgrading its presence and relaxed its grip on Bosnian processes.

If the peace process is examined through the prism of ethno-national security, it is possible to see the rationality of political behaviour that has perplexed the international community; it is

also possible to predict attitudes, likely reactions and trends. While international officials wish to see Bosnians of all ethno-national persuasions join with one another in a common European cause, Croats and Serbs are, above all, fearful of the prospect of domination by or assimilation among Bosniaks. In Bosnia's ethno-democracy, the ethno-national security of one people is achieved via the ethno-national rule of that people over specific territory at the expense of the others, as well as of Bosnians who are not Bosniaks, Croats or Serbs.

Bosnia's current situation was not pre-ordained, but the result of treating symptoms rather than addressing the underlying illness. The symptoms included physical destruction, a moribund economy and the humanitarian needs of an impoverished population. The underlying illness was and remains the country's political system, that is its ethno-democracy. Moreover, the injection of vast resources as if Bosnia had experienced a natural disaster, combined with failure to reform the political system, had the effect of reinforcing the power bases of the ethno-national parties, enabling them to develop and finance patronage networks, thereby aggravating the underlying illness.

#### 4.6 Paradigm shift: changing incentives

The current settlement – requiring grand coalitions involving representatives of all peoples, the need for consensus in decision-making and proportional representation – corresponds to what political scientists call consociationalism. Even advocates of this approach, however, recognise that it will not work in the absence of over-arching loyalties to the state and a tradition of elite accommodation, both of which are missing in Bosnia. There are better ways of managing relations among Bosniaks, Croats and Serbs than the Dayton settlement, but getting to them requires a paradigm shift. This, in turn, requires examining how democracy can be effective in a multi-ethnic state and designing a system that is tailored to Bosnia's needs. It also requires re-examining Bosnia's relationship with its neighbours and developing mechanisms whereby the neighbouring countries are integrated into the Bosnian settlement in a more constructive manner. And it requires developing new Euro-Atlantic mechanisms to support and drive through systemic change.

The most original part of *Bosnia's Paralysed Peace* is the pen-ultimate chapter, "Changing the logic of Bosnian politics", which seeks to present ideas for reconfiguring Bosnia to enable the country to move beyond zero-sum politics.<sup>19</sup> The proposals draw on the writing of political scientists, such as Horowitz and Reilly, who advocate centripetal solutions, that is shifting the focus of politics away from ethno-national identity towards less volatile issues by using institutions and, in particular, the electoral system to foster inter-ethnic cooperation. Moreover, Reilly contributed to their formulation with advice and commentary. Although there are no centripetal democracies to look to, the proposals were inspired by electoral practice in various divided societies and adapted to the Bosnian context. Specifically, they are designed to ensure ethno-national security for all Bosnians; provide incentives for conciliation by obliging politicians and political parties to seek support from peoples other than their own; give Bosnians a chance to vote on issues, not simply according to their ethno-national identity; facilitate stable and efficient

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<sup>19</sup>Many of the proposals were first presented in the ICG Report *Changing the Logic of Bosnian Politics: Discussion Paper on Electoral Reform* (March 1998), which itself drew on International IDEA's Handbook of Electoral System Design; an unpublished paper produced by the Electoral Reform Society on electoral reform in Bosnia; Horowitz's *Democracy in Divided Societies*, Journal of Democracy Vol. 4, Issue 4, pp. 18-38; Habsburg electoral experience as explained orally by a professor of the history of the Habsburg Monarchy; ICG's various election reports; Suad Arnautović's *Izbori u Bosni i Hercegovini '90: analiza izbornog procesa* (Sarajevo: Promocult, 1996); an unpublished paper by Francis Delperee, a law professor and constitutional expert from Louvain's Catholic University, commissioned by ICG's Brussels headquarters; and discussions with Bosnian lawyers and constitutional specialists.

government; and, with time, build a pluralistic party system.

The surest way to oblige politicians to seek votes from outside their own community is by dividing the electorate into Bosniak, Croat and Serb electoral rolls and using multiple voting. Electors would vote as Bosniaks, Croats and Serbs and cast separate ballots to choose their Bosniak, Croat and Serb political representatives. In addition, Others can vote directly for their own representatives to ensure that they, too, have political representation.

To ensure equitable ethno-national representation, it would be necessary to add several features. Firstly, the ethno-national results have either to be set in advance or to reflect exactly the proportion of each community in the electorate. The ethno-national results might, therefore, reflect the ethno-national breakdown at the time of the 1991 census, pre-agreed figures designed to ensure a particular ethno-national balance, or, most realistically, turnout on the day. If voting is compulsory and simple proportional representation is used, the ethno-national results would match the changing ethno-national composition of the country or region. Secondly, each community must have the same influence on who is elected in the other communities. This is possible by "weighting" the votes of each community. Thirdly, a minimal threshold of support needs to be set from a candidate's own community to ensure that "straw men", that is individuals who do not genuinely represent their own people, are not elected. And fourthly, decision-making in the legislatures has to be on the basis of super majorities, requiring a majority of Bosniak, Croat and Serb deputies.

Though complex, the system outlined above has its roots in earlier Bosnian or Habsburg democratic practice, is fair in ethno-national terms and considerably simpler and cheaper than the existing system. This approach does not necessarily appeal to Westerners, who may wish to see Bosnia emerge into a classical Western liberal democracy in which the population shares a Bosnian identity. However, that approach has already failed. The proposed system creates a dependency relationship between the elected and the entire electorate, holding politicians accountable and obliging them to take the views of different communities into consideration if they wish to get ahead. This, in turn, opens up possibilities for moving beyond identity politics, for responsible discussion and analysis of the past, as well as the development of constructive and progressive positions in currently sensitive areas such as education.

The chapter also included other original proposals, such as using the emerging legal norm of the Responsibility to Protect to justify the long-term retention of executive powers to ensure no return to hostilities and the concept of a double confederation with both Croatia and Serbia to bind the neighbouring countries into a more constructive relationship with Bosnia. Moreover, the intention behind all proposals was not to present them as the solution but to generate discussion on better ways to manage relations between Bosniaks, Croats and Serbs.

## 4.7 Academic reception and reference use

In terms of its academic reception, *Bosnia's Paralysed Peace* received a number of glowing reviews. Writing in the Times Literary Supplement, Balkan analyst and international affairs writer Toby Vogel concluded: "Excellent new book... A sobering account of international policy on auto-pilot, Bosnia's Paralysed Peace should serve as a warning in Brussels, Berlin and Washington."<sup>20</sup> Cardiff University's Simone Tholens' assessment in International Affairs was that: "Christopher Bennett has penned a historically solid, analytically robust and comprehensive account of the road from the Dayton Peace Agreement to the present Europeanization strategies. If one were to read only one book to get introduced to Bosnia's recent political history, this could very well be it."<sup>21</sup> And Columbia University's Robert

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<sup>20</sup>Times Literary Supplement, 11 November 2016. [<https://www.the-tls.co.uk/articles/politics-196/>]

<sup>21</sup>International Affairs, Vol. 93, Issue 1, 1 January 2017, Pages 217–218.[<https://doi.org/10.1093/ia/iw049>]

Legvold wrote in *Foreign Affairs* that: “As Bennett makes clear in this tough-minded book, the Dayton settlement ended the violence but dealt more with its symptoms than its underlying causes, which still linger. The problem is that Bosnian elites – Croats, Serbs, and Bosniaks alike – continue to pursue the same narrow ethnonationalist agendas that sparked the war rather than encouraging the pursuit of larger national goals. Moving past this zero-sum stalemate will require what Bennett calls a new ‘logic of Bosnian politics’, and he lays out steps for achieving it.”<sup>22</sup>

In other commentary, the late former High Representative Lord Paddy Ashdown wrote: “There is a real need for a balanced, well founded, deeply researched and comprehensive book which documents why Bosnia and Herzegovina’s ascent towards a sustainable peace in the first ten years after Dayton, turned into a descent back into fracture, division and dysfunctionality in the second post-Dayton decade. This book fulfils that need, admirably and should be required reading for all those who know and love Bosnia – and necessary reading for all those interested in the process of building peace after conflict. It is not necessary to agree with every judgement or to support every analysis to recognise that this is an important, weighty and admirable work on the tragedy for Europe and the Balkans, that Bosnia is now, in 2016, not prospering in a sustainable peace, but mired in a paralysed one.”<sup>23</sup>

Despite international reluctance to recognise failure in Bosnia, it will eventually be impossible to ignore the gravity of the situation. When that day arrives, the international community will have little choice but to begin addressing the shortcomings of the peace process, which will require major revision of the Dayton settlement. This, in turn, will involve re-opening the many points of contention that formed the historical, political, economic and intellectual backdrop to the war: self-determination; statehood; sovereignty; definitions of “nation”; and the institutions of representative democracy and the mandates they confer. In this way, Bosnia’s internal structure, the relative merits of partition as opposed to reintegration and, with it, the formal division of Bosnia, including the secession of parts of the country, will be up for discussion.

*Bosnia’s Paralysed Peace* is primarily designed to be a tool for policy-makers to help them make informed decisions in relation to Bosnia and, ultimately, to prepare them for re-opening the Bosnian Question. As such, it provides the only comprehensive narrative of Bosnia’s disintegration, war and peace process, as well as a framework of analysis for understanding the complexity of relations among Bosniaks, Croats and Serbs. It analyses the functioning of key Dayton institutions, such as the Central Bank and Constitutional Court. It describes the efforts to assist the return of displaced persons and refugees, including the work of the Return and Reconstruction Task Force. It assesses the key internationally driven reform processes – judicial, media, tax, defence, intelligence and police – as well as the areas in which transfers of competency took place between the entities. It also analyses the reforms emerging out of the 2000 Constitutional Court ruling on Constituent Peoples and the experience of Brčko Supervision. It details all elections until 2016. It examines the High Representative’s use of executive powers. And it assesses the transition to an EU-led process, as well as chronicling the ongoing deterioration in the political environment. Moreover, a particularly detailed index and a bibliographical note, highlighting further relevant literature, make it an especially useful as a reference document.

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<sup>22</sup>*Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 96, No. 2, March/April 2017. [<https://www.foreignaffairs.com/reviews/capsule-review/2017-02-13/bosnias-paralyzed-peace>]

<sup>23</sup><https://www.hurstpublishers.com/book/bosnias-paralysed-peace/>

## 5 Conclusion

Over the past 30 years, I have strived to understand Yugoslavia's disintegration. This is, in part, for personal reasons, as it was also my country, albeit not where I grew up. In part, it is because I had followed the disintegration extremely closely and wished to comprehend why the country broke apart so violently. But, above all, I have sought to improve my understanding of Yugoslavia's disintegration to place it in context and attempt to develop policies that might contribute to a return of genuine peace and stability, both in Bosnia and the wider region. In this way, my views have evolved greatly. While the events leading to war, which I identified and traced in *Yugoslavia's Bloody Collapse*, have not changed and their presentation and interpretation remain historically sound, I have come to view the disintegration in more structural terms. Discussions on Yugoslavia's dissolution within the framework of the Scholars' Initiative contributed to the evolution of my thinking. But it was observation of the shortcomings of Bosnia's ethno-democracy, long-term living among all the country's communities and the reading of academic writing on divided societies that has led me to what I consider a more nuanced interpretation, as presented in *Bosnia's Paralysed Peace*.

The challenge of building stable and functioning democratic government in a multi-ethnic and divided society in the wake of war cannot be overestimated. In this respect, the experience of international intervention in the former Yugoslavia has been sobering. The results of enormous investment and often frenetic activity have been meagre, though, critically, there has not been a return to war. This is of itself an achievement and presents opportunities, despite Bosnia's paralysis. There is, however, a dearth of ideas among policy-makers as to what could be done to turn the situation around. This is, in part, because there is little overlap between policy-making and academic thinking on peace-building and democracy in divided societies. My writing has, at all times, sought to bridge the gap between policy-making and academia to provide accurate analysis of developments, bring fresh insight to problems and, in particular, present new ideas in the quest for durable solutions.

The three publications discussed above represent my written contribution to scholarship in relation to Yugoslavia's disintegration, the ramifications of that disintegration and the prospects of rebuilding stability. Each has academic merit on its own and helps improve understanding of the evolution of the former Yugoslavia over the past 30 years. Taken together, therefore, they form a coherent body of research that, at the time of publication, were both timely and current, and represent an original and sustained contribution to knowledge. Moreover, they comprise my submission for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy by published works.