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Violence and Subjectivity

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To the memory of Neelan Tiruchelvam,
assassinated in Colombo in July 1999.
Neelan, in his life and work, exemplified the vision
and the courage to work for peace and democracy.

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Violence-Prone Area or International Transition?

Adding the Role of Outsiders in Balkan Violence

Susan L. Woodward

The end of the Cold War left the West without markers to identify potential threats to its way of life or reasons to be prepared. With the collapse of communist regimes in Eastern Europe, followed spectacularly by the dissolution of the Soviet Union itself, the global ideological confrontation that had served so well to identify friend and foe vanished. Behind the euphoria of people in the West that they had "won" the war and that everywhere peoples were conceding their superiority by liberalizing trade, reducing governmental powers, and privatizing banks, postal services, transport, health care, and public sector firms, there was a growing disquiet (in some corners even nostalgia for the Cold War) over the loss of clarifying categories. The world had become an undifferentiable mass of friends. Where was the threat to national security? What potential dangers justified expenditures on armed forces and intelligence, and told national and collective security organizations how to adjust?

The violent collapse of Yugoslavia, followed by communal violence in many parts of Africa, the Caucasus, and the Middle East, provided an answer. The world was clearly divided into violence-prone areas and zones of peace and stability. The zone of peace was at risk from the zone of violence. The West, as a peaceable area, must build a buffer between it and these areas to protect it from infection and spillover of violence and refugees.

The Balkan peninsula is the quintessential "violence-prone area" in this new understanding of threats to global peace and security. This concept of violence-proneness contains two elements: *inevitability* and *otherness.* According to the first, people who live in such areas are inclined, almost genetically, as a result of centuries of antagonism and combat, to manage social relations by reaching for a gun and resorting to violence; and this tendency is buttressed by a cultural climate of ethnic hatred and traditional jus-

tice executed through blood feud. According to the second element, their violent nature distinguishes the Balkans from the West. They are violent, we are not.

The location of the Balkan peninsula on the edge of Europe heightened receptivity to this new classification, for the wars in the disintegrating Yugoslavia did clearly appear, over time, to represent a new type of security threat to the core area of stable, civilized (an essential term in the new differentiating discourse), normally peaceable areas and peoples. So close to home, the real violence during 1988–99 in Slovenia, Croatia, Kosovo, and especially Bosnia and Herzegovina required some response, thus giving policy momentum to this classification. Pressures to intervene and stop the violence, the flow of refugees, and the televised pictures of horrendous atrocities and massive columns of displaced persons moving shell-shocked away from their homes raised a fundamental policy challenge to an international community and its leading powers, who were still thinking in Cold War terms. What principles should the major powers of the world defend in the post–Cold War era? What were the new threats to their security? What principles legitimize intervention against such threats? Under what conditions should they intervene? What were the limits to intervention?

At the same time, the perception that violence was inevitable in the Balkans—that despite geographical propinquity, they were not real Europeans—programmed a nearly automatic distancing. Even before the wars began and disturbing events had provoked early warnings that a breakup of Yugoslavia was imminent and that it would be profoundly violent, policy makers in Washington adopted a stance of sorrowful resignation. This was the Balkans, where violence is common, and if it erupts, outsiders can do little to stop it until the opponents exhaust their bloody urges. The proper policy response of outsiders, western Europeans also concluded, was containment: keep the people and their wars *in* the Balkans.

The Balkans, it is true, have an ancient reputation for instability and internal conflict that had even spawned its own classification in the Western term *Balkanization.*[1] In explaining why the area should be prone to *violence,* pundits and politicians cited a history of ethnic hatred and political fragmentation. With the disappearance of the Second World and its ideological alternative, this idea of ethnic conflict provided a distinct analytical advantage regarding an environment that was still too undefined and in transition to generate its own ideological category.[2] An immense literature on the Third World could simply be transplanted. Analysts of the Yugoslav wars that begin in 1991 were classified into one of only two schools borrowed from studies of postcolonial regimes in the Third World: the primordialists, who believed that ethnicity was inherent and tribalistic, and that ethnic conflict was by definition violence-prone; and the instrumentalists, who attempted

to demonstrate the tendency of power-hungry politicians to incite ethnic conflict and nationalism as a way of resisting change and loss of power.[3]

The end of the Cold War added fuel to this way of thinking because of the Western equation between anticommunism and a yearning for freedom. Anticommunist ideology viewed communist rule as an alien imposition, whereas nationalism was a reasserted pride in cultural distinctiveness and national history. If nationalism was separatist, it was only an extension of this yearning for freedom to the nation itself, a natural development favoring national liberation and independence. Violence revealed forces of reaction, which opposed the historical development favoring nation-states and, if necessary, wars of independence.

VIOLENCE IN FORMER YUGOSLAVIA

The Axis occupation of pre-socialist Yugoslavia in World War II (when Germany, Italy, Hungary, and Bulgaria each took a piece of the country, and puppet fascist regimes were set up in Croatia and in Serbia) was extremely violent.[4] Debates continue fifty years later over the number of deaths from combat between occupying and liberating armies, from civil war among competing domestic armies, from concentration camps and nationalist pogroms of extermination, and from individual opportunities to avenge past grievances. Three years after the end of war in Europe and the liberation of Belgrade in October 1944, moreover, a conflict between the new Yugoslav President, Marshal Josip Broz Tito, and the official head of the world Communist movement, Joseph Stalin, provoked a second civil war combining ideological and fratricidal elements.

Except for the highly unusual attempts in the early 1970s by bands of anticommunist émigrés from Austria and Germany to provoke popular uprisings in Bosnia and Croatia, however, everyday life in the Yugoslavia of 1949–80 was remarkably peaceful, stable, and increasingly prosperous. Communal disturbances did occur in Croatia in a wave of political nationalism in 1967–71. Periodic tensions between the ethnic Albanians of Kosovo, an autonomous region of the Serbian republic, and either the Yugoslav federal government or Serbian internal security forces had been a part of the landscape ever since the Balkan Wars of 1912–13. But on the scale of communal violence in other parts of the world, both instances were remarkably low in physical violence.

Beginning in August 1990, the story changes, with armed confrontations in the republic of Croatia between internal security (militarized) police and local police of Serb ethnicity in an area that once formed the military border (*krajina*) between the Habsburg and Ottoman empires. By the spring of 1991, confrontations between Croatian officials and Serb locals and

between ethnic Croat and ethnic Serb paramilitaries had become common. At the end of June 1991, a ten-day war erupted in Slovenia between the federal army and Slovene territorial defense forces after the republic's government declared independence from Yugoslavia. That war left about sixty-eight dead, nearly all of them conscripted soldiers of the Yugoslav army, and more than three hundred injured, including foreign truck drivers used as hostages. By late July, the civil disturbances in Croatia were also evolving into a war of Croatian secession (Croatia had joined Slovenia in declaring its independence, on June 25). By mid-August, the population expulsions on the basis of national (ethnic) affiliation, fratricidal atrocities, and the shelling of cities that later came to be associated with Balkan violence were in full view.

Despite the signing on November 23, 1991, of a cease-fire agreement between the Croatian and federal armies, negotiated by a special envoy of the United Nations secretary general, civil disturbances in the neighboring republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina also exploded into horrendous war in April 1992. The regularly televised violence between political parties representing Bosnia's three national groups (Bosnian Muslims, Bosnian Serbs, and Bosnian Croats)—cities under siege; terrorized prison camps; massive forced marches and expulsions of civilians; destruction by fire, bombs, and mortars of homes, religious institutions, and cultural monuments amounting to cultural genocide—which outside intervention brought to a halt only in October 1995 seemed to confirm beyond a doubt that the Balkans were a violence-prone area.

The explanation for this outbreak of civil violence and wars of independence, however, lies in quite specific events and political disputes during the preceding ten years. What is now called the end of the Cold War was a drawn-out process of transformation within socialist countries in Europe and between the two ideological blocs of East and West that accelerated during 1982–85. Although Yugoslavia was not a member of either bloc, the consequences of economic and political reform to adjust to a balance-of-payments crisis, on the one hand, and the growing incompatibility between the assumptions of economic development policy and the society that such policy had transformed in preceding decades (including urbanization, industrialization, rising levels of education, health, and professionalization), on the other, were bringing the political and social order to the brink of collapse. Popular disgruntlement at a sharp decline in living standards and the loss of expected status and jobs gave rise to youthful rebellions and to bolder critiques of the system by anticommunist intellectuals, but there was no countrywide social movement to overthrow the regime comparable to those that occurred in the eastern bloc countries. Yugoslav communism had provided a relatively high and growing standard of living until the economic crisis (albeit on the false bottom of borrowed funds and long-term,

structural unemployment). Instead, each social group and federal republic began to fight to keep what it had and preserve its socialist property rights against the onslaught of fiscal crisis and liberalization. The road to war, however, lay with the crucial role of the state as prime mover *and object* of reform, lightning rod for dissatisfaction, and guarantor of peace and security.

The Yugoslav state had three functions. Like any modern state, it held a monopoly in the legitimate use of violence, although as states go, this authority over coercive power was dispersed across a large number of actors. The armed forces were composed of two parts: a standing federal army, and territorial defense forces (TDF) under republican authority comprising locally based, all-citizen militia and local stockpiles of weapons and defense supplies. The internal security forces of each republic also had militarized police units, and each locality had local police forces. As a part of Yugoslavia's national security policy of self-reliance, the army had become the fifth largest in Europe, with a substantial economic role through contracts for domestic supplies and defense goods resulting from the requirement that a minimum of one-third of all its military needs be produced at home. By 1983, however, domestic defense industries were producing 80 percent of the army's needs, and the export of arms and engineering services exceeded imports at an ever higher rate, up to four times in value terms by 1985 (Gow 1992: 103). Moreover, repeated reductions in the scope of federal expenditures, due to successive fiscal decentralizations aimed at currency stabilization, had made veterans' benefits and pensions one of the largest remaining federal expenditures, while veterans' housing programs were a substantial local expenditure.

The second function of the state, also common to other modern states, was to confer and enforce rights. These rights included civil rights regarding the equality of citizens, as individuals and as members of national communities, and also economic and social rights, such as the right of individuals in public sector employment to a guaranteed income and a share of enterprise profits, the right of men and women to equal pay for equal work, the right of property owners (local and republican governments, in fact) to a share in enterprise profits, the right of firms to retain a specified proportion of earned income (including foreign exchange, which was essential to foreign trade and more often referred to as *rights* to import on the basis of export earnings), and the right of individuals in the private sector to subsistence.

The third function of the state was protection. As the creation of a political movement that organized in response to the consequences of agrarian and industrial depression in the 1920s and 1930s, with an ideology based on protecting the weak and propertyless against exploitation, the socialist state defined its raison d'être in terms of preventing exploitation and ensuring the survival—minimum material subsistence—of all its citizens. The

Yugoslav system of self-managing market socialism differed greatly from the Soviet model of central planning. After Tito's quarrel with Stalin, the system went through almost continuous reform of the kind introduced in the Soviet Union under Gorbachev in the mid-1980s, intended to make firms ever more autonomous, run by managers and workers in consultation, to give market signals an ever greater role in production and marketing decisions, and to decentralize planning decisions to the republics. The economy was managed by indicative planning, export subsidies, income policies, and fiscal redistribution. But its goals remained full employment, rising standards of living based on highly egalitarian foundations, including federal transfers to the budgets of below-average localities, and regional development.

In the course of the 1980s, all three functions of the state began to break down. A fiscal crisis and budget-cutting austerity program of debt repayment signed with the International Monetary Fund undermined the government's ability to provide protections and guarantee minimum welfare. Hyperinflation and mass unemployment (affecting 70 percent of the generation aged fifteen to twenty-five) spread uncertainty about survival itself to an ever larger part of the population. The authority of the federal government was severely challenged by liberalizing economic and political reforms and by republican politicians who opposed any loss of economic rights they had obtained during the decentralizing reforms in the 1970s. The result was a serious decline in the federal government's capacity to enforce rights. By 1988–89, two of the six republics (Slovenia and Croatia) began secretly to build separate armies, and this together with the growth of paramilitary groups aligned with emerging, right-wing political parties in many parts of the country indisputably ended the state's monopoly on the legitimate use of violence by early 1991.[5]

There is no need for any history of ethnic animosity or civil war to predict growing uncertainty, social chaos, and potential violence under such circumstances. The violence that later ensued was not a revival of historical patterns or cultural traits, although historical memories were recalled (or invented) by political leaders to justify the claims they were making against the federal government or each other. Instead, the violence reflected the incapacity of political institutions and political leaders to manage the severe conflicts of economic crisis and constitutional reform peacefully. Moreover, the pattern of conflict, looting, and violence that occurred after mid-1991 reflected the specific class, regional, urban-rural, generational, ideological, and national divisions on which the socialist order and system of rights had been built after 1945. Only within rural areas were earlier patterns of conflict apparent, and those were not ethnic but ideological—fascist versus antifascist—and not of tribal origin but from the conflict in World War II.

The escalating collapse of the legal and social order was in part a result of, and in part a stimulus to, rising political conflict within the political class

over taxes, governmental powers, and economic policies. This political class comprised many layers—a single ruling party composed of eight autonomous parties; federal government officials and an elected parliament; republican authorities and elected parliaments; directors of firms (most of whom were nominally members of the party but managing autonomous firms according to their own interests); and alongside this managerial class, a large middle class of professionals in public employment and on "guaranteed salary" (to be head of any organization, such as a local police chief or school principal, one had to have a university degree, and salaries were indexed to level of formal education as well as to industrial wages, giving an incentive to obtain an advanced degree as a way of increasing income). Therefore, the political competition over increasingly scarce resources, particularly jobs and public expenditures, was played out at many levels and on many issues.

The unifying thread of these many conflicts, however, was the program of economic and political reform required by the international financial institutions to service the debt. Therefore, the dominant conflict was over reform of monetary and financial institutions and of the federal constitution. And although the actors were largely officials, their methods of competing and winning were in disarray. Long-ruling patriarch Tito died in 1980. The decentralization of the preceding thirty years had eroded beyond repair the command and control of the ruling party. The reforms required to make the government more effective in managing the currency and foreign trade ignored or ended, one by one, the rules of proportional representation and consensual decision making built up over decades to fulfill the commitment to national equality and to symbolize the inclusiveness of the regime. The austerity of the economic program made the gap between the rhetoric and reality of the ruling party acutely visible. Still rhetorically committed to full employment and economic equality but composed of a narrow managerial stratum responsible for guarding access to elite positions and privilege, the party engendered open resentment in the face of rapidly rising urban unemployment among unskilled workers and youth seeking their first jobs. The ensuing contest over states' rights and federal authority included outright defiance of constituted authorities, party decisions, and enacted legislation.

By January 1990, the Yugoslav Communist party dissolved after the Slovene delegation (followed by the Croats) walked out of an extraordinary congress convened to address the crisis. In the decade-long contest over federal policy, reform, and resources, leaders in the republics had already by 1985–86 started to violate the political taboo against seeking popular support directly, rather than working through the party organization. The Slovene Communist leadership, for example, quietly funded alternative youth groups that were waging a campaign against conscription, the defense

budget, arms exports, and the federal army in general, including a call to replace the army with "national armies" of the republics, as well as those publishing irreverent magazines that aimed to shock public opinion into oppositional activity on issues ranging from educational reform to environmental issues and national rights (Benderly and Kraft 1994; Ramet 1985: 3–26). The Serbian Communist leadership yielded to demands by Serb minority groups in its autonomous southern province of Kosovo for attention to their claims of discrimination at the hands of the Albanian majority government, but it did so as a means to reduce the extensive provincial autonomy that had made governance in the republic nearly impossible. The Albanians' campaign to convert that autonomy into a separate republic was an excuse that might be acceptable to the other republic party leaderships who would have to concur with any constitutional change in Serbia. Serbian party leaders also instigated mass demonstrations of Serbs (called "meetings of truth") to provoke the resignations of uncooperative provincial leaders in Vojvodina and Kosovo and in the republic of Montenegro in hopes of gaining allies in federal voting bodies. The Croatian Communist party was more reticent in seeking popular support because the political reaction against the use of this appeal for mass support to bargain over states' rights in an earlier period of economic reform, in 1967–71, still colored public life and leaders in the republic.[6] But in 1989, when events in Eastern Europe demonstrated that party leaders had to take initiative in managing change or be drowned by it, the Croatian leadership also entered the fray and allowed intellectuals to register a political association (the Association for a Yugoslav Democratic Initiative) and discuss competitive elections.

Increasingly backed by popular support and emotion, but without the political restraints that a functioning democracy, an effective central government, or a strong party leader might have imposed, leaders in the republics (particularly Slovenia and Serbia) took ever greater risks in boldly asserting *their* rights and interests against others. The rules regulating elite interaction and decision making on the basis of parity representation and consensus could not function. In place of negotiated compromise, stalemate and confrontation ruled the day.

Because the republics were supposed to represent the states' rights of the six constituent south Slav nations recognized by the federal constitution of 1945, any fight over the rights of the republics in that federation or over the institutions of federal power was vulnerable to expression in a rhetoric of "national rights" and "national interest." Similarly, a policy to cut public expenditures and transfer the burden to the republics and localities, when the republics' economic ability to make good their legal commitments to guaranteed subsistence and promises of rising living standards for all citizens was on the decline, provoked calls for "national preferences" in jobs and housing. Public discontent over rising unemployment, declining consumption, and growing insecurity found an outlet in scapegoating, attacking federal taxes that "deprived them of their national rights," and imagining discrimination as a national group against the privileges of others. At the same time, those activities that were not expressed as national rights, such as the increased union activity in defense of workers' interests or the pro-democracy groups of liberal or left-of-center intellectuals, could not escape the federal structure and republican arena of active politics. Cross-republic alliances were particularly difficult to form on the very issues of most concern to the average citizen, because policy on employment, education, conscription, and taxes was under republican jurisdiction, and the need to cut under economic stagnation made choices increasingly zero-sum. By contrast, right-wing groups of anticommunist or antisystem persuasion could play on cultural—and therefore ethnonational and ethnoreligious—bonds, which did not confine their mobilizing activities to single republics or republican-based delegations to the federal center. Trying to influence issues of government policy required working within the governmental structure, which was defined in terms of national rights, while trying to mobilize for radical change did not require attention to those structures and could be done in terms of national sentiments.

In an atmosphere moving toward democracy (whether it would be mass or representative democracy remained unclear), there were additional advantages to politicians who appealed for popular support on nationalist grounds rather than on interests and beliefs that were independent of national identity. The urban, middle-class constituency for liberal or pro-regime (Yugoslav and socialist) ideas was rapidly diminishing under the onslaught of economic crisis. Neither market advocates nor supporters of redistribution and equality were likely to be as popular under conditions of austerity and rising inequality as were states' rights advocates who claimed that individuals had *rights*—national rights—to their earnings and employment. The authority of states in conferring rights and legitimizing privileged access to declining resources makes state power a far more desirable objective than the uncertainties of a market or the solidarity of social justice. The declining legitimacy and power of communist institutions also created a vacuum of partisan identity which the only other officially recognized political identity—that of national identity—was ready-made to fill, giving anticommunists a cover during the transition in the mobilization of popular support on the basis of national sentiment (regardless of republic).

Majoritarianism in each republic—the rights of members of the majority national group as against the constitutionally equal rights of members of all national groups—was a perfect vehicle for the exclusionary politics of austerity and for republic-level politicians (officially still communist) to build winning coalitions on the right under the guise of democratic principle. But it was only a matter of two or three years before grumbling over

questions like, "Why did he get that job when I am better qualified?" became ethnicized into questions like, "Why do Serbs have most of the police, army, and government jobs in Croatia when Croats are in the majority and this should be their state?" or "Why do Albanians get all the credit when we Serbs are just as poor?" or "Why do we Slovenes who work so hard and efficiently but see our incomes stagnating have to pay for those lazy Albanians or Bosnians?" By December 1990, when a referendum in Slovenia won 90 percent in favor of independence if the rest of the country did not adopt the Slovene government proposal on political reform (transforming Yugoslavia into a confederation of independent states with a common currency until European Community [EC] membership was obtained), the slippery slope toward the country's disintegration was greased with inchoate individual fears. The reaction took the general form, "Why should I be a minority in your state when you can be a minority in mine?"

"Bestial words, bestial war," writes a Serbian intellectual in exile in Slovenia in 1993 (Slapšak 1993). The ensuing violence was foreseeable, some argue, in the political rhetoric of nationalism (Thompson 1994). In fact, three deadly components combined to create the political context in which politicians, their aspiring opponents, and cultural leaders would use such rhetoric, and people would listen.

First, the Slovene program to enhance the republic's "sovereignty" and then move toward full independence was a revolutionary act, challenging the territorial integrity of the country, subverting its constitutional order, and ignoring the fate of all non-Slovenes. Its leaders knew they were risking violence when they began secretly to import arms to replace the weapons confiscated in spring 1990 by the federal army after it became convinced of Slovene plans to leave. But this program was far less part of an overall plan than an accumulation of steps putting Slovene republican interests first, and many would argue that the first shot at territorial integrity was fired by a small group of radical Albanians in Kosovo province in 1981. Their demand for a separate republic sent tremors throughout the country, for if internal borders might be up for revision, then the country itself was at risk from within, and republics might view ethnic minorities as a threat to be controlled. But the influence of the Slovene defense of republican rights and challenge to federal authority over many years was far greater because of its inordinate economic influence over federal policy and because of the consequence of its challenge—a substantial weakening of the federal government.

Despite efforts by economic and political reformers (including the IMF advisors and many Slovene economists and politicians) to restore the federal capacity to govern by reducing some of the republics' autonomy from earlier reforms, the effect of their liberalizing, market reforms, anti-inflationary policies, and budget cuts actually left the prime minister with

few powers and fewer resources, short of calling out the troops. Nor was that resource readily available to those (led by Serb politicians in Serbia) who wanted the army to exercise its constitutional mandate to defend the country's borders and constitutional (socialist) order. The minister of defense and commander of the armed forces at the time, Veljko Kadijević, proved maddeningly indecisive and insisted repeatedly on prior constitutional authority and political direction before the army would act. And such direction or policy of common interest would not emerge from political authorities—the federal party, the collective presidency (as commander-in-chief of the armed forces), the parliament, and the executive council (cabinet)—who could not agree.

Communal violence required a second deadly component: the demand for majority rights in a land of minorities. Once political, cultural, and economic elites called on Yugoslavs to think in terms of their ethnic identity and as members of a national (instead of Yugoslav) community and claimed that their very survival was threatened by other Yugoslav nations and that protection in insecure times lay with their own nation and its leaders, the gravity of the loss of an overarching Yugoslav state became crystal clear. All national groups in Yugoslavia, whether rich or poor, advantaged or at risk, were numerical minorities. They could therefore imagine themselves at risk from some larger group and thus as acting legitimately in self-defense, however aggressive their actions might appear to another group that was viewing the situation from the same, apprehensive perspective. Politicians succeeded who used a discourse of the weak. The circumstances of economic crisis and the habits of forty years of socialist rhetoric made it easy, in fact, to reach for a language of exploitation and victimization.

Serbian president Slobodan Milošević told the nationalist Serb minority in Albanian-majority Kosovo, "Nobody must ever again dare to beat this people!" (Čuruvija and Torov 1995: 82) when he received reports that police were using batons against demonstrators. But non-Serbs heard this as a threat to them. Slovenia's government began in the early 1980s to restrict the number of non-Slovene workers in the republic, sending Bosnians and ethnic Albanians back to their home republics and limiting entry of new labor migrants, because of the economic costs in social infrastructure and a policy to reverse the exodus of Slovenes (such as to neighboring Austria) by reserving wage increases and jobs for them. But they justified this policy on the grounds that their "national distinctiveness" and cultural identity were "threatened." Within ever smaller circles of interaction, local majorities took advantage of local minorities in the economic crisis. The spiraling behavior that is produced by the security dilemma (Jervis 1976: 62–68) and has no automatic brakes led people to arm with words, and then with discriminatory legislation, guns, and finally preemptive secession.

When the Slovene drive for independence moved to Croatia, its drive for

a state for the Croatian nation met resistance from Serbs in border regions who feared or directly opposed becoming a minority in such a state. With Serbs willing to defend their lives and homes with arms in order to remain in a rump Yugoslavia, or to join an eventual Serbian nation-state if events so developed, the constitutional niceties of Minister Kadijević could not be sustained. Worse, once Slovenia and Croatia seceded and Yugoslavia dissolved without third-party assistance in negotiating the process peacefully, there was no obvious outcome for the multinational republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The Yugoslav federal system had provided the only sure protection against claims from Croatia and from Serbia that Bosnian territory was theirs, while an independent nation-state based on majoritarian principles provided no protection for the Serbs and Croats in Bosnia who would become minorities. As a result of the multiparty elections in November 1990, moreover, Bosnia was being governed by three nationalist parties, each asserting the *national rights* of one of the three constituent nations of the republic. The choice of independent states in place of Yugoslavia was a claim for national rights over territory, and despite the thorough intermixing of the members of the three Bosnian national communities in families, apartment buildings, and local communities, such claims would engage them in a fight over land and therefore the danger of armed struggle.

The third, essential, deadly component was the breakdown of legal order. Eventually the army took sides and used force, first to prevent secession and, failing that, then to create a smaller Yugoslavia, with borders that could include defense industries, strategic routes, and those people who wanted to remain (with their land) in such a Yugoslavia. Long before 1991, however, the governmental capacity to provide justice, protection, and a fair hearing was succumbing to political revolution, unlimited partial interests, and chaos. Out of pecuniary interest or political loyalty to local leaders, many in the police forces had even switched to protecting political parties, as paramilitary formations or criminal networks. Many judges attempted to remain professional and independent, but multiparty elections were the beginning of a political revolution, and newly elected political parties sought consolidation by appointing loyalists to the bench. And as the possibility of armed confrontation grew, local authorities began to distribute their cache of TDF weapons, aided in some cases by the federal army and its stocks, and citizens in rural areas pulled rusty rifles from barns.

OUTSIDE INTERVENTION

By the time that full-scale war was raging in border areas of Croatia, in the autumn of 1991, the fact of violence and predictions of its spread to Bosnia and Herzegovina appear overdetermined. Any suggestion that the violence was not inevitable—was even preventable—was relegated to the realm of

counterfactual analysis. The image of the Balkans as steeped in a history of bloodshed and as "an intractable 'problem from hell' that no one can be expected to solve . . . less a moral tragedy . . . and more a tribal feud that no outsider could hope to settle" (U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher, cited in Friedman 1993) was confirmed in the minds of all who had already suspected as much in 1990, obliterating any second thoughts.[7] Nonetheless, the nationalist path of state dissolution and forced population movements to create homogeneous nation-states out of Yugoslavia was only one of several paths which the country might have taken from the vantage of trends in the late 1980s. That this path was the only one imaginable five years later, in 1996, cannot be explained without adding the role played by outsiders and the fundamental changes taking place in the external environment of Yugoslavia. But such an addition does damage to the concept of violence-prone areas. Classifying the world into zones of stability and zones of violence creates a false sense of separation between local and foreign events that cannot be sustained in an era of increasing interdependence and in areas where countries (such as Yugoslavia) had provided a buffer in the East-West confrontation that was no longer needed and was thus no longer financed.

In the events leading to war in 1991–92, for example, the economic crisis cannot be explained without external economic shocks (such as the two oil price increases in the 1970s, the abrupt halt in 1979 of commercial bank lending and the sharp rise in interest rates for the American dollar the same year, the sudden stiffening of terms for IMF loans in 1982, the declining trade revenues resulting from European protection, the Iran-Iraq war, and the Western market shifts of the reforming Soviet Union and collapsing eastern bloc). The constitutional crisis was generated by requirements of political reform from the IMF and the World Bank. And the success of nationalist causes in 1989–90 against other domestic political trends cannot be separated from the financial support and physical return of émigrés and workers who had been living abroad to participate directly in support of anticommunist and nationalist forces (the most striking example is the $8 million raised in support of Franjo Tudjman's victorious campaign for president of Croatia in April 1990, but a number of Yugoslav national groups of guest workers in Germany were mobilizing to fight in Yugoslavia during 1989–90).

Of far greater consequence than these Yugoslav specifics, however, is the way in which normal actions by the international community actually made violence more likely. Both through the normal interactions of states in a world system and through specific interventions to manage the crisis, foreign actors strengthened the causes of violence in at least three ways: by contributing to the weakness of the federal government and state capacity, by legitimizing the people and ideas that would win, and by failing to do (or

even understand the need for) the hard work required to make peace when they accepted the peacemakers' role.

Undermining Political Capacity

Episodes of violence in modern Balkan history are limited to periods of external disjuncture. Whether they resulted from the retreat of a stabilizing power or regional system into domestic troubles or reforms (as with the Habsburg and Ottoman empires in the early to mid-nineteenth century, or with the Cold War system of bipolar, superpower governance and balance-of-terror in the late 1980s), or from altered foreign policies in neighboring powers that threatened the peace (as with World Wars I and II), these changes in the external environment required locals to respond—to the uncertainty, threat, occupation, or opportunity. In each regional system, moreover, military power played a central role. For example, in the late Habsburg period, the Ministry of War in Vienna directly governed the mid-section of the Balkans and restricted residence in this military border (*vojna krajina*) to settlers willing to bear arms and defend the border for the Empire; under the Ottomans, the Janissaries and *spahis* ruled the Balkan province for the Porte; and in World War II, the invading Axis armies divided up the territory and occupied it directly or through local collaborators, the Ustashi and Chetniks. In much of their modern history, locals thinking of political action under such circumstances had had to entertain the risk, at least, of war.

The transformation taking place in European and global order in the course of the 1980s, and particularly after 1985, was profoundly destabilizing to Yugoslavia. Under the Communist party leadership of president-for-life Josip Broz Tito, the country had created a sovereign identity and a socialist order in relation to its position in the Cold War international system, including an independent defense that was crucial to NATO's eastern policy, a nonalignment movement that gave the country and many of its citizens working abroad alternatives in third world markets and outside the East-West security blocs, and independence from Moscow in exchange for special access to American aid and the international financial institutions. It prospered by maneuvering domestic and foreign policies in relation to shifts in superpower relations and, like South Korea or Mexico, by accumulating a substantial foreign debt. But in 1979–82, the international financial institutions adopted harsher policies toward debtors, and the European Union and European Free Trade Association (EFTA) both substantially toughened their bargaining over the renewal of association agreements with Yugoslavia, including uncertainty-generating delays. In the mid-1980s, when talks resumed between the two Cold War blocs over conventional force reductions and economic rapprochement, neutral states, including Yugoslavia, were excluded.

Developments in the Western alliances at the same time, in 1985, reinforced this exclusion. The European Community decided to advance by 1992 to full financial integration of its member states, including a parallel deepening of political integration among western European states, and NATO took a more aggressive posture toward the eastern Mediterranean, so that the Yugoslav defense establishment perceived the West as a growing security threat. In the same year, Soviet reform was looking westward under Mikhail Gorbachev's new foreign policy of a "European home"; a Vatican campaign began (under a Polish pope) for new converts and the end of communism in eastern Europe; and economic and cultural contacts between Slovenes and Croats and their neighbors in Italy and Austria began to take on institutional form (as in the association Alpe-Adria). By April 1989, in this atmosphere of East-West détente and deepening European integration, the Yugoslav government was told by a new United States ambassador presenting his credentials that Yugoslavia was no longer of strategic significance to the United States.

All these developments were diminishing the economic resources and political power on which the Yugoslav federal government depended for independent revenues and for leverage over the republican governments. While the intent of the IMF conditionality programs was to reverse the hyper-decentralization that had resulted from more than three decades of IMF and World Bank advice so as to strengthen the federal government's administrative and economic capacity within the country, the effect was to provoke massive resistance from republican governments which had independent sources of revenue through export earnings and foreign support (such as from the Vatican, Austria, Italian provinces, and eventually Germany). The protective role of the federal government collapsed as a result of IMF-mandated liberalizing reforms and austerity policies. And the international role of the federal armed forces was rapidly becoming irrelevant because of the renewal of European détente and Soviet reforms; they needed a new role, at the very time when Slovene youth were on a campaign against the federal army, when NATO maneuvers seemed to pose a rising threat, and when the IMF stabilization program required substantial cuts in the defense budget *and* new imports to modernize weapons systems and increase exports.

More than six months before the republican governments in Slovenia and Croatia declared independence, in late 1990, when the prime minister's anti-inflationary program of economic reform appeared to be working to bring the country out of economic crisis and to create an enthusiastic domestic constituency for the federal (as opposed to their republican) government—the United States moved to abandon the federal government a second time. As David Gompert, special assistant to President Bush for national security affairs at the time, recounts, "The Bush administration

could not justify putting the dying Yugoslav federal authority on life-support systems." He continues, "The United States declared its sympathy for the teetering Yugoslav federal government of Ante Marković, who was committed to democracy, a civil society, and a market economy. But the prime minister wanted debt relief and a public signal of unreserved American political backing—commitments that seemed unwarranted in view of his government's apparent terminal condition" (Gompert 1996: 123).

At the same time, the Slovene and Croatian governments were receiving increasingly open support from Austria, Switzerland, Hungary, and Germany for their plans to secede, including weapons assistance in their illegal buildup of independent republican armies. The United States actually cut off all economic aid to the federal government (about $5 million) by May 1991 because of human rights abuses against Albanians in Kosovo (mandated by the Nickles Amendment to the foreign operations appropriations act passed in November 1990). When the federal presidency ordered the army in January 1991 to restore the state's legitimate authority over the use of violence by overseeing the disarming and disbandment of paramilitary formations, the United States warned the army that it would brook no use of force inside the country. On March 13, 1991, after Slovenia and Croatia declared that federal laws no longer applied in their republics, the European parliament passed a resolution declaring "that the constituent republics and autonomous provinces of Yugoslavia must have the right freely to determine their own future in a peaceful and democratic manner and on the basis of recognized international and internal borders." By the spring of 1991, when the federal government turned to European powers for aid in support of its economic program to replace American retreat, aid necessary to navigate the market and democratic transition successfully, delegations from the EC and from neighboring countries such as Italy and Austria began to deal directly, instead, with leaders from the republics (starting with Slovenia and Croatia). In some cases, they bypassed the federal government altogether.

Mediation and Its Language

A striking aspect of the explosion of popular engagement in Yugoslav public life that republican politicians used so skillfully to support their political aims during the 1980s was the almost childlike yearning to be heard. Slovene adolescents and young adults screamed obscenities and attacked the army and other sacred cows in their music, magazines, posters, and clothing, clearly aiming to provoke a reaction from inattentive adults. Serbs in Kosovo, joined by small-town Serbs in Serbia, organized demonstrations they called "meetings of truth," pleading to have their grievances heard by Belgrade officialdom and parliament and then to "tell their story" in other republics. Traveling throughout the country in 1990 and 1991, Brian Hall

was told over and over again by individuals he met, "Tell the truth," as if their truth was the only one and was "obvious" (Hall 1994: 5–6). But because they spoke in the language of the underdog, the chance that others would hear them was small. At the political level, politicians and activists were clearly talking past each other. And the absence of democratic institutions meant there were no regularized ways to listen and be heard.

The primary role of a mediator is to provide that neutral forum: to listen and to translate so that all parties can hear. The EC and the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) responded to the declarations of independence by the republics of Slovenia and Croatia on June 25, 1991, with the weakest form of mediation: offering their "good offices" to the parties. From the Brioni Agreement of July 7, 1991, which established a cease-fire in Slovenia and terms that enabled Slovene independence by the end of the year, to the Dayton Accord of November 21, 1995, which affirmed an October cease-fire in Bosnia and Herzegovina and enabled a NATO-led military intervention to help implement the agreement, western Europeans and Americans became increasingly involved, through mediation, in ending the violence and preventing its spread. But the more they listened, the more they disenfranchised whole categories of complaints and people. The prospects for political agency by those not chosen for a hearing by Western diplomats declined dramatically. And the more violence there was, the less neutral outsiders became. But in efforts to assist, they cut off an independent sphere of domestic politics, and in choosing sides, they left those whom they refused to hear or protect to rely on force to make themselves heard and to protect themselves.

The process of hearing and mediating was guided by two factors: the strategies of the various Yugoslav parties, and outsiders' criteria for legitimate intervention. As Yugoslavia headed for collapse, and particularly as Slovenia headed for secession, political leaders chose different strategies. First the Slovene and Croat, then the Bosnian Muslim and Macedonian republican politicians, along with the Albanian provincial leaders in Kosovo, chose a strategy of internationalization. They saw their best hope for success in external intervention, and they directed substantial resources and tactical choices into shaping foreign perceptions in their favor. This culminated successfully in the German policy to recognize Slovene and Croatian independence so as to *internationalize* the conflict. By declaring Slovenia and Croatia sovereign states, the Germans reasoned, they could define the actions of the federal army in Slovenia and Croatia and of Serb resisters in Croatia as illegitimate violations of Slovene or Croatian sovereignty. In short, they could lump all Serbian and federal actors into one category of "Serbs" and accuse them of aggression—and thereby have legitimate grounds for external intervention. The strategy of politicians in Serbia, Montenegro, and Serbian communities in Croatia, Bosnia, and

Herzegovina was instead to claim that the Yugoslav conflict was an internal matter, to address their attempts at persuasion to leaders in the other republics rather than to the international community, and to insist that the Bosnian conflict was a civil war.

The strategy of the federal government fell between these two camps, for its prime minister and foreign minister worked hard during the 1980s to gain association agreements with the EC, EFTA, and the Council of Europe and to obtain financial assistance for their economic reform and debt repayment program. As a part of that objective, they invited the EC in to mediate. But federal leaders also insisted that their conflict over constitutional reform and human rights was an internal matter, protected by the rules of sovereignty. Only in September 1991 at the United Nations did they concede to vote for interference, but as a means of *regaining* international acknowledgment of *Yugoslav* sovereignty as a member state of the United Nations and of shoring up their domestic authority by proposing and voting for a United Nations Security Council Resolution to place an arms embargo on the country.

International intervention in the internal affairs of countries does occur, but it must be legitimated by claims that do not abrogate the country's formal sovereignty. Thus, military intervention short of declaring war can only occur at the *consent* of the legitimate government. This was obtained when Macedonian president Gligorov requested UN peacekeeping troops to guard his country's border against external aggression (in fact, Gligorov's goal was to gain international recognition of Macedonian sovereignty over Greek objections), but the meaning of consent in the Bosnian case was too unclear to satisfy Europeans or the UN when President Izetbegović requested the same in the fall of 1991. Yugoslavia had not yet dissolved *de jure*, and Izetbegović represented only one of three parties in a ruling coalition and a seven-person collective presidency that were bound constitutionally to rule by consensus. Similarly, foreign troops would not deploy to the country until a cease-fire had been negotiated and signed—by the Croatian government and federal army in the case of UN peacekeepers in Croatia, and by Croatia, Serbia, and three Bosnian parties in the case of NATO-led troops to Bosnia and Herzegovina. The one exception to the rule of explicit consent—UN peacekeepers sent to protect humanitarian workers in Bosnia and Herzegovina during its war—allows intervention in defense of principles accepted by states as higher law—fundamental human rights and humanitarian principles or direct threats to international peace and security. The claims made by the Yugoslav parties who chose internationalization to support independence were, in fact, made in terms of such principles—especially the principle of human rights.

The intersection of these two factors—the strategies of domestic elites and the principles of legitimate intervention—had disastrous consequences. By choosing to talk only to elected leaders as representatives of a people's sovereignty, outsiders accepted without question that the conflict was as the republican leaders and their nationalist rhetoric portrayed it. By seeking to speak with people capable of giving consent and exercising sovereignty, mediators privileged the assertion of national rights and ethnic community over those who claimed civic rights and multiethnic tolerance within or across the republican boundaries. By "mediating" between the Slovene authorities and federal authorities, moreover, the EC transformed the constitutional conflict over federal-republic relations into a border conflict, one that was more likely to lead to violence. EC mediators thereby eliminated the federal government as the legitimate sovereign actor and violated the EC's and CSCE's own principle of territorial integrity, which should have denied to Slovenia the right to secede.

Although Western mediators insisted that all parties demonstrate a commitment to democracy in order to be heard, they never proposed a referendum of all Yugoslav citizens on the country's dissolution, nor even required the Slovene government to withdraw its veto of its earlier commitment to a federal referendum on the constitution, in 1989, and of federal elections in 1990. In that context, both federal and republican leaders in Belgrade who opposed the breakup of the country heard Western calls for democracy as biased support for Slovenes and Croats, such as when United States Secretary of State James Baker declared in a last-minute visit to the capital on June 21, 1991, that if the United States had to choose between unity and democracy, it would insist on democracy. Such views were interpreted in the armed forces and Serbian leaderships, instead, as a continuation of Western anticommunism aimed at destroying the country, which they felt obliged to prevent and justified in preventing with force.[8] This judgment was only reinforced when outsiders accepted the right to self-determination of Slovenes and Croats, based on popular referendums in the two republics, but denied the same right to Serbs in Croatia (who had also held a referendum) and to two of three parties in Bosnia and Herzegovina (Serbs boycotted the EC-mandated referendum on independence, while both Serbs and Croats, for the most part, fought against the sovereignty of the republic and for national rights through secession).

In addition to partial listening, outsiders tended to hear their view of the conflict, not that of the parties. In the two years preceding the outbreak of violence, the U.S. Ambassador to Yugoslavia, Warren Zimmermann, actively condemned the Serbian government for its violation of the human rights of Albanians in Kosovo. But by 1989, when this American policy began, the nature of the conflict between the Serbian government and Kosovo Albanians was over territorial governance—Belgrade changed its constitution to reduce substantially the autonomy of its two provinces (Vojvodina and Kosovo), with the necessary approval of the other republics required by

the federal constitution, and Albanian activists had been attempting to transform that extensive autonomy into full republic status (redefining the right of national self-determination to a republic on majoritarian rather than constitutional grounds).[9] The Slovene government did argue that human rights could only find full expression in a national community and be protected by a national state, but this joining of national and human principles was an argument for secession, not constitutional reform within Yugoslavia.

Nonetheless, the elision worked. Outside mediators accepted this nationalist view and equated human rights with self-governance for the majority and minority rights for those not in the majority—confirming the very fear of becoming a minority that was motivating many to fight. Croatia was required to adapt its constitution to grant "minority rights" to Serbs before recognition.[10] The CSCE/OSCE Commissioner on National Minorities went frequently to Macedonia on the grounds that insufficient protections for the rights of the Albanian minority posed the greatest threat of violence in Macedonia. Economic sanctions on Serbia and Montenegro (which formed a new federal republic of Yugoslavia after Bosnia was granted recognition) for their role in the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina were extended until Albanians in Kosovo were restored full human rights and autonomy. While the fear of being demoted to the status of a minority in someone else's national state was the motive for violence, the Western decision to dissolve the country into national states redefined their national rights—for example, Serbs in Croatia, Albanians in Serbia and in Macedonia, and Serbs and Croats in Bosnia and Herzegovina—as the *internal affairs* of the new sovereign states, not subject to international protection beyond declarations in support of minority and human rights.[11]

Once violence began in earnest, however, negotiators narrowed further the circle of interlocutors. Giving priority to ending the violence, they talked to those in control of armies (but not of the paramilitary groups that were responsible for much of the early violence and terror in Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Kosovo). Thus, they denied a voice to anyone who had done as outsiders demanded—eschewed violence and fought through peaceful means to reform the system, prevent war, oppose the nationalists, and write constitutions for the new states. These peaceful, civic-oriented, and democratic forces were not sovereign actors, nor, as they did not resort to violence, were they threats to international peace and stability with whom one had to deal. Among armed groups, moreover, diplomats from states or regional and international organizations privileged leaders whom outsiders viewed as legitimate representatives of sovereignty—for example, treating the nationalist Croat president as the only legitimate representative of Croatia and treating Serbs as rebels, or in Bosnia and Herzegovina, treating the man who held the chair of the seven-person collective presidency at the time of recognition in 1992 as the only legitimate representative of the country, even though that position was supposed to rotate annually.

Intervention remains a decision of states and their calculation of national interest—either on grounds of vital national interest or national commitments of collective security alliances. With the end of the Cold War, Yugoslavia ceased to be a strategic asset for the West; although European states had national interests in the Balkans, there was no compelling strategic interest to mobilize troops. Human rights were not enough. Humanitarian principles outlawing genocide and providing a strong international mandate to protect refugees and civilian victims of war, however, were. Beginning in June 1992, nearly one hundred UN Security Council Resolutions mandated international organizations—including UN peacekeeping troops deployed to protect refugee and relief organizations—to provide humanitarian assistance to Bosnians at war and—here national interests were clearer—to contain the fighting and the refugee outflow from spilling over Bosnian borders. One year later, enclaves of Muslim-majority towns in Serb-controlled areas were declared "safe areas," under UN protection. But just as humanitarian assistance also fed armies and provided a cover for arms deliveries, so peacekeepers could not provide protection in the midst of war.

Humanitarianism, however, is a language of rights which defines the claims that people can make on the international community. It thus fed back into the discourse on national rights that had come to dominate the political contest in Yugoslavia by the late 1980s and that led to war. Now the claim was not constitutional rights to self-determination or particular economic assets but to protection against genocide. Already in the mid-1980s, Serbs in Kosovo sought support from Serbia proper and Belgrade authorities by claiming that the pressures against them were tantamount to genocide; and Serb nationalists attempted to mobilize supporters and sympathy within Croatia by reviving fears that a second genocide against Serbs would occur if Croatian nationalists claiming the legacy of the wartime fascist state came to power. The Bosnian Muslim leadership claimed international intervention in Bosnia on the ground that Muslims were victims of genocide. And the language of national victimization within the country was easily translated by those leaders who chose an internationalization strategy into the international language of aggressors and victims. All sides used their perception of victimization to legitimize violence, but those who used the argument to obtain outside assistance—as if a new strategy of resource acquisition was replacing the ideological categories of the Cold War—had to act as victims, even to the point of delaying military preparations and inviting violence to make the case convincing. The strategy worked in the case of Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina, but not without cost. In Bosnia, eight peace plans were rejected by American patrons of the Bosnian Muslim leadership between March 1992 and October 1994 on the grounds that

none provided sufficient justice to the victims, but "appeased" the "aggressor" Serbs instead. Apart from the fact that Bosnian citizens were never asked their view of these plans, the price of sovereignty was a land partitioned into three nationally controlled territories and at least three more years of death and destruction than might have been necessary.

Making Peace

The failure of international mediation and diplomacy to prevent or stop the violence in Croatia and in Bosnia and Herzegovina is generally attributed to the failure to intervene with force. Interposition forces proposed for Croatia in July 1991 were rejected, as were calls to bomb federal forces besieging Vukovar and Dubrovnik in the fall of 1991. Diplomats negotiating peace plans lamented their lack of influence over the parties without a credible threat of force to wield. United Nations peacekeeping forces were vilified as appeasers, and worse, because their mandate required impartiality and rules of engagement that limited them to the use of force in proportionate response and self-defense. Critics called for lifting the arms embargo for the Bosnian government and bombing the Serbs. "The only language they understand is the language of force," was the repeated refrain throughout the war, always directed at Serbs. And indeed, the Bosnian war was brought to a halt in October 1995 by a policy of force. The American policy aimed to end the war by altering control of land as a prelude, rather than outcome, of a political settlement: first in March 1994 by creating a military alliance between enemies, the Bosnian government forces and the Bosnian Croats, and sending them arms (despite the embargo), and then in the summer of 1995, by assisting the Croatian government to overrun three of the four UN-protected areas with force, bombing fleeing Serbs and burning their homes to oblivion as a means to "reintegrate the territory" of sovereign Croatia, and to sweep through Serb-held territory in western Bosnia—aided by a massive NATO bombing campaign against Bosnian Serb targets. And to undergird the peace agreement negotiated in November—the Dayton accords—it insisted on a program to train and equip these allied Bosnian Muslim (government) and Bosnian Croat forces (ostensibly in a federated army) to defend against any renewed threat of Bosnian Serb aggression, even though the accord declared an autonomous Bosnian Serb republic to be one of two equal entities in a single Bosnian state.

In fact, there would have been little cause for violence if the state had not dissolved and borders of the new states not been contested—not only between parties in Yugoslavia but also between those who wanted borders redrawn more in conformity with national borders and representatives of the Western and international powers who insisted that the borders of the republics (treated as surrogates for existing borders once Slovenia and Croatia chose to secede) were inviolable. Neither the Europeans nor

regional and international organizations had a procedure for negotiating the dissolution of a multinational state or contested borders. Those who contested the internal borders were accused of aggression, and international intervention only came *in response* to violence. If this had not been obvious in 1991, then it was clearly so by 1998, when the contest over the province of Kosovo turned violent: the unwillingness to intervene in the interests of prevention, acting only when violence occurred, sent a signal that one had to go to war to get attention. Moreover, the initial causes of the conflict that turned deadly were first the state's inability to provide its constitutionally mandated protections under the budgetary demands of debt repayment and liberalization, then uncertainty about the country's international position, and finally the breakdown of the constitutional and legal order as a result of political quarrels over rights to economic resources and the competition to enter Europe. Yet outsiders sought to control the conflict by imposing economic sanctions (first on the federal government, then on Serbia and Montenegro, and then also on Serbs in Croatia and in Bosnia and Herzegovina), and the primary task of the new states (including the framework for peace in Bosnia) was to resume the same economic and political reforms in order to become eligible for membership in the international financial institutions and the European Union.

The international capacity to assist the process of restoring peace is no less confined by the rules of sovereignty than its approach to prevention and war. Counterparts must be found who will implement agreements made—to withdraw armies, to approve loans for economic reconstruction and be responsible for their implementation and repayment, and to begin to govern. Anything more than assistance to consenting sovereign actors is derided as inappropriate, if not illegitimate, "nation-building." In peacemaking, as in peace negotiations, leaders of the nationalist political parties claiming sovereignty have their position further strengthened by the international community.

Some outsiders did take advantage of the Bosnian war to obtain recognition of the rape of women in wartime as an international crime, and women and children were aided as refugees, displaced persons, and civilians in need of food, shelter, and help in finding missing husbands and sons—in other words, as victims in need of protection. But women who organized antiwar campaigns, civic self-help groups, and reconciliation projects in schools and villages got no hearing. International negotiators for a Bosnian peace emphasized the necessity of justice to reconciliation and healing, but they placed responsibility for that process on an international criminal tribunal in The Hague that would indict and try political and military leaders as war criminals. Just as the disintegration of political authority moved too rapidly for non-nationalists to organize effectively against the tide, and the resort to violence and terror overwhelmed nonviolent forms of

political agency, so the impatience of outsiders with the costs of intervention in the Balkans also imposed a short time line (twelve months at first, then eighteen months, and only then, an undetermined stay) on those who would attempt to generate political organization and action in opposition to the ruling nationalist parties who led them to war. To be able to withdraw troops in twelve months, the American negotiators required that elections be held within six to nine months—too soon to organize against those who had used violence to achieve political ends and wielded the means of physical protection (armies, police, and foreign aid) in the minds of voters who still feared war.

CONCLUSION

Outsiders' perceptions of the wars of Yugoslav succession have given a boost to culturalist explanations of violence. Yet their categories for local behavior (victim and aggressor, nation and minority) and for legitimate intervention (interstate aggression or civil war, threat to international peace or internal affairs, humanitarian principles and prohibitions against genocide or human rights) reinforced the incentives within the current state system to organize ethnically and claim sovereign rights. Where is the perspective that addresses the core of the problem leading to violence in Yugoslavia, the widespread phenomenon of retreating or collapsing states?

The current trend, beginning in the early 1980s, of adjustment to global economic interdependence aims at dismantling the regulatory and welfare state. A profound ideological and epistemological shift became perceptible during the decade whereby government was no longer viewed as the source of justice and equal rights, protector of the weak, and guardian against economic crisis. Government was seen as corrupt, an overweening bureaucracy, a force of political repression and an obstacle to freedom, the cause of economic distortion and decline, and the destroyer of community and social values. But under attack were the accommodations, compromises, and methods of economic and group coexistence that had been developed in many parts of the world over the past fifty years to achieve social peace. Policies of economic austerity, balance-of-payments adjustment, cuts in public expenditures, liberalization, and privatization coincide, moreover, with the disruptive consequences for social values and stable communities of the effects of earlier policies of industrialization, foreign trade, and international capital flows for rural-urban migration, land use patterns, and unemployment of both the growing urban underclass and the highly educated, formerly solid middle class. The result was economic inequality and material insecurity, challenging the status achieved by the middle administrative and professional classes, and intensifying individual competition and envy over jobs and privileges.

The political result, however, was not to accept a leaner state, but to use

accusations of repression and failing public management of the economy to replace office-holders with new groups and to seek control of state assets for one's own group to the exclusion of others. Those who demanded that bureaucracies be less corrupt and more accountable to the public they are supposed to serve were unprepared for the consequences of their elimination and the need to seek alternative protections outside the state, in private provision of collective goods. Raised in traditions of resistance, activists and social movements find it difficult to organize resistance when the object of their protest crumbles. International organizations, diplomats, and foreign ministers of major powers assume the existence of sovereign actors who can control populations and be accountable to international norms, but seem to have no alternative when governments do not have that capacity, or when political leaders avoid making or keeping commitments if the result would be to expose their lack of power to their followers. Major powers even speak with two voices—demanding that states protect human and minority rights and, simultaneously, cut expenditures on the very programs that guarantee rights. Amidst these contradictory pressures and attitudes toward the state, the current winners are those who use the first-strike option to leave or exclude: opting out by claiming political autonomy or secession, or kicking others out by sending migrants, refugees, and asylum-seekers home, forcing mass population movements, or discriminating with regard to jobs and citizen rights. Clearly, the ordering principles of international organizations and of the foreign policy of the major powers have yet to adjust to the end of the Cold War and to the more profound changes being required in local societies and state orders by liberalization and globalization—if the resort to violence is a concern.

NOTES

1. But on the foreign (to the Balkans) origin of this concept, see Todorova 1997.

2. A representative of this shift can be found in Kaufman 1996, where "Cold War" conflicts are said to have been "ideological," and "post–Cold War" conflicts are "ethnic."

3. In the case of Yugoslavia, see Denitch 1994, Gagnon 1994/1995, and Silber and Little 1997.

4. The analysis and facts of the Yugoslav case are based on Woodward 1995; see that monograph for greater detail and documentary support.

5. The final crisis is vividly portrayed in chapter 8, " 'You've Chosen War': The Arming of Slovenia and Croatia, April 1990–January 1991," in Silber and Little 1997: 105–118.

6. The myriad activities aiming at political change, decentralization, university reform, language rights, and so forth during that period even gained the label MASPOK, shorthand for "mass movement."

7. David Gompert, who served as special assistant to the president for national security affairs in the Bush Administration, 1990–93, expresses the initial American

attitude toward the Yugoslav crisis, almost three years earlier than Christopher's statement: "Those American officials who knew the Balkans best believed that no external power, not even the sole superpower, could prevent Yugoslavs from killing each other and destroying their country, much less impose a fair and lasting peaceful solution" (Gompert 1996: 123).

8. This is made particularly clear in the memoirs of the period of Borisav Jović, Serbian representative to the federal presidency holding the chair in May 1990–May 1991 (Jović 1995).

9. The Yugoslav constitution of 1945 recognized five constituent nations—all speaking south Slavic—with the right to self-determination; it added a sixth, Bosnian Muslims, in 1968; but ethnic groups with a national homeland elsewhere, such as Hungarians or Albanians, and who were not Slavic, did not have that constitutional right.

10. In fact, recognition preceded this requirement as a result of German patronage; the Croatian government adopted a constitutional law, not a change in its constitution; and the law was not implemented.

11. Although NATO states continued to define their intervention of spring 1999 as a defense of Albanian human and minority rights within a sovereign Yugoslavia, their method of a massive bombing campaign was a fundamental shift in a decade of Western policy instruments.

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