

## **CHAPTER ONE - DEMOCRATISATION**

### **INTRODUCTION**

This Chapter provides an overview of the dominant ideas that have shaped international institutional intervention in Bosnia - the framework of democratisation. It will be argued that, although the language of democratisation appears universal, its content today is a highly ideological one that qualifies liberal democracy in the states of Eastern Europe and justifies the interference of Western institutions in their domestic affairs.

There are two key components of the current approach to democratisation that are inter-linked and mutually reinforcing. Firstly, the shifting definition of democracy itself, with less focus on the institutional level of elections and government process and more on the imputed values and culture of a society. Secondly, the internationalisation of questions of democratic consolidation, where the problems of democratisation are held to necessitate international institutional guidance and support. These two elements form the bulk of this overview, which concludes with the application of this approach to the context of Bosnia.

### **FROM DEMOCRACY TO DEMOCRATISATION**

Until the early 1990s, 'democratisation' was the loose term for describing the process of establishing liberal or constitutional democracies along the lines of Western European or United States models. This process has been analysed in the field of

political science by commentators such as Samuel Huntington, most notably in *The Third Wave: Democratization in the late Twentieth Century* (1991a; see also O'Donnell et al, 1986 and Diamond et al, 1989). During this period, the 'transition to democracy' or the 'democratisation process' was seen as a global process in successive waves. The first wave being from the 1820s to the inter-war revival of authoritarianism in the 1920s, the second wave from 1945 to the early 1960s; the changes that swept Eastern Europe in 1989 are often referred to as part of the 'third wave', from 1974 to 1990 (Huntington, 1991b, p. 12; Schmitter and Karl, 1991, p. 75).

Liberal or constitutional democracy was understood to involve a certain number of institutional mechanisms, central to which was electoral competition. Schumpeter's classic definition of democracy being: '... that institutional arrangement for arriving at political decisions in which individuals acquire the power to decide by means of a competitive struggle for the people's vote' (1943, p. 269). Robert Dahl defined seven attributes in his concept of 'polyarchy': elected officials, free and fair elections, inclusive suffrage, the right to run for office, freedom of expression, alternative information and associational autonomy (1989, p. 221). Elections were considered to be the key tests of democratic institutionalisation. If they were carried out when legally scheduled, organised in an inclusive, fair and competitive way, with voters registered and free from coercion, the votes counted fairly, and the winners allowed to take office without their terms being arbitrarily terminated, then the institutionalisation of democracy was considered to be fairly advanced (see for example: O'Donnell, 1996a, p. 37).

As Lincoln Allison has highlighted, the positive view of the international expansion of democracy, held by the democratisation theorists up to the early 1990s, contrasted sharply with the increasingly negative view of democracy *per se* by the ‘normative’ democracy theorists, concerned with liberal democracy within the established democracies of the West (1994, p. 8). It is the contention of this Chapter that this division has now been superseded through the focus on democratic ‘consolidation’. Since the early 1990s, democratisation theorists have highlighted the weakness of the ‘third wave’ and the problems of consensus-building in liberal democratic systems along similar lines to the normative democracy theorists (see, for example: Huntington, 1991b; Diamond, 1994; Schmitter, 1994; and Fukuyama, 1995).

Today, democratisation involves deeper concerns that relate to the sustainability of democratic institutions rather than their establishment and operation, for this the new concept of ‘consolidation’ has been deployed: ‘For our purposes, “democratisation” is seen as the overall process of regime change from beginning to end, including both stages of what are generally called in the comparative literature “transition” to a liberal democracy and its subsequent “consolidation”’ (Pridham and Vanhanen, 1994, p. 2). Gunther and others argue that ‘merely creating democratic institutions and holding elections captures only part of the process through which stable, viable democratic systems come into being’ (Gunther et al, 1996, p. 155). Karen Dawisha, a leading authority in the field, goes further to argue that, for the purposes of her research project, ‘democratisation is said to begin when the first set of free and fair elections for national-level office takes place’ (1997, p. 42).

One international sphere where this discourse has been particularly influential has been in international strategy towards the reintegration of the newly independent states of Eastern Europe. Their need for international recognition, financial assistance, and desire to enter Western institutions, such as the Council of Europe, United Nations, NATO, and the European Union, established a focus for international community judgements of democratic standards. This focus on democratic standards soon shifted away from the formal political process to the nature of East European society itself. Geoffrey Pridham and Paul Lewis, two leading commentators on democratic transitions argue that:

New democracies are by definition 'fragile democracies' ... The political cultures of the countries in question do not necessarily provide a reasonable basis for system support. Initial transition may be an occasion for euphoria, but the overall process is usually the source of considerable disorientation at elite and mass levels ... But even without any immediate or direct threat from anti-democratic forces ... [new democracies may be] vulnerable to collapse or at least involve a lengthy and complicated process of transition. (Pridham and Lewis, 1996, p. 1)

## CULTURE AS KEY

The discussion on the problems of the new democracies normally takes the form of counterposing asserted Western cultural values, embedded in civil society, to merely having democratic institutions. Claus Offe, for example, argues that: 'Copied and transplanted institutions that lack the moral and cultural infrastructure on which the

“original” can rely, are likely to yield very different and often counter-intentional results’ (cited in Sztompka, 1996, p. 125). Pridham and Lewis stress:

What happened in 1989 was only the beginning of a long and complicated process. Within little more than a year, it was noted that ‘the East Europeans are discovering that there is a large, dangerous chasm between grabbing freedom and establishing democracy; there is no natural progression’. (Pridham and Lewis, 1996, p. 2)

Marcin Krol writes that those who saw the victory of liberal democracy internationally as straightforward were looking at the facade not the real content: ‘... many of the world’s new democracies are currently situated somewhere between real democracy and sham democracy. There is little doubt that if we restricted ourselves to the survey of institutional forms or democratic facades, we should perceive a still rising wave of democratisation’ (1995, p. 37).

Without the cultural preconditions of civil society the institutions of liberal democracy are seen to be little more than window-dressing. Electoral competition, the traditional focal point of institutional studies of democratic legitimacy, is often held to be less important in assessments of the new democracies:

Without the mediating institutions of a vibrant civil society, popular influence over politics is going to be limited to election day, and elections in post-communist Europe all too often revolve around feelings and resentments rather than issues. For exactly these reasons, ex-communists came to power in Lithuania, Poland, and Hungary in 1993-94. (Krol, 1995, p. 39)

In fact, as the above quote indicates, elections are often seen in highly negative terms. Krol argues that without regulation ‘venomous invective, accusatory rhetoric, *ad hominen* argumentation and the like’ can get out of control, and that uncivil political discord can then influence the electorate and produce poor outcomes (1995, p. 39). Tom Gallagher fears that unrestrained political debate could be too much for East Europeans to handle: ‘Agreement about the management of political competition is essential if nascent democracies are not to be tested beyond endurance by heavily adversarial parties’ (1995, p. 353).

Today, as the capacity of the electorate in the ‘new democracies’ is openly questioned, it is Tocqueville, not Schumpeter, who serves as an inspiration for theorists of democratisation. His view that citizens needed to be educated in the values of democracy through voluntary associations, which served ‘as large free schools, where all the members of the community go to learn the general theory of association’, is much quoted (Tocqueville, 1945, vol. 2, p. 124). Bruce Parrott, for example, writes that: ‘Without key components of civil society, government structures that are formally democratic cannot be expected to operate in a fashion that is substantively democratic’ (1997, p. 24). Piotr Sztompka uses the metaphor that ‘*building a house* is not the same as *establishing a home*’:

The former is only the shell, the empty framework ... it is a concern for architects. The latter is the living arena of social actions and interactions ... it is the concern for sociology. The more or less explicit recognition of that distinction between the

institutional and the cultural-civilisational spheres is also indicated by other terms, i.e. public sphere versus civil society. (Sztompka, 1996, p. 117)

Larry Diamond similarly stresses the importance of civil society above the conflict-ridden and self-interested sphere of politics. Groups which are part of civil society are concerned with public interest and do not aim to capture formal political power for the narrow ends of any group, nor do they seek to impose their views on others, therefore they are held to play a central role:

Civil society can also be a crucial arena for the development of other democratic attributes, such as tolerance, moderation, a willingness to compromise, and a respect for opposing viewpoints. These values become most stable when they emerge through experience, and organisational participation in civil society provides important practice in political advocacy and contestation. (Diamond, 1994, p. 8)

The growing consensus on the importance of the cultural values of civil society to the democratic process has meant that for increasing numbers of commentators, institutional and legal safeguards are no longer enough. If states do not have the culture and values necessary to safeguard democracy then democratisation necessitates change which reaches down to the heart of society. Parrott notes:

A civic political culture embodies high levels of interpersonal trust, a readiness to deal with political conflict through compromise rather than coercion or violence, and acceptance of the legitimacy of democratic institutions. It stands to reason that political culture affects whether citizens choose to support moderate or extreme

political movements and parties, and whether they choose to engage in democratic or anti-democratic forms of political participation. (Parrott, 1997, pp. 21-22)

David Held writes that institutions alone are not adequate ‘a “will to democracy” and a democratic culture are indispensable supporting conditions’ (1995, p. 158). Keitha Fine highlights ‘the patent inability of conventional instruments of western politics and legal systems to function effectively’ in the East as ‘without a history and practice in participatory politics, warring groups have little incentive to negotiate’ (1996, p. 560). For Fine, ‘ingrained patterns of thought, response, and behaviours’ of the former communist society are ‘dysfunctional’ and counterproductive for modern civil society, constituting deep cultural barriers (1996, p. 566):

... people in the so-called new democracies have remarkably few legal, political, and civic skills; they hold deep-seated prejudices and an enormous reservoir of anxiety about the future. They have as yet little willingness to re-conceptualise their prejudices or anxieties in language familiar to Westerners. (Fine, 1996, p. 559)

US Deputy Secretary of State Strobe Talbott agrees that institutional change is not enough and ‘must be matched by a corresponding change in public attitudes, or what is sometimes called political culture’ (1996, p. 62). Richard Gunther and others similarly argue that consolidation has more to do with attitudes than institutions: ‘Consolidation involves a second dimension, relating to the stabilisation, routinisation, institutionalisation, and legitimation of patterns of politically relevant behaviour ... This definition thus includes an attitudinal dimension ... as well as a behavioural criterion’ (Gunther et al, 1996, p. 152). Sztompka uses the concept of

‘civilisational competence’ to describe the alleged lack of ‘internalisation of certain cultural codes, rules and values’ which are essential for ‘meaningful action within institutions’ (1996, p. 118). He argues that the problem in Eastern Europe is not with the idea of democracy itself, or even with the institutions of liberal democracy, it is one of cultural mismatch:

The institutional and cultural levels may fit together and may mutually reinforce each other. In such situations we may speak of a true *consolidation* of institutions and *adequacy* of culture. But both levels may also manifest a lack of fit ... This seems to be the case in post-communist societies where the widespread cultural rules still dictate pervasive suspicion toward authorities, reluctance to get involved in public life, ignorance and neglect of public issues, political apathy, and electoral absenteeism. (Sztompka, 1996, p. 119)

This framework of a cultural democratic divide seems to be encapsulated in Francis Fukuyama’s view of four levels of democratisation. Firstly, that of normative beliefs, a belief in the legitimacy of democracy; secondly, the institutional level; thirdly, the level of civil society; and fourthly, the level of culture. It now seems that each higher level depends on the one beneath it:

Just as democratic institutions rest on a healthy civil society, civil society in turn has precursors and preconditions at the level of culture ... Change on level 3, that of civil society, has been much slower in coming. And here the pace of change clearly depends to a great degree on the characteristics of level 4, that of culture. (Fukuyama, 1995, pp. 8-9)

As Richard Rose pinpoints, the privileging of culture makes no small difference:

Some theorists argue that a democratic culture is a consequence that follows from the establishment of democratic institutions, while others consider it a prerequisite for achieving a stable democracy. If the latter is the case, it could take generations before democracy is secure in a given country, insofar as persons socialised in an authoritarian or totalitarian regime would persist in these ways even after democratic institutions are introduced. (Rose, 1997, p. 97)

Even if East Europeans demonstrated the right institutional procedures and cultural attributes to the satisfaction of the West they would still be under suspicion. Burgess usefully highlights how the discussion of democratic consolidation becomes a tautological one where by definition ‘new democracies’ can not be ‘consolidated democracies’ (1997, p. 191). Commentators are divided over exactly how long the process of consolidating democracy will take. For Fred Halliday, ‘no-one can be sure [until] a democratic system is established for at least a generation’ (1995, p. 217; 1994, pp. 232-33). Fine also argues that at least a generation is necessary (1996, p. 566). Strobe Talbott considers the time-scale for democratic consolidation to be ‘not just years but decades, the passing of a generation or more’ (1996, p. 62). Ralph Dahrendorf, in his influential book, *Reflections on the Revolution in Europe*, writes that democracy in Eastern Europe can not be considered secure until at least two generations, or sixty years, have elapsed (1990, p. 99).

## QUALIFYING DEMOCRACY

As considered above, new democracies are seen as so fragile that, ‘even without any immediate or direct threat’, they may be susceptible to collapse. This has allowed the discussion of the regulatory implications of the democratisation approach to expand despite evidence of the formal workings of the democratic system. This approach to the problems of democracy in the 1990s is very different to that of earlier democratisation processes, for example the transition from authoritarian rule in Southern Europe in the 1970s. The conditionality requirements for Eastern European membership of the Council of Europe and other institutions are far more exacting than they were for the new democracies of Greece, Spain and Portugal (Storey, 1995, p. 142; see also: Bates, 1998; M. Walker, 1998b).

In Eastern Europe the establishment of democratic institutions and the holding of free and fair elections has been generally unproblematic, notable only by its exception. In terms of formal democracy, survey after survey shows Central and Eastern European states as meeting international norms. This is illustrated well by the ten country survey carried out jointly by the European Commission and the Council of Europe (Kaldor and Vejvoda, 1997, p. 65). In fact, the stability of the democratic process in both countries which are relatively ethnically homogeneous, such as the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and Slovenia, as well as in countries with large ethnic minorities, such as Romania, Bulgaria and Macedonia has been the norm for the region. The successful establishment of liberal democratic institutions along Western lines, has been achieved despite severe economic and social dislocation since 1989. The fact that no significant anti-system party or social movement has emerged, would

in a different period probably have been greeted as demonstrating the strength of the democratic framework.

A key theme of democratisation commentators today is that the traditional methods of political categorisation are no longer adequate. Of particular concern is the need to downplay the traditional connection between elections and democracy and to develop an alternative broader framework that stresses the importance of the cohering values of civil society. Parrott notes that 'a competitively elected government is capable of behaving in a despotic fashion toward large numbers of its citizens or inhabitants' (1997, p. 4). Schmitter and Karl argue that the belief that free and fair electoral competition is a sufficient condition for democracy is a fallacy:

However central to democracy, elections occur intermittently and only allow citizens to choose between the highly aggregated alternatives offered by political parties ... During the intervals between elections, citizens can seek to influence public policy through a wide variety of other intermediaries; interest associations, social movements, locality groupings, clientelistic arrangements, and so forth. Modern democracy, in other words, offers a variety of competitive processes and channels for the expression of interests and values - associational as well as partisan, functional as well as territorial, collective as well as individual. All are integral to its practice. (Schmitter and Karl, 1991, p. 78)

There is a new East/West divide not between states with liberal democracy and those without but between the leading 'mature' Western democracies and those states whose liberal democracies remain qualified. This divide is not predicated on the

question of formal democracy, but inevitably subjective judgements about democratic consolidation and political culture. Richard Rose, for example, notes that, according to Freedom House's ratings, states in Eastern Europe, such as the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Estonia, Lithuania, and Slovenia, are credited with being as democratic as France or Spain, yet he stresses that they 'are not stable democracies ... nor can they be considered as perfect democracies' (1997, pp. 94-95). As leading commentators have stated:

While it is generally argued that the institutional, formal prerequisites for democracy have been broadly fulfilled in the ten Central and Eastern European countries under consideration, it is more difficult to assess in such a clear manner the level of consolidation of democratic behaviour, or of the fledgling democratic political culture, that has been obtained. (Kaldor and Vejvoda, 1997, p. 60)

While there is universal agreement on the basic elements of formal democracy - regular elections, equality under the rule of law, freedom of association etc. - there is no real consensus on the best indicators of democratisation, or how to measure them. Kaldor and Vejvoda list factors such as the media, political parties and civil society as indicative of substantive democracy. But the more these themes are inquired into the less certainty there seems to be. Either political shortcomings appear little different to those in the West, such as the general lack of popular participation in the political sphere, or interpreting specific actions within a universal framework appears problematic; for example, is a high poll turnout a good sign or proof of a prevailing Stalinist mentality?

In relation to the political sphere itself, especially with regard to political parties and campaigns, it is difficult to raise questions about the lack of grass-roots involvement of the electorate in political party organisation, the lack of programmatic substance, or even the hierarchical organisation of political parties, without noting the universal nature of these problems, East and West. In which case, the distinction between East Europe's 'pre-democratic crisis' and Western Europe's 'post-democratic crisis' appears somewhat artificial (Kaldor and Vejvoda, 1997, p. 81).

Similarly, studies of the media reveal mixed messages, state control or influence over dominant sections of the media is not unusual in Western Europe, and giant media corporations mean that media pluralism is often restricted. Mostly media experts cite a lack of free time for opposition parties as a major problem, but media specialists, from the Dusseldorf-based European Institute for the Media and the Open Media Research Institute in Prague, write with regard to the Trans-Caucasus region, that the state media provided too much free time to parties and candidates, which 'may have saturated the audience and induced fatigue, rather than contribute to viewers enlightenment' (Lange and Fuller, 1996, p. 9). Instead, they call for less free time and more editorialising on issues, as the state-run media has a responsibility to be more informative.

The growth of civil society is also difficult to measure and difficult to categorise. The measurement of public attitudes has produced little agreement among scholars on interpretation of the data, as well as results which show that there are broad similarities in political culture in East and West Europe (Miller et al, 1998). Some research indicates that Russia is equal to the United States in democratic values,

because the minority rejecting some democratic values is similar in both countries; other research shows the public in some Eastern states to have higher levels of acceptance for rights for ethnic minorities, normally seen as a key indicator (Rose, 1997, p. 98; Parrott, 1997, pp. 23-24). If political participation is used instead of attitudes, there is still little agreement. One measurement generally used is the number of NGOs active in the society, but the fact that Slovakia, normally portrayed as one of the least democratic countries in the region, has one of the largest NGO sectors has begun to raise questions about this approach (Kaldor and Vejvoda, 1997, p. 77).

The variety of measures for democratisation and democratic consolidation, and the flexible and selective use of the data, has meant that states under international assessment can always be seen as lacking 'democratic maturity'. As Kaldor and Vejvoda note, the increasing qualification of democracy by leading international institutions means an ever extending framework of hoops for the new democracies to jump through to prove themselves:

In substantive terms, a process of democratisation is ... not a linear process, and it is not possible to measure progress or specify overall benchmarks of success ... Thus Slovakia is often contrasted with the Czech Republic as being relatively backward in democratic terms; yet although it is undoubtedly true that Slovakia has one of the worst records among CEECs in terms of treatment of minorities ... Slovakia has an extremely lively civil society and unusually active public participation in debates. The Czech Republic, on the other hand ... [has a] human rights policy ... [which is] rather weak. (Kaldor and Vejvoda, 1997, p. 80)

Once there are no ‘overall benchmarks’, any facet of life, from leadership style to street protests, can become an indicator of a lack of democratic consolidation (for example: Rose, 1997, p. 95; see also Schedler, 1998, p. 102). On the basis of selected policy areas, which are seen to fail the test of ‘mature’ democracy, the division between the democratising states of the West and those which need to be democratised in the East is accentuated and the areas of government policy-making open to international regulation are extended.

As work on democratisation expands, it seems that liberal democracy is in need of ever more qualifiers. Research published in 1995, by David Collier and Steven Levitsky, indicated the use of more than one hundred different qualifiers that had been attached to the term ‘democracy’, mostly used to indicate the lack of one full attribute of democracy or another (cited in O’Donnell, 1996a, p. 47). Taking into account the new vogue for adding adjectives to adjectives such as ‘consolidated’, one could guarantee that number would be much higher today. Gunther and others, for example, argue that ‘full consolidation’ would be ‘the unachievable end point of our ideal-type continuum, where all individuals in a society join in the democratic consensus’, this is in fact what is called for by Geoffrey Pridham’s conception of ‘positive consolidation’ (Gunther et al, 1996, p. 153). As O’Donnell notes, the dynamic of the discourse is no longer to define democracies positively, but only negatively; through this process more and more characteristics and attributes can be held up to demonstrate a lack of democracy and the necessity for some form of regulation (1996b, p. 164).

Although liberal democracy is increasingly problematised, as Carole Pateman notes, no one talks about post-democracy (1996, p. 5). For the theorists of democratisation,

the problem is never democracy itself. Democracy is upheld as a universal aspiration at the same time as being held to be increasingly difficult to obtain outside the developed and mature democracies of the West. This contradiction is played out in the international sphere, through the contrast between the states which can assist others to democratise and those which are held to be incapable of democratically governing themselves:

... there is a paradox; on the one hand, a global language of democracy is being created, and claims about human or universal rights are encouraged by international declarations of rights by non-governmental bodies ... On the other hand, the idea of universal rights is under theoretical attack by the proponents of the local, the particular, and social and cultural differences. (Pateman, 1996, p. 10)

In unravelling this paradox the ideological assumptions which inform the approach of democratisation become clearer. This paradox is the subject of the following section.

## **DEMOCRATISATION AND SOVEREIGNTY**

Writers analysing international relations since 1989 have increasingly seen the key problem of the global order as the disjuncture between the political level, dominated by nation-states, and other levels, such as culture, communications, economics or the environment which are enmeshed in global interconnections. There is a call for intervention on the international level to deal with problems beyond the apparently narrowing scope of the nation state. Fred Halliday, for example, calls for a new 'firm insistence on universal standards and rights' (1995, p. 220). David Held argues that as

the influences that affect peoples lives are global there cannot be real democracy and accountability without new forms of global governance (1995). As the United Nations' *Report of the Commission on Global Governance* explains, global governance is about strengthening existing international institutions, not just in terms of a broader remit, to deal with the host of new problems unleashed by the process of globalisation, but also strengthening them morally, through putting to the fore a new global civic ethic and the promotion of democracy and social inclusion (Commission on Global Governance, 1995, p. xvi).

The nation state and narrow national interest should not be allowed to take precedence over the more pressing 'people-centred' concerns of the global community. This call for putting democracy and rights back on the international agenda has been warmly greeted, not only by many commentators, disillusioned with the way abuses of power were condoned during the Cold War, but also by the major international institutions, which have pledged to act under this international pressure. The end of the Cold War, in 1989, ushered in an era of transition in international relations. The international institutions, developed to contain conflict after the Second World War, such as the United Nations, NATO and CSCE, now needed to find new ways of legitimating their cohesive international roles (Park and Rees, 1998). The language of global ethics and democratisation has provided a new set of 'mission statements' that are particularly suited to the needs of the new era (Chandler, 1997).

It is clear that we have witnessed a major transformation in the language and themes of international relations. The international policy agenda today is dominated by issues such as the consolidation of democracy and the protection of rights, particularly

those of women, children and minorities. These issues are to a large extent ones that would previously have been classed as the internal domestic concerns of states. The sovereignty of the nation state vis-à-vis the United Nations and other international institutions is under constant pressure. As the *Report of the Commission on Global Governance* urges: 'The principles of sovereignty and non-intervention must be adapted in ways that recognise the need to balance the rights of states with the rights of people, and the interests of nations with the interests of the global neighbourhood' (Commission on Global Governance, 1995, p. 337). This is given official support in international documents such as the 'Final Declaration' of the Third Strasbourg Conference on Parliamentary Democracy, in 1992, which states: 'Human rights are no longer the exclusive province of states. The infringement of human rights entails an actual international duty of intervention' (Council of Europe, 1992). The UN World Conference on Human Rights in Vienna, in 1993, confirmed the competence of UN bodies to subject to scrutiny and to critical study human rights violations in all countries (Boyle, 1995, p. 85).

The global rights thesis, despite its universal thematic, in fact has presaged a new language of division, that of democratisation. The global democratic values now being espoused as the crucial organising principles of the new era are, of course, not held by all. Held gives his proposals thus:

In the first instance, cosmopolitan democratic law could be promulgated and defended by those democratic states and civil societies that are able to muster the necessary political judgement and to learn how political practices and institutions must change

... an association of democratic nations which might draw in others over time ...  
(Held, 1995, p. 232)

If only democratic states are to be allowed into the institutions of the new world order, this poses the question of how this can be judged and what the 'democratic minimum' should be. For commentators such as Marcin Krol, this means that those who judge 'must be the West, however frightened or unprepared it may be to do so at this time' (1995, p. 42). Writers like Halliday and Shaw put the case for the division of the international order according to democratic status even more bluntly. Halliday, questioning Fukuyama's assumption of the victory of liberal democracy, writes that only about two dozen states can be trusted when it comes to democratic values (1994, p. 233). Shaw states that the global responsibilities that come with global society necessitate:

... a new unity of purpose among Western peoples and governments, since only the West has the economic, political and military resources and the democratic and multinational institutions and culture necessary to undertake it. The West has a historic responsibility to take on this global leadership ... (Shaw, 1994, pp. 180-1)

Since 1989, the international institutions which have a relation to Eastern Europe, for example, the UN, the EU, the OSCE, the Council of Europe and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, have all developed policy proposals to encourage democracy, 'good governance' and the protection of international democratic rights in the region. The major landmarks in this process have been the 1989 Vienna Concluding Document of the Human Dimension of the Conference on

Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE, now the OSCE); the OSCE Copenhagen Conference Document in 1992, which outlined the most comprehensive list of government structures and processes ever adopted by an international organisation; the 1992 United Nations resolution *Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities*; the Declaration of the Helsinki Conference of the CSCE, the same year, which made rights protection and the domestic political framework of member states ‘matters of legitimate international concern [which] consequently do not constitute exclusively an internal affair of the respective state’ (OSCE ODIHR, 1995, p. 15); and, in 1995, the Council of Europe’s adoption of the *Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities*.

All these proposals have been undertaken within the framework of ‘mature’ Western democracies regulating the ‘new’ democracies of Eastern Europe. The division, central to this regulation, can be seen clearly in relation to policy development around ethnic minorities. The regulative powers of the international institutions, such as the OSCE, are interpreted so that ‘national minority’ specifically excludes American ‘indigenous peoples’ and the Turkish, Arab and Asian minorities in Germany, France and Britain. Even more controversial has been the exclusion of the Irish, Basque and Kurdish questions, affecting Britain, Spain and Turkey, from the remit of the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities (Heraclides, 1992, p. 16; 1993, pp. 102-4). This has meant that the new standard setting regulations not only operated in a selective manner, but also minimised problems in the West while exaggerating them in the East (Chandler, 1997; 1998a).

The standard-setting dynamic of the OSCE around minority rights often meant that new regulative powers bore little relationship to the problems and needs of the region. This mismatch meant that OSCE policy development ‘[ran] the risk of appearing trivial or far-fetched, and as if locked in an absurd exercise ... of trying to constantly raise the standards so as to proclaim more and more states as wrongdoers’ (Heraclides, 1993, p. 138).

Initially, policy moved forward fastest in relation to minority rights but, with the potential for European Union membership, broader requirements were flagged-up as democratisation became increasingly central to the discussion on the membership requirements and role of European institutions. The Council of Europe summit in Strasbourg, in October 1997, billed as ‘a summit to consolidate democracy’, demonstrated the new international dynamic as the institution set out to develop new social codes for member state policy; the President of the Assembly, Leni Fischer, stating: ‘The Council of Europe seems to me to be best placed to elaborate a European social model, in defence of social rights and social cohesion’ (M. Walker, 1997).

The OSCE as an organisation symbolises the belief that democracy and the regulative protection of rights are intimately linked to broader security issues, and has used this to push forward new mechanisms of rights regulation in the region. The OSCE made a rapid transition from the Cold War to the new rights-based era due to the flexibility of its informal framework before 1990 and to the fact that it had already begun to prioritise rights issues in the 1980s (Chandler, 1998a). The process of externally regulated democratisation can, with hindsight, be seen to have originated with minority rights and then to have expanded over only a few years to cover broader

concerns around the political process and the creation of civil society. This has been reflected in the rapid expansion and strengthening of the role of the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR). When it was originally established in 1990, as the Office for Free Elections, this arm of the OSCE was restricted to election issues, since then its remit has constantly been extended. In 1992 the institution was renamed ODIHR and its remit expanded to cover the structural conditions necessary for the implementation of rights and national and international programmes of institution-building and democratisation (Kritz, 1993, pp. 21-22). These powers were extended at the OSCE Rome Council Meeting, in December 1993, and at the 1994 Budapest Summit. This shift away from a focus on the elections themselves has necessitated much greater powers of intervention in the domestic political sphere of East European states. ODIHR's Director, Audrey Glover, explained this increasing role:

With the advent of second-generation democratic elections, newly emerging democracies have more sophisticated needs in elections assistance and observation ... election day observation alone has a limited impact. It was a feature of the first wave of fresh democratic elections, but now the international community's desire to assist newly-emerging democracies is best served in assuring fair and adequate conditions for political parties/candidates to compete in elections. This includes the important issues of access to media, free speech in an electoral context, and how parties/campaigns are financed. Finally the ODIHR will provide CSCE States with advisory services on how to improve election laws and practices. (Guerra, 1996, p. 14)

Democratisation has followed the pattern of expanded forms of international regulation seen with minority rights issues and so too has the amount of institutional resources devoted to it. Most Western states have democratisation aid programmes: the Canadian government sponsors the International Centre for Human Rights and Democratic Development; the United States funds the National Endowment for Democracy; Germany's political party foundations support *Stiftungen* for democratic development; the Dutch, Danish, Swedish, Norwegian and Finish official aid agencies all sponsor democracy programmes; Britain established the Westminster Foundation for Democracy in 1992; and the European Union funds the PHARE and TACIS democracy programmes for projects in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union (Carothers, 1997b, p. 110). The rise of non-governmental institutions in the field of international democracy assistance has been equally rapid over the last ten years, and in particular from the mid-1990s onwards.

#### ETHNIC DIVISION AND THE CONTINUUM OF RISK

Emphasis on the instability created by states lacking the 'democratic culture' of the West and thereby prone to the problems of nationalism and ethnic rivalry has thrown into sharp relief the new positive aspect of the international community, the fact that traditional inter-state rivalry is apparently no longer a threat to peace. The focus of concern seems to have shifted from the highly militarised major world powers to the dangers of fragmentation in the states that are more peripheral. The UN Commission on Global Governance sees that '[although] war between states is not extinct, in the years ahead the world is likely to be troubled primarily by eruptions of violence within countries' (Commission on Global Governance, 1995, p. 81). Martin Shaw

agrees that although there may be rivalry between Western powers no one seriously believes this could lead to war, whereas 'regional and, even more, civil conflicts now have greater potential for war' (1994, pp. 59-60). A central supposition of the post-Cold War era for Konrad Huber, an adviser to the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities, is that one of the greatest threats to security 'is posed not so much by disputes between countries as by conflicts involving - or appearing to involve - national minority issues within a country' (1993, p. 30). Fred Halliday's explanation is that today the major world powers are no longer 'in the grip of nationalism' and uninterested in military action against each other, whereas the 'torrent of nationalism' that does exist 'takes a communal, inter-ethnic, as distinct from strategic form' (1995, p. 211). Paul Hirst and Grahame Thompson argue that conflict between the major powers is impossible because of the nuclear threat, which has meant that 'lesser states' are the remaining threat to world peace, particularly as they are more likely to engage in 'the politics of losers', inward-looking nationalism and cultural fundamentalism (1996, pp. 178-80).

It seems that while, in the advanced states of the West, there is no danger of petty national interests leading to conflicts, in other parts of the world states are yet to reach this level of development. The internal political arrangements of states is now classed as a key concern for international stability. The Council of Europe, downplaying conflict caused by previous attempts of external powers to promote minority protection, particularly in the inter-war period, argues that 'upheavals of European history have shown that the protection of national minorities is essential to stability, democratic security and peace in this continent' (Council of Europe, 1995, p. 2). Similarly, Vernon Bogdanor writes that:

... the need to transcend nationalism is the fundamental challenge facing the emergent democracies of Central and Eastern Europe. Upon their success in achieving this, in overcoming the 20th century, the democratic stability of the region and perhaps also the peace of the Continent depend. (Bogdanor, 1995, p. 97)

In a remarkable, but fairly unquestioned, shift in approach to international security, it seems that the test of a state's commitment to a peaceful world is no longer how large its nuclear or conventional arsenal is, nor its record of military intervention or subvention, but its policy on minorities and whether its civil society satisfies the standards set by international bodies. Halliday, for example, asserts that 'the precondition for world peace is the consolidation of democracy on a world scale' (1995, p. 211).

In the international relations field, US and British policy advisers have been keen to talk up the new potential threats from democratic transition in the former Soviet bloc. Samuel Huntington and William Pfaff provide two differing approaches in the influential *Foreign Affairs* journal. Huntington reproduces the East/West divide as a cultural one, leading to inevitable conflict: 'The Velvet Curtain of culture has replaced the Iron Curtain of ideology as the most significant dividing line in Europe ... it is not only a line of difference; it is also at times a line of bloody conflict' (1993, p. 31). For Pfaff, the East European 'ethnic definition of citizenship' is the problem. NATO must be permanently on guard because 'the idea of the ethnic nation is a permanent provocation to war'. His assumptions lead him to conclude that, for example, 'Hungarians cannot be allowed to rest until they are reunited with the

Hungarians of Hungary proper'. NATO has to act because 'it is the true Great Power in Europe today', and he urges 'a more activist and interventionist Western policy in defence of national minority rights in Eastern Europe and the Balkans' (1993, pp. 97-109).

In Britain, James Mayall, a leading international relations academic and policy adviser, shares American concerns about the fragility of democracy in the region:

Wherever powerful and unassimilated national communities must coexist within a single polity, they are likely to use the institutions of democracy to gain preferential access to state power ... at the expense of their ethnic rivals. The competition to establish their respective national rights is likely to prove sufficiently ferocious to ensure that any commitment to uphold the merely human rights of all citizens will remain theoretical. (Mayall, 1991, pp. 423-24)

Since 1989 the future of Eastern Europe has often been posed in stark terms with the question of ethnicity as central. For example, the late Ernest Gellner, a leading authority on nationalism, saw the challenge facing Eastern Europe as that of two competing ideologies. Either 'civil society' would win out or the region would fall victim to 'the powerful ethnic passions' (1994, p. 126). His prognosis for the region was a negative one; while civil society could not easily be created, ethnic nationalism could be easily ignited: 'The sleeping beauty of ethnicity can, alas, often be awakened with the gentlest and most tender of kisses. She now sleeps ever so lightly' (1994, pp. 126-27).

The problematising of the nature of ethnic identity has been a key factor in facilitating a new international regime of regulation in the region. Highlighting the issue of identity has led to the questioning of the legitimacy of liberal democracy in the region. Rights theorists argue that in an ethnically divided regime, democracy must mean 'so much more than one man - one vote' (Mullerson, 1993, p. 811). Once division in society is seen to present special problems in Eastern Europe because of a lack of consensus, the focus of debate easily shifts to the broader theme of civil society itself and the alleged 'democratic deficit' of regimes which have recently escaped the grip of one-party rule.

The key factor legitimising the security fears is the idea that East European states can not be trusted because they are 'susceptible' to democracy being undermined by 'ethnic politics'. Tom Gallagher writes that Western civil society is necessary, otherwise Eastern states are merely 'adapting the outward forms of north Atlantic democracies' (1995, p. 340). The fears about Eastern Europe have far outweighed any rational analysis; for Keitha Fine, for example, overpopulation is the threat to democracy: 'East Central Europe as a whole, not just the Balkans, is a crowded region of the world overpopulated by people of many languages, religions, and cultures crammed into small, territorially artificial nation-states' (1996, p. 556).

The worst is always assumed. The level of risk is high, 'they' are susceptible to vote in madmen or to engage in genocide. It follows that conflict prevention and early warning are the solution. In today's risk-conscious world there is potentially no end to the possible problems. This means that even without obvious problems the risk is always there. For example, Mark Beissinger writes:

The belief that post-communist states should represent the aspirations of the ethnic groups which gave them their names - even if their elites claim that these states are seeking to incorporate other groups living on their territories, and even if elites openly define these states as 'civic' rather than 'ethnic' polities - is fundamental to ethnic majorities throughout the region. (Beissinger, 1996, p. 134)

The OSCE Commissioner on National Minorities, Max van der Stoel, illustrates the way concerns about the region are generalised and therefore more threatening, despite the lack of proven relationship between perceived risk and reality. Asked in 1994, what, for him, the hottest issues were, he replied: 'it's hard to say what the real powder-keg issues are. I also think that their gravity can change from month to month' (Stoel, 1994, p. 36). This consensus that there can be a crisis anywhere is demonstrated in many treatments of the region, Laurence Rees, producer of the influential *BBC* series *The Nazis a Warning from History*, writes that:

... the underlying philosophy of Nazism - one of hate-filled nationalism - is not dead. It could arise again anywhere in Eastern Europe in an instant ... One cannot be sanguine about the countries of the former communist bloc. For if democracy does not bring the economic benefits that they expect, then it is possible that one day they will decide to vote democracy away and put their faith in violent nationalism. (Rees, 1997)

J. F. Brown's *Hopes And Shadows: Eastern Europe After Communism* provides another typical example, after listing potential minority problems in every country, he justifies such an extensive catalogue, on the following grounds:

The list is not intended to be a Doomsday roster or a jeremiad, but rather a guide to conflict situations and tension spots, a list of bills that history is now presenting for settlement, if not full payment. No attempt is made to calibrate the seriousness of the different issues or their potential for conflict because, as events since 1991 have shown, conflict can flare up in the less likely of cases and places, while the apparently more likely ones remain smouldering. Better, therefore, to be on the *qui vive* for all of them and ready for the distinct possibility of new ones appearing. (Brown, 1994, p. 178)

This assumption, that no apparent problems can equally mean a smouldering conflict, puts inter-ethnic co-operation and conflict on the same continuum. Through this extension of the potential for conflict, and thereby the necessity of international regulation, nearly every domestic political relationship is opened up to international institutions. A typical example is Jan Kroc's work on ethnic conflict in Macedonia. He notes that Macedonians and Albanians have coexisted in separate communities without violent conflict, in fact, that relations are shaped by 'deeply steeped social patterns of conflict avoidance'; however: 'The behavioural pattern is to suppress, rather than openly confront conflict, which also presents its own risks ... The danger of conflict avoidance behaviour arises when the parties fail to use the opportunities that stalemates provide to engage third parties' (1996, p. 286).

For democratisers such as Kroc, the fact that Macedonians and Albanians have developed societal mechanisms to minimise conflict and avoid the escalation of tensions is not good enough. The belief in the inability of East European, and

particularly Balkan, actors to autonomously manage their own 'conflict resolution' does not depend on the current situation on the ground, but the assumption that cultural incapacity means that there is always 'the risk that social tensions will end up at a higher level of conflict intensity' (1996, p. 286).

These assumptions legitimate a policing role for the international community in East Europe and reinforce the 'democratic divide' between the East and the West. Mayall, writing for the Royal Institute of International Affairs, argues for a 'new transnational regime in which national minorities would have some measure of confidence that their interests and rights would be protected' (1994, p. 12). The proposed transnational regime he suggests would be led by the OSCE and the Council of Europe, through which, he urges a 'strengthened international capacity for rapid and politically robust intervention to prevent the massive abuse of human rights' (Mayall, 1994, pp. 12-13). Bogdan Denitch similarly argues:

... new and greatly strengthened international institutions, including a much stronger UN, are now desperately needed. The institutions have to be international because it is entirely possible, as free elections in many post-Communist states ... have shown, for a majority to democratically elect a xenophobic nationalist or fundamentalist majority. The result of such elections can be ... a massive attack on the rights of women ... internal and external conflicts and wars. This is not only an obscure regional problem; it can easily overflow its regional boundaries with terrorism, kidnapping, international arms trade, and other allied phenomena. (Denitch, 1996, p. 129)

## **CONCLUSION: DEMOCRATISATION AND THE BOSNIAN WAR**

The new linkage between international security and democratisation has helped make the domestic political framework of East European regimes a central preoccupation for Western institutions. Once the global values of civil society, democracy and rights have been established as not just the best way of organising society but also an essential prerequisite for peace and stability it has then fallen to Western institutions to ensure other states comply. The major international bodies set up in the aftermath of the Second World War pride themselves on having learnt the lessons of the past when nationalism and state rivalries brought the world to the brink of destruction. The underlying assumption is that, while states in the West have spent the last fifty years distancing themselves from the experience of fascism, communism and war, states in the East have yet to come to terms with the past and reject extremist and 'fundamentalist' ideologies. In which case, the task of ensuring democratisation can only be entrusted to external bodies:

The establishment of a cosmopolitan model of democracy is a way of seeking to strengthen democracy 'within' communities and civil associations by elaborating and reinforcing democracy from 'outside' through a network of regional and international agencies and assemblies that cut across spatially delimited locales. (Held, 1995, p. 237)

Democratisation has become a central theme of international relations today, with President Clinton proclaiming the promotion of democracy as 'the successor to a doctrine of containment' (Carothers, 1997a, p. 86). As US Deputy Secretary of State

Strobe Talbott has stated: 'In an increasingly interdependent world, Americans have a growing interest in how other countries govern, or misgovern, themselves' (1996, p. 48). American leadership in the international promotion of democracy is, for Talbott, 'rooted in idealpolitik as well as realpolitik' as democracy promotion abroad is vital for US national interests of security as well as upholding the values 'the United States is uniquely and self-consciously founded on' (1996, p. 49).

The paradox of the prioritisation of universal democratic values but also the increased importance of cultural and regional differences, raised at the end of the first section of this Chapter, can now be seen to be at the heart of the democratisation approach itself. The universal values of democracy and rights have today been asserted as the new priorities of international relations, important to defend both for self-interested reasons of global security and as good and noble causes in themselves. The approach of 'new ethical foreign policy', espoused in London, Washington and Bonn, is, according to Rein Mullerson, 'politics which is cross-fertilised with morality' (1997, p. 180).

However, the precondition of this projection of power on the international stage is the acceptance of the democratic divide between those states with the culture and social development necessary to make the 'morally right' choices and those, still caught up in the problems of economic and social development or lacking the culture of civil society, who can not be trusted to manage their own political framework in the correct manner. As traditional democratic freedoms are supplanted by ethical and moral codes of behaviour, the universal content of liberal democracy, the presumption of individual and collective autonomy, has been replaced by regulation taking a

universal form of judgements by international authorities which claim the mantle of mature democracy and civil society. Democracy has become a moral as opposed to a political category and democratisation now concerns societal values and attitudes rather than political processes.

The democratisation approach held up a vision of the conflict in Bosnia as above all a conflict of two value systems, the values of civil society and the values of ethnic division. Bosnia was the warning that civil war and social collapse were the inevitable result of unfettered liberal democratic freedoms in Eastern Europe without either Western cultural values or constraining international regulation. Nearly all analysts stressed the problem of democracy and lack of limits to autonomy as the crucial factor and the need for international action of one kind or another (see for example: Thompson, 1992; Malcolm, 1994; Cohen, 1995; Rieff, 1995; Sammary, 1995; Woodward, 1995; Barratt Brown, 1996; Denitch, 1996; Glenny, 1996; ICoB, 1996; Silber and Little, 1996).

The political fragmentation of Bosnia and the slide into war was often seen by commentators as the result of the failure of regulative and cultural frameworks that could have kept the democratic process on track. Susan Woodward titles a central chapter, in her authoritative *Balkan Tragedy*, 'Interrupted Democratization: The Path To War' (1995). The four volume Cambridge University series *Authoritarianism and Democratization in Postcommunist Societies*, similarly titles its chapter on Bosnia 'Bosnia Herzegovina: a case of failed democratization' (Burg, 1997). David Potter *et al's* *Democratization* sees the lack of civic nationalism as the key to the failed transition to democracy in Yugoslavia (Ferdinand, 1997).

The republic elections held in Bosnia, in November 1990, the only free elections in Bosnia before the imposition of the Dayton Peace Agreement, have been seen, nearly universally, as demonstrating the failure of democracy. The reason for this was the success of the nationalist parties at the expense of the cross-Yugoslav liberal-reform and reform-communist parties. 202 out of 240 seats in the republic's two chamber legislature, or 84 per cent, were won by the three leading ethnic party organisations. 87 seats (33.8 per cent) went to the (Muslim) Party of Democratic Action (SDA), 71 seats (29.6 per cent) to the Serbian Democratic Party (SDS), and 44 seats (18.3 per cent) to the Croatian Democratic Alliance (HDZ). The liberal reform alliance, led by Federation Prime Minister Markovic, won 13 seats (5.4 per cent) and the reformed communists 18 seats (less than 8 per cent) (Cohen, 1995, p. 146).

Prior to the elections, Bosnia had been recognised internationally as a model of multi-cultural co-existence and symbolic of federal Yugoslavia's progressive minority policies. Public opinion polls in May and June 1990 and in November 1991 had shown overwhelming majorities (in the range of 70-90 per cent) against separation from Yugoslavia and an ethnically divided republic (Woodward, 1995, p. 228), and only six months before the elections 74 per cent of the population had been in favour of a ban on nationally- or confessionally-based parties, later overturned by the Bosnian constitutional court (Bougarel, 1996, p. 99).

The democratisation approach holds that the Bosnian people were manipulated by the nationalist elites into voting for them, through the use of nationalist demagoguery. Mark Thompson illustrates the view that rational, modern values were alien to the

voters of Bosnia: 'Bosnia [is] full of uneducated people who don't know what politics is, what they can do, what's right and what's wrong. Only the nationalist parties and the communists exist for these people' (Thompson, 1992, p. 102). The power of nationalism as an irrational force is central to this argument as the politicisation of ethnicity in Bosnia could not be purely a matter of elite manipulation; if this was the case, the question would have to be posed as to why the other elites with considerable social influence, such as the reform-communist and liberal politicians, failed to achieve the success they expected at the elections (Cohen, 1995, p. 146; Woodward, 1995, p. 125).

The 1990 elections took place as the Yugoslav state was fragmenting and the key political question was that of constitutional reform and a looser confederal arrangement. Without the security provided by the counterbalancing mechanisms of the federal state, questions of security became closely tied up with those of ethnic or nationalist orientation. In Bosnia, the reform of the constitutional framework put to question the guarantees of security and equal treatment for the three ethnic groups. Bosnian Croats were most in favour of a looser confederation, being the smallest of the three ethnic groups they felt their interests would be more secure through closer links with Croatia and Slovenia, the Bosnian Muslims were more divided over the question of constitutional change, while the Bosnian Serbs feared any separation of Bosnia from the federal system would place them in a worse position (Cohen, 1995, p. 143). Bougarel's analysis captures the 'prisoner's dilemma' facing the Bosnian people and the ease with which ethnicity became a central political issue (1996, p. 99).

From the perspective of the democratisation approach, the vote for nationalist parties counted merely as evidence of the inability of the Bosnian electorate to accept democracy and the necessary values of civil society. Bougarel stands out, as an exception, in explaining the vote for nationalist parties as a rational response to the uncertainties of Bosnia's constitutional situation (see also Offe, 1996, Chapter 4). However, once the democratisation dichotomy, between the values of modern, rational, civil society and those of backward, irrational, ethnic division, had been established in relation to Bosnia the democratisation approach followed an inevitable logic.

If the population were not capable of voting rationally then the elected representatives lacked a legitimate mandate. Because the nationalist elites had exploited the cultural incapacities of the electorate they were seen to be unrepresentative of the electorate's real interests. Once convinced of the unrepresentative nature of the elected political leaders, the popular support they were able to wield during the protracted period of the dissolution of the Yugoslav state and the war and negotiations over Bosnia could only be put down to manipulation. For Woodward, fragmentation and war were essentially a continuation of electoral competition, as political leaders used their access to state resources to secure their hold on power and marginalise the opposition:

In Bosnia-Herzegovina ... These leaders, to retain their position as representatives of their nation, not just in electoral terms but in terms of territorial rights to self-determination, had to go beyond holding a monopoly over an ethnic constituency within Bosnia-Herzegovina to destroying the constitutional alternative for an independent Bosnia - the idea of a civic state where ethnic difference was not

politically defining and citizens were loyal to ethnic tolerance and multi-cultural civilisation. (Woodward, 1995, p. 233)

The Bosnian war was therefore seen as the direct result of the mismatch between Bosnian ethnic culture and liberal democracy, the electorate electing the wrong leaders who then used their control of the state institutions to create ‘collective paranoia’ (Woodward, 1995, p. 228). These elites, unrepresentative of Bosnian opinion, are then held to have fought amongst themselves for narrow political and self-interested reasons.

It was because the Bosnian war was portrayed as a struggle between civil society and ethnic division that it acquired an international importance well beyond the consequences on the ground. This was the test of the newly proclaimed international order based upon moral and ethical foreign policy. As David Rieff explains, he and other journalists were not driven by suffering alone, there were other wars being fought in different corners of the globe, but none had the urgency of Bosnia:

... I and many other foreign writers, photographers, and television journalists kept choosing ... to spend time on the Bosnian side. We did not just think that what was going on was a tragedy - all wars are tragic - but that the values that the Republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina exemplified were worth preserving. Those ideals, of a society committed to multiculturalism (in the real and earned rather than the American and prescriptive sense of that much overused term) and tolerance, and of an understanding of national identity as deriving from shared citizenship rather than ethnic identity, were the ones which we in the West so assiduously proclaim ... we in the rich world

had not only a moral obligation to defend Bosnian independence but a compelling interest in doing so as well. (Rieff, 1995, p. 11)

Portrayed as an irrational ethnic struggle, the political motivation of actors in Bosnia and the inter-relationship between external factors, such as the fragmentation of the Yugoslav state and international intervention, and the Bosnian factions was often ignored. Moral condemnation replaced rational explanation as leading experts wrote that all sides, although mainly the Serbs, committed 'unspeakable cruelty' and that 'ethnic cleansing' was the 'organising principle of state and society' in a direct challenge to 'the fundamental values of the pluralist democracies on both sides of the Atlantic' (ICoB, 1996, p. 2). The war was seen to have its roots purely in Bosnian society, in which 'claims and counter-claims are transmitted down the generations like a congenital deformity' (Thompson, 1992, p. 11).

Not only were the causes of the conflict located at the level of Bosnian culture, this culture was also held to prevent the parties from being able to resolve the conflict through rational negotiation and compromise. The elected leaders, described as products of the ethnic Balkan culture, were held to be incapable of bringing about a peaceful solution, as David Owen notes:

... leaders who had had no experience of democracy also displayed a callousness of mind in which the people's view never seemed to come anywhere near the conference table ... History points to a tradition in the Balkans of a readiness to solve disputes by the taking up of arms ... It points to a culture of violence ... [and] dark and virulent nationalism. (Owen, 1996, p. 3)

The irrational nature of Bosnian elected representatives and their incapacity to resolve political differences was highlighted by many authors as necessitating international intervention. Paul Szasz, for example, stated: ‘the warring parties are unable to construct ... agreements amongst themselves’ (1995a, p. 258). In similar language, Ivan Vejvoda writes:

The warring parties were unable to sort it out themselves. In the end, they had to seek intermediaries to lead them out of the chaos they had, with varying degrees of responsibility, plunged themselves into. This plea for intervention was, in fact, very much in line with the nineteenth and twentieth century history of these territories. (Vejvoda, 1996, p. 258)

The war was held to have demonstrated the problems of unrestrained democratic autonomy in a society where often both the electorate and its leaders were alleged to be without civilised values or morality. Nearly all commentators agreed that the people of Bosnia would be unable to make democracy work without the international community regulating society. Denitch argued: ‘The sad but important point is this: the meddling Western ‘outsiders’ ... are *far better* representatives of the genuine interests of the Croatian, Serbian, and Bosnian peoples and states than their patriotic leaders’ (1996, p. 210). Elsewhere he stressed:

Out of that stalemate a new approach to international peacekeeping will have to be developed ... less rigidly restricted by respect for local sovereignty, especially when it comes to local political leaders, elected or not, who subject their peoples to endless

war and misery. That may be a significant step forward for a world organisation previously paralysed by great power rivalries and an excessive respect for formal sovereignty. The peoples of the new post-Yugoslav states now have the dubious privilege of being pioneers of one more noble experiment. (Denitch, 1996, p. 60)

This is the 'noble experiment' that forms the subject of the following Chapters.