Alice in Wonderland Meets Frankenstein: Constructivism, Realism and Peacebuilding in Bosnia

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Studies in peacebuilding generally adopt either a conceptual or an empirical approach, but rarely both at the same time. However, there is much to be gained from combining theory with case studies. In presenting an overview and an assessment of peacebuilding in Bosnia, this article seeks to bring theoretical understanding to bear on empirical analysis. We believe that to gain a better understanding of this peacebuilding mission, which has been under way for more than four years, we should examine the different visions underpinning the efforts to bring the conflict to a definite end and assist in rebuilding the country. Those visions and the way they shape peacebuilding missions have a significant impact on the prospects for success and on the decisions of a variety of actors who have committed considerable human and financial resources to building peace in Bosnia. They provide a useful guide for gauging the ability to bring about lasting peace in a region devastated, as Bosnia is, by an armed conflict with grave implications.

This article seeks to come to grips with the following questions: is it possible to rebuild Bosnia and create conditions conducive to lasting peace? Can Bosnia ever return to a state of stability, interethnic harmony and economic progress? And if so, by what means: the integration or separation of ethnic groups? Can Bosnia survive without ongoing foreign intervention (military and civil)? Are the international community’s laudable efforts likely to succeed in building peace or are they doomed to failure and a resumption of hostilities? To these difficult questions there are no simple answers. However, two analytical frameworks, constructivist and realist, are useful for examining the appropriateness of the peacebuilding mission in Bosnia and its likelihood of success. Depending on the set of lenses through which we examine the peacebuilding efforts on the ground, Bosnia after Dayton may appear to be on the right track (this is the ‘Alice in Wonderland’

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PUBLISHED BY FRANK CASS, LONDON
view) or the wrong one (what can be called ‘Frankenstein’s monster’). Our assessment of the results of the peacebuilding efforts will seek to determine which approach, constructivist or realist, is more applicable to Bosnia, and which outcome, promising or disappointing, is more probable.

To begin, the article draws on a number of basic constructivist and realist concepts to clarify the nature of conflicts and the appropriateness of peacebuilding missions. These two theoretical approaches are then applied to the analysis and interpretation of the conflict in Bosnia. The article also looks briefly at some of the critical commentary on the Dayton Accords. Lastly, it examines the process of peacebuilding in Bosnia in terms of security outcomes, political implications and social and economic impact by applying and comparing constructivist and realist theses. It concludes with remarks about Bosnia’s future and the explanatory value of our conceptual framework.

**Constructivist and Realist Views of Conflict and Peacebuilding**

The constructivist thesis is very popular among scholars as an explanatory scheme for the origins of conflict, as well as the norms that influence states and the international system. Roland Paris sums it up well.¹ Constructivists maintain that norms largely define the conduct, interests and basic character (identity) of states. Norms shape the nature of states by transforming their identities; conversely, states can contribute to redefining norms through changes in their conduct, in other words, through identity changes. Norms and identity thus assume a co-determining role in the explanation of conflicts as well as peace missions.²

a) Conflicts result from identity crises. When they occur, norms of conduct are cast into question and are subject to attacks that can drastically alter them. The construction of threats serves, in particular, to redefine identities and ultimately modify norms by force in order to satisfy individuals, leaders or groups who seek to use shifts in identity for the purposes of group legitimation, asserting authority or national chauvinism.

b) Peace missions entail the dissemination (read construction) of new norms. Peacebuilding is exemplary of constructivist logic to the extent that its goal is to rebuild shattered states in accordance with the norms embraced by the actors. Since norms are constitutive of states, it is theoretically possible to change a state’s identity to bring it into line with the peace mission’s goals. This ‘artificial’ intervention thus renders the new identity more compatible with prevailing norms and makes it possible to construct peace on the basis of liberal norms such as negotiated agreements, the peaceful arbitration of differences, the institutionalization of democratic...
processes, the institution of a free-market economy and security for individuals (in other words, ‘human security’).

The constructivist approach is eloquently articulated by partisans of the democratic model (the democratizers), who stress the following norms: justice, respect for human rights, democratization and international involvement in rebuilding states and reshaping their identities. The reform is undertaken at all levels by an army of peacebuilders from a wide variety of organizations (especially IGOs) which claim those norms, regardless of the motivations and interests expressed by the states themselves. Peacebuilding is thus a concrete example of constructivism in action, a strategy designed to establish (impose?) norms of conduct in the countries that are being rebuilt in order to minimize if not eliminate the risk of a resumption of hostilities. Extending this vision to all peacebuilding missions sustains a hope that Alice may one day enter the land of perpetual peace. We shall see whether there are grounds for such optimism in the case of Bosnia and whether it may also be justified elsewhere.

Contrary to the constructivist perspective, the realist thesis asserts that conflicts are intrinsic rather than ‘constructed’. Objective and historical factors contribute to polarizing societies and pitting states against each other, leading inexorably to militarization and confrontation. In addition, one recent ‘ethno-realist’ interpretation marshals the traditional explanation of interstate conflict to explain intrastate conflict. In particular, the concept of the ‘security dilemma’ is used to illuminate the dynamic of ethnic rivalries; this concept refers to the lack of trust between states, which must arm themselves to maximize security (resulting in generalized insecurity for all states). This thesis is highly relevant to analysis of peacebuilding in Bosnia.

a) The realist begins with a rational and non-subjective interpretation of the causes and factors underlying conflicts, such as the existence of an expansionist state, processes of fragmentation and polarization, the pursuit of contradictory interests by societies or states, the desire to protect or gain territory, and assistance to allies. Just as naturally as a forest fire results in destruction and regrowth, conflict is an age-old natural phenomenon. Ethnic confrontation is a form of conflict that is nevertheless governed by the same logic as conflict between states. Fearful of being weakened, marginalized or destroyed, an ethnic group, spurred by leaders seeking to conserve or enhance their power, attacks one or more other groups. The lack of a central authority (national or international) capable of maintaining order or internal political equilibrium tends to produce a state of anarchy among ethnic groups, which ultimately can only be remedied by force. In this respect, the anarchic intra-state and inter-ethnic situation is similar to that which prevails among nation-states. This is the origin of the security dilemma, which also
arises in internal conflicts. The cycle of conflict between ethnic groups seems to exhibit the same pattern as that between states: fragmentation of interests and polarization of power lead to non-violent confrontation and then to armed conflict, which is resolved and followed by a transition period (marked by victories and defeats), which itself gives rise to subsequent conflicts. As Penelope Safioleas remarks, ‘it is quite easy for these societies to be led down the same paths over and over again. In this way, the cycle of ethnic conflict seemingly dominates history’. Which is to say that the spectre of Frankenstein will be haunting us for a long time to come.

b) Peace missions are seen by most realists as temporary band-aid solutions that stifle conflict temporarily without ever succeeding in resolving it. By itself, the mere presence of Blue Helmets or a civilian intervention force is never enough. Conflicts are settled through the exhaustion of the combatants, through the victory of one of the parties, or through the intervention of a great power. In the view of Edward Luttwak, a member of the realist camp, ‘armistices remove the greatest incentive to negotiate peace settlements. In fact they intensify and prolong warfare’. According to Luttwak, humanitarian intervention and initiatives such as peacebuilding missions are counterproductive insofar as they prevent wars from running their course, the only way in which the means for continuing the hostilities can be eliminated. The efforts of NGOs and the UN fuel the will to wage war and ultimately work against the interests of peace. In this macabre logic, ‘war is the origin of peace’. A virtual peace or one imposed from outside prolongs the state of war and actually prevents a genuine peace from being achieved. With Luttwak’s cynical argument, the realists certainly earn their name.

Realists see the goal of conflict management (and, if possible, resolution) as valid and useful, but view peacebuilding operations as superfluous. Conflict management does not mean reconstruction; it means negotiation with a view to suspending or putting an end to hostilities rather than resolving conflicts. Peace is achieved not by bringing the parties responsible for the war to justice, but rather by negotiating security compromises with them that let them keep their grip on power. Territorial and political concessions take precedence over reconstituting a unitary and democratic state. In short, peace is not won through democratization and peacebuilding, but through the only approach the realists consider viable: conflict management, which allows for the (temporary) containment of the security threats attendant upon ethnic confrontation.

Which of these two approaches, constructivist or realist, is most useful for looking at the peacebuilding process in Bosnia? How can we use the basic concepts associated with these two contrasting visions to assess and
analyze the efforts made in that country? To answer these questions, we must first examine their respective interpretations of the conflict.

**Realist and Constructivist Approaches to the Conflict in Bosnia**

Without rehearsing the entire history of the Bosnian conflict, we can distinguish two principal interpretations of its disintegration and subsequent developments. These interpretations derive from the realist and constructivist theories and are useful for understanding the subsequent peacebuilding mission. Let us turn, first, to the realist analysis.

1) The realist approach is clearly the dominant paradigm for explaining the Bosnian conflict. We shall present a brief survey of this analytical framework, drawing on the work of scholars who have studied the causes and consequences of the conflict and noting the various types of explanation it offers – rational, objective and historic – as well as the impact of traditional factors.

a) Dusko Doder maintains that the crisis resulted from internal causes specific to the former Yugoslavia: ‘until its collapse in 1991, Yugoslavia was in essence the unhappy union of its two largest nationalities’. Tito was able to impose peace, but after his death ancestral antagonisms resurfaced and nationalist crises proliferated. This analysis of the conflict is characterized by a degree of fatalism: international influence could not have altered the course of events in any significant way. Once Serb nationalist expansion manifested itself, the process of disintegration was inevitable.

b) According to Adam Roberts, ideas about ancient communal hatred and aggression must be balanced by an understanding of the quest for power by ‘machinations of corrupt politicians who have exploited ethnic rivalries to further their own political ambitions’. Albrecht Schnabel and Nika Strazisar add, ‘a great deal of responsibility for the break-up can be attributed to nationalist leaders that seized the opportunity of the weakness of the country in order to come to power, maintain and/or expand it. In the service of their goals, they appealed to ethnonationalist sentiments and emphasized historical inter-ethnic antagonisms’. During the 1980s, moreover, these leaders took advantage of a disastrous economic situation marked by growing inequality, a decline in the standard of living, an unemployment rate fluctuating between 25 and 30 per cent, a large public debt, and galloping hyperinflation. In Susan Woodward’s view, these conditions contributed to the rejection of the Tito regime’s erstwhile institutions and policies by anxious populations.
c) US General Charles Boyd, Deputy SACEUR in charge of Bosnia from 1992 to 1995, rejects the thesis of an inevitable war caused by centuries of ethnic rivalry. However, he fully embraces the realist perspective and the security dilemma thesis when he maintains that the conflict was the result of ‘ambition, fear, and incompetence – local and international’. He believes that American (and we might add European) policy up until the Dayton Accords needlessly prolonged the conflict. Contradictory policies of military restraint towards the Serbs and humanitarian support for the Muslims ultimately hindered resolution of the conflict (a number of scholars have drawn attention to this counterproductive alternation between active and passive conduct). Only Bosnia itself, Boyd concludes, could and still can heal its own wounds.

d) The major powers’ attempts to avert the conflict were hamstrung by traditional conflicts of interest. Realpolitik was employed without consistency or credibility, save the desire to keep the conflict from spreading beyond Bosnia’s borders. Yet information on the preparations for the conflict and the terrible consequences which were likely to ensue was readily available. It was foreseeable that armed confrontation would follow upon the eruption of interethnic rivalries. Schnabel and Strazisar (cited earlier) and Saadia Touval concur in this view. Touval claims that the West’s desire to preserve Yugoslavian unity at any cost and to propel the country along the path toward democracy was a tremendous error, a view shared by Warren Zimmermann (the former American ambassador to Belgrade): ‘western policies promoting economic reforms, democratization, and respect for human rights did not bring about the expected results. Ironically, they may have even contributed to the aggravation of the country’s problems’. Like Adam Roberts, Touval believes that it is extremely difficult for a third party to mediate or manage a conflict in a context of interethnic hostilities. This has been borne out by, among other things, the United Nations’ disastrous experience in Bosnia between 1992 and 1995.

e) Troy McGrath, Director of European Studies at the University of Central Europe, agrees with the ethno-realist approach outlined above; in his view, the liberal-institutional and democratic model could not apply to a disintegrating Yugoslavia under conditions in which a small elite was seeking to entrench its domination by preying on ethnic fears and prejudice. The norms of justice, democracy and the free market can have no meaning in circumstances of scapegoating and demagoguery by dictators who take advantage of crises to further their own ends. ‘The paradox is that “democratizing” regimes can, with western support (either tacit or explicit), enact harsh or even repressive economic and social policies with as much impunity as authoritarian regimes, under the guise of “democratization”.’
The new leaders in the former Yugoslavia fed this paradox, using the pretext of sovereignty and democracy to fan the flames of belligerent territorial nationalism. Their conduct weakened the hold of genuine democratic norms and forces. Finally, in McGrath’s view, we must ask whether the western democratic model is applicable to States emerging from the communist era. Most realists believe that, in the final analysis, there can be no permanent resolution to conflicts in the former Yugoslavia, and particularly in Bosnia. In Penelope Safioleas’ terms, an ‘objective’ cycle of ethnic conflict will continue indefinitely. A number of constructivist analyses of the conflict take issue with this deterministic and empirical argument.

2) The constructivist approach looks to subjective, normative and identity-based explanations. On the issue of Bosnia, the contributions of Beverly Crawford, Ronnie Lipschutz, Kenneth Bush and Fuat Keyman are particularly instructive.

According to Crawford and Lipschutz\(^1\) (two writers who have made extensive contributions to the critical study of security issues), the decisions made by elites during the conflict were ‘constructed’ on the basis of a particular and highly subjective understanding of identity differences. Those decisions resulted in bellicose rhetoric aimed at stirring up the populace and prodding it towards a new identity. In contrast to the dominant realist thesis, the constructivist view holds that this strategy made use of history rather than being dictated by history. In other words, the leaders were not moved by their sense of identity, as the realists would have it; on the contrary, they exploited it. Identity does not drive individuals; individuals drive identity. This is not a static view, like the conception of the state in the realist approach, but a dynamic and contingent one. ‘Identities are politically constructed during periods of upheaval by certain members of political and economic elites, who we can call “political entrepreneurs”.’\(^2\) Leaders manipulate the language of identity to win popular support, particularly in circumstances where identity is the last rampart of identity left standing by the instability or breakdown of institutions. ‘The construction of threat may also consolidate identity.’\(^3\) In this respect, identity contributes to the very definition of the group and, in extreme cases such as Bosnia, encourages the development of a chauvinist, xenophobic and exclusivist identity pitted against others. (The journalist Michael Ignatieff arrived at a similar conclusion following his trip to Bosnia.\(^4\))

Thus, constructivist scholars completely reject ‘biological’ theses that find age-old enmities at the root of a variety of phenomena such as civil war among ethnic groups, the collapse of Yugoslavia, Serb aggression (the conquering state), and the interethnic security dilemma. In their view, none
of these arguments really explains the conflict. They view it rather as a social war waged over local, familial, national and civic claims to identity based on ethnic belonging. For Crawford and Lipschutz, ‘The referent object of war in the former Yugoslavia thus has been not the state, not competitors for state power, not even the tribe, but society and the individuals who make it up’. History occupies a relatively minor place in their cultural and sociological approach, which casts the conflict as a recent rather than an ancient phenomenon. ‘Reading Yugoslavia “out of history” is, so to speak, a strategy of denial’, for it denies that it is possible to do anything, in Bosnia or elsewhere, to affect, contain or prevent identity-based conflicts. The implications of their analysis lead Crawford and Lipschutz to recommend more not less international intervention in order to ‘restructure state institutions in areas threatened with similar conflicts in ways that might lead to peace and more security for individuals’. In other words, they support peacebuilding efforts.

The constructivist perspective is clearly at odds with the realist approach insofar as it considers peacebuilding missions such as the one in Bosnia to be very important. But what has been the real impact of the Dayton Accords on the ground? Is a new identity conducive to lasting peace being forged or will the historical realities always make peace uncertain? Is it possible to reconcile conflict management (the separation of ethnic groups) and democratization (the integration of ethnic groups)? Can Alice and Frankenstein be wed?

Assessing the Dayton Accords: Success or Failure?

Signed in Paris in December 1995, the Dayton Accords are certainly among the most impressive examples of conflict resolution. To reach the agreement, force had to be brought to bear against the Bosnian Serbs and sustained negotiations had to be conducted by American and European diplomats. The Dayton Peace Accords comprise four main dimensions:

1. The cessation of hostilities between the Bosnian and Serb forces and the de facto (not de jure) division of Bosnian territory into two autonomous but federated entities separated by an inter-entity boundary line. Sarajevo remains a unified city, while the status of the city of Brcko remains to be determined. A NATO international implementation force (first IFOR, then SFOR) enforces the military provisions, namely, maintaining the cease-fire, the redeployment and demilitarization of the armed forces, ongoing measures to create a safe environment and, lastly, arms control under the aegis of the OSCE. NATO has the authority to use force, if necessary, to implement all the measures set out in the Dayton Accords.
2. The constitutional structure of the Federal State of Bosnia remains intact. In other words, Bosnia remains, in principle, a unitary state, with its 1992 borders, its democratic and interethnic institutions, as well as a federal regime embracing the two entities. It is based on a tripartite presidency (Serb, Croat and Muslim) with a rotating leadership; a constitutional court; a bicameral pan-national legislature consisting of a lower house (28 Muslim and Croat representatives, 14 Serb representatives) and an upper chamber (five delegates for each ethnic group). The federal government is responsible for foreign affairs, international trade, citizenship, immigration and monetary policy (a central bank was established). In addition, the two entities each have their own independent institutions, including a president and a legislative assembly.

3. Civil reconstruction, under the direction of a High Representative (currently Wolfgang Petritsch from Austria), entails regular elections at both the national and municipal levels, under the auspices of the OSCE, to promote interethnic reconciliation; a UN International Police Task Force; a vast programme of technical and economic assistance provided by donor states, the European Union and international institutions such as the IMF and the World Bank.

4. Lastly, guarantees of personal security including the free return of refugees to their place of origin or requested relocation under the supervision of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees; a ban on participation of war criminals in political life and the prosecution of war crimes by the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY); full respect for human rights and a functioning judicial system.

Four years later, what had the Dayton Accords accomplished on the ground? The general view is fairly negative and sceptical. We shall examine the security dimension, as well as the political and socio-economic aspects of peacebuilding in Bosnia in greater detail. The summary that follows provides an overview based on the assessments of specialists in the field. The Clinton administration saw ‘progress’ after Dayton: greater military stability, better public security, democracy and the rule of law, the existence of an independent media, the right of refugees to circulate freely, the arrest and prosecution of war criminals, economic reconstruction. All of these benchmarks point to the success of the Dayton Accords.26 Most observers agree that Dayton brought the war to an end and that the cease-fire is gradually evolving into a sustainable peace. ‘No one in Bosnia-Herzegovina believes that hostilities will break out again’, writes Thomas Hofnung.27 ‘By anyone’s measure, Bosnia is much better off now than it was in 1995’, concludes Ruth Wedgwood and her colleagues.28 James Schear also offers a
positive assessment: ‘thanks to the Dayton accord...struggles are now largely non-violent’, despite persistent differences among the protagonists ‘certainly Bosnia would have been in far worse shape without Dayton’. With regard to other civilian goals, however, Dayton has proved disappointing in many respects.

According to the 1999 report of the International Crisis Group, ethnic cleansers are winning the battle to shape Bosnia after the war, and major parts of the Dayton accord remain unimplemented. The ICG recommends the establishment of a full international protectorate in Bosnia. David Chandler estimates that ‘after more than four years of democratisation, Bosnia is further away from democracy than at any point since the war’. William Hyland also concludes that ‘the Dayton agreement is not working politically’. Ivo Daalder refers to Dayton as an ‘incomplete peace’. Svebor Dizdarevic believes that ‘the dream of a multiethnic, multicultural and democratic Bosnia in the short or medium term seems to be evaporating in the face of the alliance between the political realism of the world powers and the communal hysteria of the actors in the Balkans’. Xavier Bougarel believes the institutional edifice of Dayton is tottering; in his view the military provisions have been executed quite well, but the civilian provisions have been ‘very imperfectly’ implemented. He points to significant delays and dysfunctions (particularly flawed elections and difficulties setting up institutions). In his view, the Dayton Accords sanction Bosnia’s ‘de facto partition’ – an observation that, for Hofnung, conjures up a ‘Cyprus-like scenario’. In this respect, the real Bosnia is fragmented and bears little resemblance to the virtual Bosnia, conceived as a unitary state within which the various ethnic groups are gradually reintegrated. Ironically, the partition is being reinforced by the electoral processes and the economic aid programmes which, although intended to iron out the divisions and disparities among ethnic groups, are actually exacerbating them. At times, Dayton appears to be a continuation of the conflict by other means. Warren Bass argues that recourse to international institutions is proving to be a ‘disaster’; he decries the timidity of the European Union and the uneven performance of the ICTY; he regards multiethnic democracy and the nominal unity of the Bosnian State as a ‘house of cards’. In his view, the liberal aspects of Dayton, such as a central government, the prosecution of war criminals, the return of refugees and the values of civic culture, will remain a dead letter unless there is real determination to make them a reality at any cost. As Susan Woodward concludes, ‘Whether one looks at the settlement of refugees and displaced persons, or political power, the goal of a multiethnic, unified Bosnia was further from realization than at the time of the Dayton signing’.

Without the presence of NATO forces and the international community, Bosnia would not be an experiment in peacebuilding but a dangerous
powder-keg for many years to come. As General Boyd maintains, ‘virtually
no one familiar with Bosnia believes that peace will endure…if the coalition
force is withdrawn’.38 This is borne out by the substantial investment in
weapons and the arms race by the three parties. In the words of Pedrac
Simic, Bosnia resembles ‘a European Gaza Strip’, and it will be ‘just about
impossible for this former Yugoslav republic to function as a single State
once the peace forces leave for good’.39 Gideon Rose shares that fear. He
criticizes the illusion of an ‘exit strategy’ for the United States and NATO;
in his view, they cannot consider setting a deadline for withdrawal (however
much Clinton and the American Congress may desire it40), for the SFOR
mission is likely to be a protracted one. At the same time, he acknowledges
that ‘re-creating a unified Bosnia is beyond U.S. capabilities in the near
future’.41 The strategic dilemma remains unresolved, especially if we accept
Safioleas’ argument that ‘the stage is definitely set for yet another
fragmentation and polarization phase’.42

According to Jane Sharp, the great powers have had a tendency to
appease aggressors at the expense of the victims of war and if this is not
reversed ‘the current fragile peace could be shattered’.43 Indeed, General
Boyd argues that to continue implementing the Dayton Accords as
conceived may lead to a renewal of hostilities and ‘that war will not be in
spite of our efforts, but because of them’.44 Susan Woodward warns: ‘the
Dayton accords only reproduce the institutional causes of Yugoslavia’s
disintegration that led to war in Bosnia-Herzegovina’.45 Thus, the Dayton
Accords leave the very same nationalist leaders who dream of one day
redrawing the Dayton map in power. The return of the refugees is
proceeding very slowly and may take as long as 50 years. The collegial
tripartite presidency is functioning badly or not at all, while each of the
ethnic leaders is developing ‘more and more intransigent positions further
and further removed from the ideal of a multiethnic, multidenominational
Bosnia’.46 According to Bougarel, reconciliation will remain a distant goal
if it presupposes the emergence of a form of peacebuilding that breaks with
‘visions that reduce the transition to a process of institutional
transplantation and financial transfusion, or a simple policing operation’.47

In light of this assessment, we are compelled to ask whether Bosnia is a
fiction, whether it represents a wonderful but unattainable ideal. Is it
possible, in the long term, to transform the fictitious Bosnia into a real
Bosnia? This is indeed the aim of the ‘constructivist’ peacebuilders who
think it possible for Alice to turn Frankenstein into a creature at peace with
himself. Nothing is less clear for the realists who, by contrast, fear the
sleeping monster of interethnic rivalry.
Peacebuilding and the Future of Bosnia

As New York Times editorialist Thomas Friedman writes, ‘the Dayton accord is based on the notion [of] a civil war that ends with elections, a new constitution, a military balance, the trial of war criminals and power-sharing’. Surely, no better portrait could be painted of the marriage of Alice and Frankenstein! This vision corresponds to the notion of peacebuilding missions that was articulated in 1992 by then-Secretary General of the United Nations Boutros-Boutros Ghali, which conceived peacebuilding as an effort to help societies devastated by conflict and war recover and put peace on a firm footing. Since that time peacebuilding activities have been developed, in one guise or another, by various parties, particularly by IGOs such as the UN, by NGOs and by several states – notably Canada – that made it the cornerstone of their foreign policy. The goals of peacebuilding are reconstruction, reconciliation and peace education. It is based on a security transition, on democratic process, and on the restoration of a capitalist economy. It promotes a liberal vision, which corresponds to the democratic, free market model that certain actors wish to export to conflict zones in order to institute peace. The motives of the various parties involved vary: some are driven by constructivist aims, others by realist ends. These contradictory positions reflect the uncertainty about how to achieve peace and the prospects for doing so. This contradiction is nowhere more evident than in Bosnia, in the realm of security as much as in the political and socio-economic spheres.

The Security Transition

It was Churchill who said that the Balkan region has a tendency to produce more history than it can consume. In Bosnia, this dictum is exemplified in the domain of security. Through the presence of NATO forces, the peacebuilding mission seeks to rein in the parties and encourage them to live together (although separately for the time being) without reviving disputes over territory and the domination of one ethnic group over another. The twofold challenge is an ambitious one: first, to speed up the process of integration in a context of mutual distrust and intolerance among ethnic groups and, second, to resolve the traditional security dilemmas by imposing new peace norms through the active intervention first of IFOR and then of SFOR. Has the challenge been met? What hope does the future hold?

By accepting the principle of a de facto partition of Bosnia, Dayton sanctioned the territorial division of two ethnic groups. As a result of this division, the politicians (and policies) responsible for the confrontations remained in place. Thus, not only is Bosnia a fiction, but the fiction is being maintained by the presence of NATO troops. In this respect, the country is comparable to a vassal or client state of the West. Dayton’s aim was to
initiate a process of ethnic integration but its ambiguities are such that, on the one hand, integration is being effected by force and, on the other, it is entrenching ethnic barriers. The partition is currently being supervised by SFOR’s 20,000 soldiers (of whom 6,900 are American); in terms of security, they behave far more like peacekeepers than peacebuilders.51 Their approach is reminiscent of that of the Ottoman Empire: keep competing nationalisms in a state of torpor, maintain a balance of power, and, when necessary, redress military inequalities. This is precisely the realist approach to conflict management. The American authors of Dayton have always recognized this; they have instituted a sugar-coated version of realpolitik under the guise (or at least not at variance with) the liberal ideals of the Clinton administration, namely, policies promoting the reestablishment of a multiethnic Bosnian state. As Warren Bass remarks, ‘Dayton is an act of realism rather than idealism’.52 The desire to construct new liberal norms so often articulated by Western diplomacy was abandoned during and after Dayton. This is reflected in the decision to keep the SFOR mission in Bosnia for purely military reasons. All the parties fear the withdrawal of the troops, at least at times, anticipating that it would have catastrophic consequences for peace. SFOR is therefore playing an increasingly strong and significant role in the application of the civilian elements of Dayton, since, as Thierry Tardy affirms ‘one of the main lessons…is precisely that the military and civilian dimensions of the peace accords are indissociable’.53 It is unlikely that the norms of conduct of the Muslim, Croat and Serbian entities will change on their own and it is possible that the tenuous stability achieved by IFOR and then SFOR is only temporary. Peace cannot be nurtured unless the parties in question have an unconditional desire for it. Few observers are confident that this will develop.54 Barring radical changes in sense of identity, there appears to be little likelihood of ethnic coexistence.

The security dilemma has not vanished – however much SFOR hopes that the parties will renounce the pursuit of territorial gains through the use of force. An exit strategy for NATO troops is inconceivable as long as the dilemma continues to be perceived as significant and dangerous. Professor Zlato Isakovic observes: ‘Croat and part of Serb political leaderships in Bosnia and Herzegovina are threatened by Bosniacs’ intentions to establish the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina as a real federation, single, state; Bosniacs’ leadership is, in return, threatened by Serbs’ and Croats’ intentions to join (as much as it is possible) neighbouring Former Yugoslavia and Croatia... The Dayton Accords stopped the war, but it seems that did not eliminate actors, conditions and causes that started it’.55 In Jane Sharp’s view, rather than encouraging reconciliation, the many announcements of SFOR imminent withdrawal have ‘encouraged former enemies to prepare for the
next battle’.

Evidently, none of the ethnic leaders is satisfied with Dayton – especially the Serbs who did not accept the Accords – and they are pursuing divergent aims. The Serbs and Croats want to exclude the Muslims from their territories, while the Muslims want to be able to return to zones controlled by other ethnic groups. Warren Bass speaks of a ‘marriage of interests’ and of ‘partners on paper only’, pointing out that ‘most Bosnian Serbs have no interest in sharing power with Muslims and Croats… Muslims and Croats will cooperate only as long as it suits both sides’ interests. Otherwise they eagerly exploit each other.’

Ethnic paranoia persists, fuelled by nervous leaders seeking to control and preserve intact the areas where their ethnic groups form a majority. Referring explicitly to the security dilemma, Susan Woodward notes that, ‘the fear of becoming a minority in someone else’s nation-state was exactly what was (and still is) motivating each community to fight, from Croatia to Macedonia’. She concludes: ‘there appears to have been no change in the incentives, interests, ambitions, or identities of the political leaderships or their political parties, no reduction in the insecurity felt by citizens about their future, and no shift of power and responsibility to others who have different interests and goals’. Although it remains politically possible, a change in the leading elites and their appeals to ethnic identity is thus doubtful at best. And as long as those conditions prevail, the security dilemma cannot be abolished.

3) While the norms of peaceful conflict resolution must prevail in principle, the extension of military assistance to the Bosnian Muslims is contradictory to say the least. How can progress be made on the security front when one of the basic elements of the security equation, approved at the time of the Dayton Accords, is the rearmament of one of the factions, which will recreate a military imbalance and undermine the prospects for peace? The train and equip programme for the Muslim forces follows a realist logic. At the insistence of President Izetbegovic, this assistance became a requisite condition for signing the Accords. Moreover, the United States and NATO believed that the programme would make it possible for them to disengage their troops from Bosnia more quickly. In cooperation with allies such as Egypt and the United Arab Emirates, the Pentagon thus provided more than $400 million in equipment to the army of the Muslim-Croat Federation. The Federation also received training from the private US firm Military Professional Resources (MRI). In addition, the Muslims stepped up their efforts to obtain arms secretly from countries such as Iran. Nor did the Serbs remain idle. Some observers see benefits in Western training for the Federation’s troops, since it inculcates values of discipline and respect for human rights. Jane Sharp disagrees, arguing that ‘train and equip’ undermines trust-building between the two Bosnian entities, as well as the...
parallel disarmament negotiations. All members of the contact group, which supported the Dayton diplomatic effort, opposed this programme. General Boyd explains: ‘ironically, after supposedly arming the Muslims so they could defend themselves in our absence, we may now have to stay, if only to prevent them from restarting the war’. General Boyd explains: ‘ironically, after supposedly arming the Muslims so they could defend themselves in our absence, we may now have to stay, if only to prevent them from restarting the war’. A comprehensive study by the US Institute of Peace also finds that ‘Train and Equip radically alters the balance-of-power and increases the likelihood of a Federation-directed offensive…Some believe that by mid-1999 the Bosniacs will have the ability to inflict a decisive defeat over the Serbs. According to this assessment, parity will simply cease to exist.’ That view was shared by the former High Representative in Bosnia, Carl Bildt. This situation does very little to mitigate the security dilemma. Nor does it promote the development of new norms based less on defence and more on development and reconstruction.

4) Certain territorial disputes have been worrisome, especially those which were at the core of ethnic cleansing during the war. In particular, the Serbs lost control of the city of Brcko, which forms a corridor between the two main sections of their entity. This happened in March 1999 when a judgement by international arbitrator Robert Owens (the legal father of Dayton) ruled that the city should be reunified, demilitarized, and accorded neutral status under the authority of the Bosnian Federal State. This (reasoned) ruling was bitterly resented by the Serbs, who felt that the Dayton peace had robbed them of a city of great strategic importance to them, one that they believe they won in the war. Moreover, the city of Mostar is still disputed by Muslims and Croats, and only the presence of SFOR and the EU seems to be preventing an outbreak of hostilities. Brcko and Mostar are thus two examples of territorial disputes, which illustrate the hazards of the security transition.

5) What are the implications of this situation for the security transition in Bosnia? Can the Dayton Accords be maintained in their current form, and can SFOR stay indefinitely? Some ethno-realist scholars respond in the negative and consider the peacebuilding efforts aimed at creating a unified Bosnia to be futile. In their view, there was good reason for the Dayton accords to create a *de facto* partition of Bosnian territory: forcing the reintegration of the combatants against their will is riskier than separating them and endorsing the separation. For the ethno-realists, the solution does not lie in transforming and reconciling incompatible identities, but in accepting those identities and putting distance between them. Thus, a legal partition of the Bosnian state would be the simplest solution, even though such a course of action represents an abandonment of Dayton and of liberal values. Separation of the ethnic groups is viewed as a more promising route. Recognizing that Dayton was full of ambiguities concerning the precise nature of Bosnian identity, Ivo Daalder
(coordinator of American policy on Bosnia at the NSC between 1995 and 1997) proposes to resolve the fragmentation-reintegration dilemma with a Dayton II accord to ratify the partition. The Serbs could be granted their own republic (with minor territorial adjustments) and the Muslim-Croat Federation could preserve its territory intact. A NATO transition force would be redeployed to guarantee the new security agreements; this force could be withdrawn sooner than the continuation of present conditions would allow. For Daalder, ‘the renegotiation of the Dayton framework could resolve the underlying differences among the parties and thereby provide the basis for a lasting peace’.65 Chaim Kaufmann, John Mearsheimer, Stephen Van Evera, Michael O’Hanlon and Fareed Zakaria all argue along the same lines and support the partition option, on the grounds that the various factions will never accept the concept of a multiethnic Bosnia, as envisioned by Dayton.66 Robert Pape remarks, ‘history records no instance where ethnic groups have successfully shared power in a democracy after a large-scale ethnic war’.67 However, the examples of Ireland, India, Palestine and Cyprus bear witness to the grave consequences and considerable violence associated with partition strategies (deliberate or not).68 The peacebuilders are opposed to a renegotiation of Dayton for just this reason. For Carlos Westendorp (the former High Representative), ‘Dayton remains the only solution to the problem, since everything that falls outside that framework is tantamount to creating the same conditions that led to war in the first place’.69 Former NATO Secretary General Javier Solana believes partitioning Bosnia into mini-states would be catastrophic and dangerous.70 Carl Bildt (previously cited) considers the idea naïve and potentially disastrous – a recipe for heightened instability – and sees no chance for what would be left of Bosnia to survive.71 The Tindemans report predicts that in this case Bosnia would split into three entities; it deems the divorce ‘no recipe for stability’.72 According to Pauline Neville-Jones, former British representative at Dayton, it would be risky to reopen the Accords; she remarks that: ‘the enemy of success is not so much the development of a “dependency culture” on the part of Bosnians as the insecurity about their personal future’.73 In sum, the dismemberment of Bosnia does not appear to represent a miracle solution; the scenario is the object of lively arguments between US experts, who favour partition, and the Europeans, who oppose it.

By opting for ‘soft’ partition, constructivists and realists have managed to have it both ways. However, it is not clear for how much longer this will be possible. A conflict management approach to the security situation is called for, in the hope that democratization will transform the political and socio-economic situation and, in the long run, render the security dilemma obsolete, making the supportive presence of the West unnecessary. If not,
Alice and Frankenstein agree: there can be no entry into the wonderland of peace as long as the monsters of war are lurking in the shadows.

The Democratic Transition

The democratic transition is conceived along constructivist lines. Democratization can be achieved by inculcating new norms, which will serve to construct new identities based on the liberal model, conceived as the source of political compromises and peace. This reconstruction can be accomplished without taking history into account because it can transform history. On this view, all that is required is perseverance, and Alice will be able to convince Frankenstein to change, through the catharsis of elections. As the weekly The Economist correctly observes, ‘Westerners in Bosnia believe that people do not kill people, politicians kill people. Change the politicians and the institutions they control, and you change the culture of fear and intolerance that make it impossible for Muslims, Croats and Serbs to live together.’ For some commentators, such as Alain Joxe, this vision stems from ‘a purely American cultural standpoint’. For others, it is the only way forward. The West can artificially rebuild Bosnia, institution by institution. It can ensure that elections, the media, the justice system and all kinds of civilian activities (such as police work and traffic regulation) conform to liberal and democratic principles, under the supervision of a ‘proconsul’ responsible for implementing Dayton. What have been the results of these attempts to reconfigure identity?

a) For constructivist peacebuilders, elections are critical. They are a measure of the success of peacebuilding efforts. Elections bring about two changes: they promote a climate of debate and political compromise (rather than military conflict) and they allow the eventual rise of a political class convinced of the virtues of democracy. Federal elections were held in the fall of 1996, 1998 and 2000, as provided in the Dayton Accords. National and municipal elections took place in November 1997 and April 2000. Although the electoral process unfolded in a fairly exemplary fashion (under the auspices of the OSCE), as a rule, the outcome registered victories for nationalist candidates within the three ethnic communities. Political fractures have thus remained mostly intact and, in the case of the Serbs, have even been exacerbated.

The 1997 elections in the Serb entity gave reason for hope that the more moderate tendency of President Biljana Plavsic would eventually prevail over the radical current of former President Radovan Karadzic, who was responsible for the Serbian genocide in Bosnia. For nearly two years, in 1998–99, SFOR tried by every means to help Plavsic lay her hands on the mechanisms of political control in the Serbian republic. Its efforts were in vain. Karadzic partisans, assembled in the southern part of Bosnia, undermined all of Plavsic’s efforts to encourage the moderates, such as
Prime Minister Mirolad Dodik, to carry out significant political reforms. As James Schear recalls, ‘one measure of the elections’ success will be whether they can establish a legitimate niche for nonethnic opposition parties’, in other words those who favour a multiethnic and non-nationalist political community. According to David Rieff, ‘lack of commitment to pluralism is revealed by the absence of any candidates who are not members of the dominant group the party in question claims to represent’. This is the reason why nationalists fear elections much less than is generally thought. Rieff acknowledges, that voting ‘suits their interests’. In this respect, the September 1998 election results were disappointing. The radical Nikola Poplasen was elected the new President of the Serbian entity, marking a defeat for Plavsic’s party and for the democratization efforts of the Serb political leadership. Thus, the pragmatists could not withstand the electoral test and, after two sets of elections, it must be said that a functioning multiparty system seems more elusive than ever.

Not only has the democratic route suffered a setback, but the very idea of using the electoral process as a means to unify Bosnia has been cast in doubt. Following a trip to Bosnia, journalist Thomas Friedman had this to say about the 1996 elections: ‘I believe elections will not unify Bosnia. There is no example of a partitioned country unified by an election process. Elections tend to expose divisions, not heal them.’ Canadian observer John Graham agrees: ‘these [in Bosnia] were governments with no tradition of democracy and little interest in democratic norms except insofar as elections served to reinforce control’. If elections don’t produce moderates, why bother? They only paralyze the ethnic gameboard. The question is actually subtler and also bears on political change at the grassroots level. Many peacebuilders feel that change is more evident in the business of daily life. In all areas, Bosnians are learning to live together again – at least if the reports of reconciliation efforts at the local level are reliable. The municipal elections offered a few rays of hope, with breakthroughs by candidates clearly opposed to nationalist positions. The OSCE can certify that 125 of 136 Bosnian municipalities are following the rules for selecting their mayors and municipal councils. Pessimism remains the order of the day, though. As one elections monitor notes, ‘Bosnia’s political institutions offer few incentives for multiethnic behavior...in a country like Bosnia, with no history of political accommodation, a system of proportional representation is a disaster’. And an editorial in The Economist maintains, ‘after three years of keeping Bosnia under intensive international care, it is getting harder to sustain the argument that its people will opt for reconciliation once freed from the grips of the demagogues’. Ironically, the elections are serving to strengthen the nationalist parties and are thereby hindering efforts to bring democracy to Bosnia. In December 1999, a report
of the US Institute of Peace concluded: ‘Thus far, initial assumptions about elections have not been supported. Elections do not necessarily bring moderates to power.’

Only time will tell whether the constructivist vision of democracy can take root in Bosnia. For the time being, in spite of Alice’s appeal to the virtues of democracy, Frankenstein refuses to change.

b) One key factor in building a democratic civic culture that gives dissenting voices a hearing is the existence of an independent press which can freely broadcast news and opinions in the most objective manner possible. Conversely, media that serve as platforms for one ruling group or faction, spreading messages of hatred and aggression, can play an important role in breeding civic violence, political tensions and armed conflict (as was the case throughout the former Yugoslavia between 1991 and 1995). These considerations led SFOR to take action in the summer of 1997 and seize the four transmitters of the Serb television station in Pale, which was broadcasting the Karadzic faction’s xenophobic appeals to revolt against Plavsic and the Bosnians. The thinking was that with NATO playing a novel role in peacebuilding, only SFOR control over the media could sway the Serbs to a more favourable attitude towards Plavsic and improve the odds of inter-ethnic reconciliation. The loss of their transmitters, however, does not seem to have greatly affected the general radicalism of the Serbs. Nevertheless, such actions are necessary, not only to counter the messages of fear and revenge, but also to make people less receptive to interethnic rivalries and more inclined toward tolerance and pluralism. Frankenstein must not speak louder than Alice; otherwise Alice will have little chance to be heard.

c) The arrest and prosecution of war criminals was one of the most important components of the peacebuilding mission and one of the major successes of the joint efforts of SFOR and the ICTY. It was not clear at first that IFOR troops could or would make arrests, and for more than two years the ICTY was frequently frustrated. Without the cooperation of the military, how could criminals be arrested in zones where they had support (due to ethnic ties), without putting the hard-won Dayton peace agreement in peril? Of the 74 indictments issued by the tribunal in October 1997, only 19 individuals were in custody. Two years after Dayton, a number of local police forces remained under the control of some of these criminals. The tribunal’s chief judge, South African Richard Goldstone, admitted ‘the lack of credibility and enforcement of the ICTY’, while affirming that it could ‘further international humanitarian law’. His successor, Canadian Louise Arbour, decried the lack of cooperation, especially on the part of the French authorities, in pursuing war criminals, and charged France with wanting to discredit and sabotage the ICTY. Simply put, the problem was that, in the
absence of political pressure, NATO had little reason to step up arrests, since its primary objective was a security transition, and that meant dealing with some of those criminals to ensure their cooperation in implementing Dayton.

When the British and American governments became convinced that stepping up the arrests would actually enhance the prospects for a lasting peace and a more rapid withdrawal of SFOR, NATO received the green light to provide substantial support for the ICTY’s efforts. In December 1997, SFOR arrested three Bosnian Croats accused of massacring Muslim civilians in 1993. In January 1998, it apprehended a Serb described as the ‘Adolf Hitler’ of ethnic cleansing. Then, in March 1999, another notorious Serb was arrested for crimes against humanity, and in January 2000, the Tribunal sentenced five Bosnian Croats for attacks of ethnic cleansing. As Hofnung notes, ‘the total impunity that the perpetrators of these crimes had benefited from, until then, was finally ended’. Since that time, SFOR operations of this kind have increased and the new ICTY chief judge, French Claude Jorda, now has 40 indicted individuals in custody (of whom 15 have been sentenced) and hopes to indict another 150 suspects by the time investigations are completed in 2004. While this constitutes substantial progress, it cannot solve the basic problem as long as ethnic divisions remain entrenched and the process of reconciliation remains blocked. A report from the US Institute of Peace notes: ‘arresting war criminals will not bring social reconciliation to the former Yugoslavia unless it is perceived by all parties as the means to a just end, and not simply as a way to expedite Dayton implementation’. In this connection, when war criminals like Karadzic remain free, justice cannot be seen to be done and undermines the prospects for reconciliation. While Karadzic has been made a scapegoat for all the difficulties with pushing the peace process forward in the Serb entity, it is virtually impossible to arrest him (the possibility was contemplated and then rejected) without seriously imperilling Dayton. The alternative between a realist peace with a guilty party and the justice of the peacebuilders may be a Hobson’s choice; it is one on which Alice and Frankenstein have differing opinions.

d) Bosnia is under a form of ‘disguised protectorate’ and, in June 1997, Carlos Westendorp was named High Representative responsible for full implementation of the civilian provisions of the Dayton Accords. Like General MacArthur in Japan and General Clay in Germany after the Second World War, Westendorp resorted to increasingly drastic measures (even more than his predecessor Bildt) to rebuild Bosnia. The effectiveness of his approach, which has been compared by some to that of a viceroy, was enhanced by the increasingly firm support he received from the SFOR troops. The following are just a few random examples, which illustrate the range of areas in which Westendorp’s successor, Wolfgang Petritsch, and his
212 international bureaucrats are forcing the hand of the Bosnians:

- appointing Bosnian ambassadors
- re-establishing civilian control of Bosnia’s airspace
- helping refugees return to Sarajevo by restoring their property rights
- instituting a single system of car registration throughout the country
- rapidly restoring telephone service
- choosing a new flag and national anthem for Bosnia
- adopting a common passport, as well as new citizenship laws
- curbing media activities that violate the spirit of Dayton
- creating a new currency, the ‘marka’, to replace the dinar.

This list could be extended considerably. The High Representative is taking every opportunity to give substance to the (re)construction of the state. An exemplar of constructivism, he is defining and choosing the norms that can make Bosnia less of a virtual country and endow it with a common ‘identity’. This mission is sometimes difficult inasmuch as coordinating military and civilian personnel is a complicated matter. Moreover, some of the decisions are proving to be very unpopular, especially the removal of certain politicians who oppose the peace process – the latest being none other than Nicola Poplasen.98 Other unpopular measures include the unilateral appointment of administrators for some towns that have been placed under trusteeship, forbidding certain candidates from running for office due to their refusal to implement the Dayton Accords, and threatening to impose sanctions on and withdraw economic aid from Serb authorities who impede the return of refugees.99 The moral of the story is that peacebuilding succeeds best when peace is imposed and soldiers support the efforts of the civilians, who are ultimately responsible for reconciliation strategies. When it comes to subduing a recalcitrant Frankenstein, Alice is clearly more effective dressed in khakis.

The democratic transition is an ambitious and feasible (realist) endeavour only insofar as it has the long-term support of an international community prepared to use brute force as a means to foster the rise of new leaders and a new culture imbued with peaceful values. It remains to be seen whether this support will suffice to carry the democratization to completion.

**Socio-economic Reconstruction**

After Dayton, Nebojsa Vukadinovic recalls, it was expected that there would be a five-year period of reconstruction in Bosnia, but ‘two years later, the time estimate has doubled or tripled’.100 A tremendous effort has been made and it has resulted in significant achievements. Bosnia has been a unique exercise in peacebuilding: an army of peacebuilders has been placed at the disposal of the Bosnian state in order to rebuild an efficient capitalist economy which could serve as an example for other peacebuilding missions.
The stakes are high. As Richard Holbrooke foresaw, ‘a huge economic reconstruction programme was essential to any Bosnia settlement’. But is socio-economic reconstruction sufficient to complement and gradually replace SFOR’s military mission? Can economic norms designed to promote capitalism eliminate insecurity? Can constructivists keep the realist bugbears at bay through their intervention in the economy and the society? There are significant disconnects between liberal dreams and the concrete realities on the ground. These have to do with economic conditions, with the strategies of the ‘builders’ and donors, and with the return of refugees.

The most recent economic assessments of the Bosnian federal state show that while progress has been made, the performance is still well below expectations. There is no longer famine and lack of adequate heating; the road system is functional again, the $45 million debt to the IMF has been forgiven, and Bosnia is receiving considerable international aid to cover the $445 million in financial arrears owed to the World Bank. Several economic summit meetings have been held by donor countries. They have resulted in an aid package of nearly $5 billion over five years. Finally, in partnership with the private sector, the US Department of Commerce generated over $5 billion worth of contracts for US firms (between 1,000 and 3,000 American businesses are benefiting from the joint plan). On the other hand, ‘the Bosnian economy is scarcely more viable than it was when the Dayton Accord was signed in 1995’. Indeed, the overall performance in 1998–99 offers a more sombre portrait of Bosnia’s economic transformation. GDP remains at only half its pre-war level (in spite of $5 billion in aid since 1996 to help Bosnia close the gap). People, goods and products cannot easily cross interethnic boundaries; Bosnia has only nominal control over its borders. Sometimes customs posts are unmanned, and contraband, as well as the flow of illegal migrants from Asia and Africa, is allowed to freely cross the border. The Central Bank, headed by New Zealander Peter Nicholl, is not receiving consistent cooperation from its affiliates and the monitoring system is inadequate. Corruption within the Bosnian government is still a serious problem. And, finally, private foreign investment has been slow in coming (only $160 million in 1997 and 1998).

All things considered, the situation is far from catastrophic – a positive note in and of itself – but much remains to be done, especially in light of a number of key factors: the production and redistribution of goods remains sluggish and unemployment is high (30 per cent). In the Serb republic, which is receiving 2 per cent of the international aid, compared with 98 per cent for the federation, unemployment is running at 50 per cent. Taxes remain unpaid, corruption is rampant and the mafia is ubiquitous. Further, there are increasingly deep disparities between Bosnia’s two territorial entities. In these circumstances, Vukadinovic fears the development of a two-tier process of
reconstruction in the two entities, which would have the unintended consequence of underscoring the advantages for the Bosnians of a strategy of separation as opposed to a policy of integration. He warns: ‘the difficulty of pursuing reconstruction at the same time as the transition stems from the political logjam and the intractable institutional problems. If the logic of neoliberalism governs both reconstruction and the transition, there is a danger that, in time, the underlying disparities of the Bosnian economy will resurface.’

From this vantage point, the socio-economic transition depends on the results achieved in the realm of security and in the political sphere, rather than the reverse. Before he can prosper, Frankenstein must first feel happy and secure.

a) It is no exaggeration to speak of an ‘army’ of peacebuilders deployed in Bosnia. The force includes 10,000 people from foreign governments (primarily the donor states), various UN and EU agencies, and, above all, 200 NGOs from 24 countries (in addition to the 77 Bosnian NGOs) that are investing more than $1.5 billion annually to help Bosnia get back on its feet. Together, they are carrying out a ‘mini Marshall plan’. It is a fine example of constructivism in action, an effort to reshape the norms of conduct and refashion Bosnia’s identity. Alice is stepping up her efforts on the ground to conquer hearts and minds, from rebuilding homes and restoring nursing care to clearing mines, from bolstering the judicial system and assisting widows and orphans to organizing elections and schools. The NGOs believe that peacebuilding is carried out from the bottom up and not the other way around. The populace can be won over faster and more completely than politicians, and successful projects can bring ethnic groups together by empowering them to conceive and implement solutions to their own problems. As one aid worker observed, ‘This place is healing, not dying. But we are the life-support system.’ For their part, the donors have agreed to give Bosnia an enormous amount of aid, $1.25 billion in 1998 alone. This assistance is often dispensed in a scattered way. There is little coordination between the United States and Europe, which is acting primarily through the ECHO and PHARE programmes (one component of which aims at rebuilding the city of Mostar). To this can be added the actions of governments such as those of Canada and Japan, and of the World Bank and the IMF, as well as the Organization of the Islamic Conference and other IGOs and NGOs. The lack of coordination among the parties involved in the reconstruction efforts is impeding progress. As Jane Sharp writes, all these players ‘tended to work in a bilateral framework with recipients, not as part of a coordinated plan…Most of the money directed to Bosnia had been squandered with so little effect.’ This has prompted many observers to call for the creation of a civilian chief-of-staff, comparable to the military
authority, and for a central coordinator to organize the activities of the
civilian players in Bosnia and elsewhere (the High Representative does not
have formal control over the work of the NGOs and IGOs because he
represents only the UN and the EU). The ‘constructivist’ strategy of the
peacebuilders and donors is certainly laudable, but Alice must speak in a
unified voice if she wants to prevail.

b) One of the basic points in the Dayton Accords was the return of the three
million refugees who had been dislocated or had fled Bosnia during the
1992–95 war (the largest exodus since the Second World War). Of Bosnia’s
total population of 4.4 million, one-third were dislocated and one-third fled;
67 per cent of the Croats, 63 per cent of the Muslims and 39 per cent of the
Serbs were displaced within or outside Bosnia’s territory. Although 1998
was supposed to be the ‘year of return’, UNHCR statistics show that 1.2
million have no prospects of repatriation or relocation in Bosnia; they are
‘awaiting a solution’ to use the standard phrase. As of December 1998,
475,000 refugees and displaced persons had returned since the end of the
war. Of that number, only some 60,000 settled outside the entity controlled
by their own community (Serb or Muslim-Croat). In most cases, the
refugees are not returning to their former lands and homes but to a region,
a city or a village where their ethnic group forms the majority. It would
appear that the return is not being conducted on a harmonious and
multiethnic basis; rather it is entrenching the divisions between the peoples.
In fact, 90 per cent of the Serbs who lived in the territory of the Muslim-
Croat federation are now residing in the Serb entity. Evidence provided by
NATO, in December 1999, shows that Bosnian Croats have shored up their
ethnic presence in Western Herzegovina to prevent the return of Muslim
refugees. The promise of return contained in Dayton remains largely
unfulfilled, although there were strict provisions in the Accords concerning
the right of refugees and displaced persons to return to their former homes.
The powers of the Office of the High Representative, Daalder irreverently
observes, ‘are like those of the pope: it can issue an encyclical, but unless
people believe, there is very little it can do about their behavior’. In
principle, this right of return was supposed to promote reunification, not the
segregation of Bosnia. Sophie Albert remarks, ‘by adding the word
“homes” to the provisions on return, the negotiators at Dayton appeared to
express an almost mystical belief in human goodness’. The reality is quite
different, however: it is not safe to return to one’s home and many houses
were destroyed or damaged; indeed, 40 per cent of them are uninhabitable.
There are not enough homes to accommodate the refugees who are
returning to Bosnia; there is still a dearth of potable water; and landmines
are scattered everywhere.
It is vital that the peacebuilding mission halt the current (re)division of Bosnia’s population and promote ethnic coexistence. Accordingly, a UNHCR programme aims to create a dozen ‘open cities’, intended to encourage the multiethnic reintegration of refugees in exchange for significant economic aid. The UNHCR is also supporting measures such as trust building among refugees who wish to return to a region where they will be a part of an ethnic minority; setting up a bus service to transport Bosnians across the interethnic border; and a large-scale home building project in cooperation with USAID.\footnote{117} It would appear, though, that the ethno-realist thesis is being borne out. The people of Bosnia are turning their backs on coexistence; rather, they want to maintain and even reinforce the ethnic divide. Short of a permanent military occupation by SFOR and a forced repatriation of the refugees within a completely ‘open’ Bosnia, it is hard to see how the return of the refugees can contribute to reconciliation. In spite of much effort and encouragement, Frankenstein does not seem to want to set up house with Alice.

**Conclusion: NATO or TITO, That Is the Question!**

Our analysis of peacebuilding in Bosnia shows that scepticism is warranted in assessing the prospects for successful implementation of the Dayton Accords and reconciliation. Given a choice between (re)constructing and instituting new security, democratic and economic norms, on the one hand, and maintaining ethnic cleavages, on the other, Bosnia seems to be taking the second road, in spite of the imposing civilian and military presence of the international community. As the former commander in chief of the Bosnian army has remarked: ‘the multiethnic bosnian state is a fairytale made up for foreigners’.\footnote{118} Either Frankenstein will need extensive therapy to agree to change and learn to appreciate the benefits of Alice’s liberalism or Alice must reluctantly swallow a healthy dose of realism. In Bosnia’s case, realism means continuing conflict management, not embracing false hopes of peacebuilding. Conflict management must be conducted with a firm hand by NATO over an extended period of time. NATO has no choice but to assume the role of Tito, to borrow Thomas Friedman’s analogy: ‘Sarajevo residents are hoping that president Clinton will be their new Tito – the iron-fisted Yugoslav strongman who used his army and secret police to maintain peace among the different communities. That’s worth thinking about: We’re telling them that the solution to their problem is a new constitution and they are telling us that the solution to their problem is a new Tito.’\footnote{119}

Experts who have pondered the future of Bosnia fear the consequences of maintaining the *de facto* divisions between ethnic communities. Policies favouring partition will breed future conflicts between ethnic groups over land, resources, political power and military superiority in Bosnia.\footnote{120} The
international community may well weary of Bosnia and the peacebuilders may lose interest in an interminable mission with an uncertain outcome. Certainly, it would be a shame if the ‘Frankies’ (ironically, the name given to the Serb para-military force that practised ethnic cleansing in Kosovo\textsuperscript{121}) were to prevail against the heroic efforts of Alice the Constructivist to change the course of history by altering human consciousness and identity. The facts strongly suggest, however, that Bosnia, like the rest of the Balkans, is not amenable to the North American ideal of a multiethnic and multicultural society. At the end of the day, as one prominent realist unhappily (and probably correctly) concludes: ‘the ethnic groups have lived together peacefully only when that coexistence was imposed, as under foreign empires or the Tito dictatorship’.\textsuperscript{122} Our case study of peacebuilding in Bosnia does not appear to gainsay this assertion. NATO must play Tito to avoid an irreparable break between Alice and Frankenstein.

NOTES

This study was made possible by multi-year grants from the Canadian Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (DFAIT) and the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC).


8. Pauline Baker, ‘Conflict Resolution Versus Democratic Governance: Divergent Paths to
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19. Ibid., p.168.
23. Ibid., p.151.
29. James Schear, Bosnia’s Post-Dayton Traumas’, Foreign Policy, 104, (Fall 1996), pp.87, 89. See also Fouad Ajami, ‘Under Western Eyes: The Fate of Bosnia’, Survival, 41, (Summer 1999), pp. 35–42.
42. Penelope Safioleas, *op cit.*, p.23.
47. Xavier Bougarel, *op cit.*, p.35 [my translation].
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72. Leo Tindemans, op cit., p.86.
77. James Schear, op cit., p.97.
92. ‘UN Indicts Serbian Paramilitary Leader’, International Herald Tribune, 1 April 1999, p.10.
93. Thomas Hofnung, op cit., p.34 [my translation].


